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## Aging in Eastham: A Community Needs Assessment

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# **Aging in Eastham: A Community Needs Assessment**

January 2023

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Commissioned by The Town of Eastham &  
The Eastham Council on Aging

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Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging  
Gerontology Institute  
John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy & Global Studies  
University of Massachusetts Boston



## Contributors and Acknowledgements

This report was produced by the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging (CSDRA), a research unit within the Gerontology Institute at UMass Boston's McCormack School. The CSDRA provides resources and research expertise to communities, non-governmental organizations, and other agencies through the Commonwealth.

Caitlin Coyle, PhD and Beth Rouleau, MA are primarily responsible for the contents of this report. Others contributing to the project include doctoral candidate Ceara Somerville and undergraduate students Bendu David, Daniel Caron, Himani Pachigar, Roisin O'Keeffe, and Sabrin Zahid. We offer our appreciation to Dorothy Burritt, Director of the Eastham Council on Aging, and Joan Lockhart (Chair of the Council on Aging) for their leadership and guidance. As well, we appreciate the Eastham COA Board Members: Paula Bruns, Carol DiBona, Jan Guidess, Beverly Hobbs, William O'Shea, Linda Reed, Dr. Richard Trimble, Patricia Turiello (Vice-Chair, Council on Aging), and Patricia Unish. We acknowledge with gratitude the Town of Eastham, which provided funding for the project. As well we are deeply grateful to the Eastham leaders and the many residents who shared their thoughts as part of the data collection.

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## EASTHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

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Dear Eastham Residents and Community Members,

In 2022, the Eastham Council on Aging (COA) and its Board of Directors, in partnership with the Town, decided to commission a community study focused on the needs and interests of Eastham's adults aged 50 and over -- a segment that accounts for 68% of Eastham's current year-round population. Additionally, the age 60 and over population is expected to grow by 20% by 2030. These demographics pointed to the need for in-depth community input and data-driven analysis. We are pleased to share the results of this research, conducted by the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

***Aging in Eastham: A Community Needs Assessment*** is the result of nine months of coordination, planning, and comprehensive outreach to Eastham's full-time and part-time residents aged 50 and over, as well as many town departments and stakeholders. The participation rate by our residents was extraordinarily high at 33%, demonstrating the importance of aging-related issues to our community. As a result, we have significant data that will inform the direction of the COA's programs and services and provide a blueprint to other Eastham departments in their planning and budgeting processes today and into the future.

We are grateful to the more than 1,500 residents, community leaders and municipal employees who shared their time and insight. Your input will help advance projects that will have demonstrable impacts on how older adults can continue to live and thrive in Eastham. We are indebted to Caitlin Coyle, PhD, and her team at UMass Boston -- from coordinators and graduate research assistants to undergraduate interns -- for their time and expertise in creating this comprehensive, polished and readable document.

We trust you will find this report interesting and informative, and that you will be stimulated to engage and advocate for programs that serve to enhance the lives of Eastham's older adult population. Thank you, again, for your support, insight and engagement. We look forward to working together to continue to make Eastham an age-friendly community for all residents.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Burritt  
Director, Council on Aging

Joan Lockhart  
COA Board Chair

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## Executive Summary

This report describes research undertaken by the Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging within the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, on behalf of the Eastham Council on Aging. The goals of this project were to investigate the needs, interests, preferences, and opinions of Eastham's residents age 50 or older. The contents of this report are meant to inform the Town of Eastham, the Eastham Council on Aging and Senior Center, and organizations that work with and on behalf of older residents of Eastham for the purposes of planning and coordination of services. The report will also help to build awareness about issues facing Eastham among community members at large.

Already, estimates suggest that more than half of Eastham's population is age 50 or older and this trend stands to continue. This results from a number of factors—that adults are choosing to retire in Eastham (where they perhaps had a summer or family home), that young people are leaving Eastham seeking employment or education. An additional, and quantitatively unknown, factor is that the COVID-19 pandemic prompted many people to work remotely or have more flexibility in their physical location. Anecdotally, it has been observed that people came to Eastham during this period. Regardless of the reason, this central overarching observation—that the older population of Eastham is already large and will continue to expand—makes clear the importance of considering how well features of the Town, the services and amenities available, and virtually every aspect of the community align with the age demographic moving forward.

In preparing for this demographic shift, the Eastham Council on Aging and the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging at the University of Massachusetts Boston partnered to conduct a study to investigate the needs, interests, preferences, and opinions of the Town's residents age 50 and older. As part of this assessment, we conducted interviews and focus groups to hear from Eastham leadership, key stakeholders in the community, and a diverse group of residents. In addition, a survey was developed and administered to year-round Eastham residents age 50 and older. As well, the survey was distributed to seasonal residents. A total of 1,563 questionnaires were returned, reflecting a strong return rate of 33%. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other sources were examined in support of the project aims. Information from peer community senior centers was reviewed, as well.

A broad range of findings are reported in this document, highlighting the many positive features of Eastham as well as concerns expressed by older residents. While many of our findings, and the recommendations that follow, intersect with the scope of responsibility of the Eastham Council on Aging, it is understood that responding to many needs and concerns

expressed in the community will require the involvement of other municipal offices or community stakeholders, and some will require substantial collaborative effort.

We summarize key findings and make the following recommendations to the Eastham Council on Aging:

- **The demand for Senior Center programs and services is expected to escalate in coming years.**
  - Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau show that in 2021, there were 2,769 residents age 60 or older living in Eastham—comprising nearly half of the population (49%).
  - Eastham is a retirement destination—29% of survey respondents age 50+ have lived in Eastham for less than 10 years. Among those who are not currently full-time residents, 24% anticipate moving to Eastham full-time in within the next 5 years.
  - Not only is the size of the older population growing in Eastham, but the complexity of their needs is increasing. In addition to basic needs (food, housing, transportation), participants identified meaningful opportunities to be engaged in their community and maintain physical health as key elements of community living.
    - Among survey respondents, the most important service offered by the Eastham COA is health insurance counseling and information and referral to available resources.
  - The desire, among Town staff and residents, to address capacity and scheduling limitations at the Senior Center is reflected in collective planning to create a Community Center in Eastham. While these efforts continue, there is a parallel opportunity to build resident engagement through satellite programming and collaboration among stakeholders.

#### Recommendations:

Plan for escalating demand for Senior Center programs and services –including the expansion of both staffing and space.

- Advocate for more dedicated space for older adult programming. Specifically, space to accommodate lifelong learning courses and exercise programs is needed to meet the current and future preferences of Eastham residents.
- Currently, the Eastham Senior Center provides the only public social services in the Town. As needs for social services are expected to increase in quantity and complexity, address the need for additional social service staff to meet the needs of current and future older residents and their families.
  - Given the need for an increase in outreach staff, perhaps a new hire might be a LICSW who could offer clinical guidance to residents and provide supervision to social work interns.

- Having more outreach staff dedicated to community outreach and education could widen awareness of the Senior Center’s offerings.
- As the space for additional programming becomes available, expand the programming staff to include an additional “activities coordinator” position that assists with scheduling and planning the programming aspects of the Senior Center.
- Consider selectively increasing the involvement of volunteers in staffing the Senior Center. Recognize that recruiting, training, and managing a strong volunteer program will require additional paid staff effort.

➤ **The perception of the Eastham COA is that it is “needs-based”—which deters participation.**

- The number one (26%) reason for not currently participating at the Eastham COA was “other”. For those who wrote in a response, the most common responses centered “not needing” to visit the Senior Center or “not being interested” what goes on at the Senior Center was extracted from these write-in responses, suggesting that communicating the purpose of the Senior Center and defining its target audience is a possible future step that could draw in a wider range of residents
- Similarly, among those who do not currently participate at the Eastham COA, developing “a need for something” was the most commonly reported factor that would motivate them to participate (28%).

**Recommendations:**

- Consider changing the name to be more inclusive. Creating an image that reframes aging as a positive and active experience may empower residents to participate.
  - Consider soliciting ideas for a new name by facilitating a Town-wide contest.
- Form an ambassadors program where informed residents can promote the COA to their networks and clarify the offerings of the Eastham COA.
- Further collaborate with local organizations and Town departments to host satellite programming around the Town to promote Senior Center programs and draw-in a wider range of residents. Consider meeting quarterly to establish consistent and coordinated efforts.
- Partnerships with the library, local businesses, and schools could help meet the needs for additional programming opportunities targeted for older adults and offer intergenerational opportunities.
  - For example, working with the schools to utilize gym equipment, track space, or even art equipment/space during off hours.
  - Consider occupying a table or two at a local coffee shop or the library and offer “technology drop-in” help for residents looking to learn more about their devices or how to hone their technology skills. Consider recruiting local residents with technology backgrounds to serve as the coaches.



➤ **Programming at the Eastham COA does not currently align with the range of interests of residents.**

- Regardless of whether respondents use the Eastham COA or not, indoor and outdoor exercise were among the most preferred types of programs to be expanded at the Eastham COA and educational programs were the second most preferred.
- Among those who do not currently use the Eastham COA, 34% would like to see the Eastham COA expand on its lunch program or other food offerings.
- Given the opportunity to write in their own ideas, respondents focused on programs that enabled them to develop or hone a skill (e.g., woodworking, gardening, dance, business) and social programs that were focused on bringing like-minded people together (e.g., film discussions, LGBTQ programs, intergenerational programs).

**Recommendations:**

- Advocate for new space that includes ample space for indoor exercise classes that can accommodate large groups and offers access to exercise equipment (e.g., weights, stationary bikes etc.). Also consider a walking track that is available to all residents.
- Consider a community wide contest that provides an opportunity for residents to share programming ideas that reflect their interests and talents.
- Extend the satellite model to the business community through a partnership with the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce to increase socialization, while supporting local business infrastructure during the off-season.
  - Explore opportunities with local restaurants and performance theaters such as The Academy Playhouse, Cape Rep Theater, and Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater to create dine and engage events that include lectures, entertainment, and wellness programs.
  - Encourage Cape Cod resorts to offer short term access to their amenities through the Resort Pass system.<sup>1</sup>
- Partner with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) to provide transportation for an around the Cape Senior Center bus tour where members have an opportunity to experience programming and events in other communities through a monthly day trip.
- Support the expansion of current Hiking Club by developing a Trailblazers club<sup>2</sup> to link with adults seeking to connect via outdoor activities.
  - Construct, or incorporate at an existing playground, intergenerational fitness and play features with accessible gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Consider a walking trail or labyrinth; partner with the Recreation department to offer outdoor yoga and meditation programs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.resortpass.com>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/SouthboroughTrailBlazers/>

- Create parklets.<sup>3</sup> at the beachside and in frequented locations to provide comfortable spaces for interaction and enjoying scenic views. Partner with local food trucks to offer convenient dining options.
- Explore opportunities to hold regional senior sports tournaments on Cape Cod, potentially through a partnership at Cape Cod Community College. For inspiration and sponsorship ideas, look to the Massachusetts Senior Games<sup>4</sup>, a volunteer driven non-profit organization that promotes health and fitness among older adults through education programs, fitness activities, and competitive athletic events. On a smaller scale, conduct a fitness fair with paddle and field events at Eastham High School.
- Coordinate with residents to identify topics and skills they can share with others and pilot-test a lifelong learning program.
  - Perhaps COA Board members could facilitate special interest groups to develop programs.
  - Explore the possibility of providing a stipend or opportunity for tax-relief for volunteer instructors.
- Create an intergenerational committee with representatives from the High School and Senior Center to establish a “Reverse Mentorship” or a “Sages and Seekers”<sup>5</sup> program. Create and publicize shared theater, educational, and recreation events among residents. Consider an intergenerational book club, debate team, or choir group that is led by adult mentors.
- Expand access to LGBTQ events and activities by collaborating with other COAs and organizations.
  - Connect with existing LGBTQ events on the Cape and provide transportation for Eastham residents.
  - Consider occasionally hosting such events locally.

➤ **Opportunities to adapt current housing, downsize, or obtain housing with services are perceived as challenging in Eastham.**

- Cost of living, particularly rising property taxes, is named as a top concern among respondents as they think about being able to stay in Eastham as they age.
- Nearly a third of survey respondents report needing some kind of home repair to remain living safely over the next 5 years. Among them, 10% are unable to afford such repairs. Among those who wrote-in about their concerns, maintaining property and homes was also a top concern, specifically citing the lack of knowledge about finding a handy person or contractor to help with small repairs or modifications.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.boston.gov/transportation/boston-parklets-program>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.maseniorgames.org/2023-schedule>

<sup>5</sup> <https://sagesandseekers.org>

- When asked about preferences for type of housing, more than one-third (37%) of respondents aged 50-59 would prefer to live in 55+ community, and among those respondents age 60+, assisted living is the most preferred housing type for the future.

### Recommendations:

- Conduct a home safety workshop that includes a panel with COA and First Responder staff, local architects, real estate professionals, and Eastham Ace Hardware to discuss home safety evaluation tools and related solutions, including supportive aging in place products. Refer to the AARP HomeFit Guide<sup>6</sup> and consider the development of a Lifelong Housing Certification Program.<sup>7</sup> Through safety and accessibility improvements properties can be certified as age friendly
  - Work with partners to offer a more extensive list of contractors or handypersons who will provide home modifications to support safety within the home. Continuously update the list.
- Promote awareness of various housing options across the lifespan and continue to contribute to local conversations about housing options for older adults who wish to find supportive housing.
  - Advocate for options that current residents prefer, including condominiums and other types of housing that offer low maintenance and single-floor living. Assisted living communities and senior independent living units are desirable housing options.
  - Host a virtual forum to promote community conversations and awareness related to home sharing opportunities. Include representatives from Nesterly, a social enterprise that is dedicated to building intergenerational engagement and access to affordable housing through home sharing. Distribute Nesterly's<sup>8</sup> digital toolkit in advance of the meeting to Town leaders and residents.
  - Design a "housing choice" lunch and lecture series to encourage pro-active thinking about aging in place and inform residents of local creative and supportive resources that support housing needs.
    - Invite local experts (e.g., real estate agents, contractors, disability commission members, lawyers, financial professionals) who can share their perspective about future housing options based on a wide range of individual scenarios.
    - Include representatives from Cape Cod organizations fostering access to affordable housing and offering technical and financial assistance for the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/homefit-guide.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://rvcog.org/home/sds-2/lifelong-housing-program/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nesterly.com>

- Community Development Partnership<sup>9</sup>
- Housing Assistance Corporation<sup>10</sup>
- TRI, The Resource, for Community and Economic Development, Inc.<sup>11</sup>
- Promote awareness of existing property tax relief programs.
  - Document the number of residents who are “turned away” from existing programs due to eligibility requirements or other reasons to establish recommendations for expanding access.
  - Explore other incentive programs for volunteers.

➤ **Obtaining supplementary and accessible transportation is a concern for Eastham’s residents as they age.**

- More than one out of four respondents (29%) who drive modify their driving to make it easier or safer; and 5% of respondents do not drive at all.
- 30% of those who modify their driving and 46% of those who do not drive at all report having difficulty getting to where they want to go.
- When asked about barriers to using existing transportation in Eastham, top barriers reported by those who modify their driving or do not drive at all include having physical mobility challenges that make accessing transportation difficult and not having enough information about what is available.

**Recommendations:**

- Ensure that segments of the community at high risk of experiencing barriers to transportation are aware of available options: residents aged 80 and older, non-drivers, and those with significant mobility limitations.
- Consider developing a local “travel training” program where residents can learn about options and navigation.
- Explore the development of a formal volunteer transportation program (e.g., Friends in Service Helping <sup>12</sup>(F.I.S.H.). to expand door-to-door transportation to the Senior Center or other social gatherings or shopping excursions and appointments.
- Collaborate with Nauset Neighbors to expand existing options.
- Consider collaborations with neighboring COAs to coordinate transportation to medical services, adult day programs, or special trips.
- Promote availability and access for on-demand ride service through the Town’s commitment to educational events at the Senior Center and a partnership with

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<sup>9</sup> [Community Development Partnership | Homepage \(capecdp.org\)](http://CommunityDevelopmentPartnership|Homepage(capecdp.org))

<sup>10</sup> <https://haconcapecod.org>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.theresource.org>

<sup>12</sup> <https://fishlexington.org/>

Eastham High to increase local capacity as well familiarity with on-demand resources. Explore funding opportunities to offset costs associated with these services. See TRIPPS<sup>13</sup> for resources.

- **Many Eastham residents need support due to physical or cognitive conditions, and many caregivers need help. Partnership opportunities exist to expand safety features in homes and the environment through education and intergenerational support.**
  - 36% of survey respondents reported having been a caregiver within the past 5 years, including 43% of respondents aged 50-59.
    - Among caregivers, 43% reported that it is challenging to provide care and complete their daily responsibilities.
    - Nearly a quarter of caregivers are caring for someone who is frail or has limited mobility, and 23% are caring for someone living with dementia.

#### Recommendations:

- Look at options to expand supports for caregivers and create new ways of providing information about referral resources available through the COA.
  - Consider hosting a family caregiver “resource fair” as an opportunity to connect the Eastham COA with family caregivers.
  - Consider developing a volunteer respite program, which would require space and staff oversight, to offer residents a few hours of respite.
  - Explore ability to re-establish an adult day program or provide transportation to area programs.
  - Continue to coordinate with other COAs and organizations to connect Eastham caregivers with existing services.
- Conduct community-wide dementia friendly training among Town Staff and residents through a partnership of the Council on Aging and Eastham Police Department. Explore opportunities to leverage the Community Navigator program to establish Mental Health First Aid training. Explore Dementia Friends<sup>14</sup> and Thrive NYC<sup>15</sup>; these training initiatives raise awareness about residents and families living with dementia and expand capacity to support residents through a train the trainer model.
- Leverage Eastham’s S.A.F.E and Senior Safe programs to design intergenerational events which build awareness of safety challenges that affect residents of all ages, such as cyber security. The programs bring trained firefighter educators and residents together to discuss fire and life safety lessons. Eastham is one of many

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.brooklinema.gov/1502/Transportation-Services>

<sup>14</sup> <https://dementiafriendsusa.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://mentalhealth.cityofnewyork.us>

Cape Cod communities that receive funding through legislative earmarks to the Executive Office of the Public Safety & Security. Consider providing training opportunities for residents to support tasks related to safety in the community.

- **Eastham residents are a tight-knit group, but the risk of isolation is high.**
  - There are features of life in Eastham that can make it easy to lose touch or self-isolate. For a wide range of reasons, residents are frequently traveling off the Cape for periods of time. As well, the seasonality of the local economy and the challenges of weather can make it seem desolate.
  - According to American Community Survey data, more than one out of five residents of Eastham age 65 and older live alone (23%). Among survey respondents, this rate of living alone is highest among those in their 70s (34%) and 80's (52%).
  - 36% of survey respondents get together in-person with someone once a month or less.

#### Recommendations:

- Engage local faith communities<sup>16</sup>, restaurants, and nonprofits like the Family Table Collaborative<sup>17</sup> to host a monthly community dinner to provide a regular opportunity for residents to come together in a social setting.
- Work together with the Public Works Department to install new, or dedicate existing, “Chat Benches<sup>18</sup>” to create public spaces where socializing is encouraged.
- Identify land, or seek volunteers to share their property, to establish community gardens in Eastham. Consider a multigenerational approach<sup>19</sup> or a more informal arrangement<sup>20</sup>
- For residents with family off-Cape, consider creating an “Adopt-a-grandparent<sup>21</sup>” program in which local residents can meet up with younger families and do things together like celebrate Grandparents Day with a luncheon or bake cookies for the holidays.
- Consider celebrating National Good Neighbor Day (9/28) or Older Americans Month (May) with a series of “Let’s Talk, Eastham” programs<sup>22</sup> in which residents come together to be in conversation with one another that are exhilarating, inspiring, and meaningful.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.saintlukesscitate.com/community-dinner>

<sup>17</sup> <https://familytablecollaborative.org/partners/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/09/17/metro/happy-chat-benches-encourage-strangers-sit-stay-while/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-in-action/info-2015/how-to-create-maintain-intergenerational-community-garden.html>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.capecodtimes.com/story/lifestyle/2011/08/14/treehouse-community-garden-bring-neighbors/49935281007/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://adoptgrandparent.org/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://conversationsnewyork.com/>

## Introduction

Over the coming years, the population of older adults of Eastham is expected to increase substantially, with growth rates far outpacing those of younger segments of the population. Currently, many older adults benefit from programs and services designed to address aging-related needs and prolong independence, offered through the Eastham Council on Aging and the Eastham Senior Center. As a municipal entity, Eastham's Senior Center is an important and valued resource, operating as the Town's central point of contact for older residents who seek services to promote healthful and fulfilling lives. Growth of the older adult population therefore has special significance for the Senior Center and increasing demand for its services and programs can be expected moving forward.

This report presents results of a comprehensive examination of issues relating to aging in Eastham. A need assessment was undertaken to support planning efforts of the Eastham Council on Aging (COA) and the community as a whole. Results presented here focus on the characteristics and needs of Eastham residents who are age 50 and older, considering their needs and preferences both now and in the future. While the primary goal of this report is to support planning on the part of the COA, a secondary goal is to present information that will be useful to other Eastham offices and organizations interacting with older residents.

## The Eastham Council on Aging and Senior Center

In Massachusetts, Councils on Aging (COAs) are municipally appointed agencies meant to link older residents to needed resources. Virtually every city and town in Massachusetts has a COA, and in most communities, they serve as the only public social service agency. Each COA is expected to establish its own priorities based on local needs and resources. Many COAs are responsible for operating a senior center, a community facility housing senior services and programs, along with the staff and volunteers offering them. The Eastham Council on Aging is tasked with providing information and some direct services to Eastham residents aged 60 and older. The Eastham Council on Aging aims to "promote the well-being and independence of adults (age) 59 and older."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.eastham-ma.gov/542/Council-on-Aging>

In general, when considering the mission of Councils on Aging, observers commonly think of two sets of responsibilities. First, COAs promote well-being among older residents by offering activities that appeal specifically to older adults and that promote personal growth and social engagement. Exercise classes, late-life learning programs, and informational programs are good examples. Second, COAs provide services to older residents and their families that promote physical and emotional wellness. Blood pressure clinics and transportation services are common examples of such services. Many observers are not aware of two additional important responsibilities of COAs. COA staff members link older residents in the community to existing programs for which they may be eligible by providing needed information and referring residents to appropriate programs and services. For example, staff may help residents apply for income support programs or health insurance made available through the state or federal government. Finally, COAs provide leadership within the community around issues faced by older adults, by serving on municipal boards, interacting with other municipal offices, and serving as resources to residents and organizations.

The COA plays an important leadership role in the community, serving as a resource to other Town offices and organizations working in the community, and collaborating on initiatives broadly beneficial to residents. COA services and programs are funded by municipal appropriation, grant support from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and other sources, gifts and donations, and nominal fees charged for some activities.



The Eastham Council on Aging (ECO) is comprised of a Town-appointed group of residents that make up the ECOA Board of Directors. They advise the Eastham Senior Center as they provide multi-purpose programs, transportation, and outreach to the community. Located just a few miles from the coastal beaches of Cape Cod, the Senior Center offers an array of services, resources, and programs; these are offered for free or at low cost to community members who are age 60 and older. Staff at the COA also refer eligible residents to services and programs available through other offices and organizations.

The Eastham Senior Center operates Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Its eetedtrtrteree eeeeeegte f6464t includes a full-time Director and a full-time Outreach



Coordinator (who is a licensed nurse), a Program Coordinator, Program Aide, and one full-time Administrative Assistant. There are a limited number of on-call medical transportation drivers. The COA is grateful for the collaborative support it receives from other Town agencies, community partners, and many volunteers.

In addition to dedicated staff, and the COA Board, the Senior Center is supported by the Friends of the Eastham Council on Aging (FECO), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, run by dedicated volunteers. The Senior Center is a better place because of the “Friends” volunteerism and generosity; it is the primary financial support for most programs, as requested by the COA Director and Board of Directors. The Friends group helps cover increased transportation costs and funds the content-rich printed version of the COA newsletter which is mailed to all town residents age 59 and over. The FECO’s primary sources of revenue come from operating the all-volunteer Thrift Shop on Massasoit Road and donations.

With a strong foundation of talented staff and volunteers, the COA has consistently responded to the needs of the community. In 2021, despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, many successful initiatives were prioritized and completed to promote the wellbeing of residents. During the Senior Center’s temporary closure, the COA recognized an opportunity to update the interior and outdoor spaces of the building. “Operation Refresh” was made possible through donated materials, services and time provided by COA staff, The Friends group, and many volunteers. Efforts included brightly painted walls, fresh artwork, updated furnishings, and new window treatments. Outside, landscaping and restoration of the deck created welcoming outdoor space for exercise programs, social programs, and cookouts. With well over 2,000 volunteer hours contributed, the Senior Center building, deck, and grounds were transformed. Additional 2021 highlights include:

- 8,000 interactions (remote/in-person) were conducted with seniors and/or their family members, through programs, events, services, and referrals
- 750 ambulatory/non-ambulatory seniors received Covid-19 vaccinations and boosters
- Approximately 4,500 nutritious, home-cooked meals were delivered to socially isolated and homebound seniors
- 2,000 bags of groceries were delivered to seniors via the Healthy Meals in Motion Mobile Food Pantry service, Brown Bag Pantry grocery program
- Close to 1,000 round-trip rides were provided to medical appointments, hospitals, grocery, and drug stores
- Supports including tax assistance (federal, state and property), elder legal counsel, food insecurity/entitlement programs, and insurance counseling produced \$500,000 in savings for older adults.

During 2022, many new programs were introduced to encourage seniors of all generations to participate at Eastham’s Senior Center. Approximately 1,400 individuals were served on over 21,000 separate occasions. Increased use of the Senior Center has been driven by the desire for socialization and ‘aging strong’ (remaining engaged, alert, healthy and active). Transportation services continue to be highly valued and accessed by many residents. During 2022, the Senior Center provided approximately 1,200 rides to almost 150 different individuals. Additional programs and services offered through the Eastham Senior Center are highlighted below:

<b>SERVICES</b>	<b>PROGRAMS</b>
<p><b>Health, Safety, and Nutrition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach home and office visits</li> <li>• Case Management and referrals</li> <li>• Life Alert/File of Life Assistance</li> <li>• Durable Medical Equipment Loans</li> <li>• Entitlement Program Application Support</li> <li>• Mental Health Support &amp; Wellness Programs</li> <li>• Flu/Covid-19 Vaccine Appointment</li> <li>• Onsite Food Pantry/Food</li> </ul> <p><b>Legal, financial, and healthcare counseling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel Assistance, SNAP, SSI &amp; Tax Abatements)</li> <li>• Health Insurance Counseling (SHINE)</li> <li>• Income Tax Assistance</li> </ul> <p><b>Support Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caregiver Support</li> <li>• Technology Support</li> <li>• Veterans Services Support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wellness, Nutrition, Fitness, Arts, Music, Lifelong Learning and Social Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art/Craft Classes</li> <li>• Cultural/Education Programs</li> <li>• Foreign Language Classes</li> <li>• Mobile Library/Media Delivery</li> <li>• Evidence Based Programs/VNA Fit &amp; Strong</li> <li>• Fitness Classes</li> <li>• Health and Wellness Education Series</li> <li>• Cooking Club</li> <li>• Nutrition/Meal Programs</li> <li>• Holiday Meals/Food Delivery and Luncheons</li> <li>• Local Trips/Excursions</li> <li>• Intergenerational Music Programs</li> <li>• Men’s/Women’s Social Groups</li> <li>• Night Out Programs</li> <li>• Recreation/Social Programs</li> <li>• Computer Center: Tablet Loan Program/Technology Classes</li> </ul>

## Methods

Methods used in compiling this report include analysis of existing data. Demographic material used in this report was drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau (the decennial censuses and the American Community Survey), from projections generated by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, and from the Healthy Aging Data Report for Eastham (Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative, n.d.). Additional information about the Eastham COA was retrieved from material drawn from the COA's 2021 Annual Report as well as original data collected for this study.

## Demographic Profile

As an initial step toward understanding characteristics of the Town of Eastham's older population through quantitative data, we generated a demographic profile of the Town using data from the decennial U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS)—a large, annual survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. For purposes of this assessment, we primarily used information drawn from the most current 5-year ACS files (2017-2021), along with U.S. Census data for the Town of Eastham to summarize demographic characteristics including growth of the older population, shifts in the age distribution, gender, race and education distributions, householder status, living arrangements, household income, and disability status.

## Key Informant Interviews

In the Fall of 2021, we conducted interviews with eight individuals who currently hold leadership positions in Eastham. We spoke with the Town Administrator, the Police Chief, the Fire Department's Community Outreach Coordinator, the Chair of the Council on Aging, the Chair of the Select Board, a planner from the Community Development Department, and the President of the Friends of the Eastham COA. Interviews focused on the interviewees' perceptions relating to unmet needs of older adults in the community, and how the growing size of the older population is impacting Eastham and the work that the key informants do. All interviews were conducted remotely via telephone or video conference. Interviews ranged from 35-90 minutes.

## Focus Groups

During the Fall of 2022, we conducted four focus groups with residents and stakeholders who were recruited by the Director of the COA, with input from the COA board of directors. Two groups of residents were convened. One group was comprised of residents who consider themselves seasonal residents of Eastham (n=8) and was conducted via video conference technology (e.g., ZOOM). A second group of residents who live in Eastham fulltime (n=10) were convened in person at the Eastham Public Library. A third focus group was made up of municipal staff who have regular interactions with Eastham residents (n=6);

this conversation was facilitated at the Eastham Public Library as well. The fourth focus group, convened at the Eastham Public Library, included representatives from local organizations, all of whom have regular interactions with Eastham older adult residents (n=9). Participants in this focus group included three current volunteers at the Senior Center, a real estate agent, and representatives from the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA), Food Pantry, Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands (ESCCI), the lower Cape Outreach Council, the Community Development Partnership, and the Housing Rehab Program.

## Community Survey

In collaboration with the COA Board members, a community survey was developed for this study and mailed to all residents aged 50 and over (N=3,484). A mailing list was obtained from the Eastham Town Clerk, based on the most current municipal census. Postcards were mailed to participants alerting them that they would be receiving a survey in the coming weeks. Subsequently, printed surveys were mailed to Eastham residents meeting the age requirement, along with a postage-paid return envelope. As well, the survey was made available via the Town's website and was distributed to an email list of 1,514 seasonal residents of Eastham. A total of 1,563 responses to the survey were obtained, representing a strong return rate of 33% (see **Table 2**). Twenty-one percent (n=323) were returned online, and the rest of the responses were returned by mail.

## Data Analysis

Data collected for the resident survey were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, including frequencies and cross-tabulations, and are reported in full in tables contained in **Appendix A** and throughout the results section of this report. Some responses elicited through open-ended questions were extracted and cited verbatim within this report (e.g., "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Eastham?"). Notes taken during the study's qualitative components (e.g., focus groups, key informant interviews) were reviewed by project staff and used to characterize and categorize salient ways in which aging issues are impacting older adults and individuals who work with older adults in Eastham. We used information from all sources of data to develop recommendations reported in the final section of this report.

## Results

### Demographic Profile of Eastham

#### Age Structure and Population Growth

According to American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, there were about 5,674 residents living in the Town of Eastham in 2021. About 65% of the population (3,657 individuals) were age 50 and older (See **Table 1**). Residents who were age 50 to 59 (888 individuals) made up 16% of the population; residents age 60 to 79 (2,208 individuals) comprised around 39%, and another 561 residents (10%) were age 80 and older.

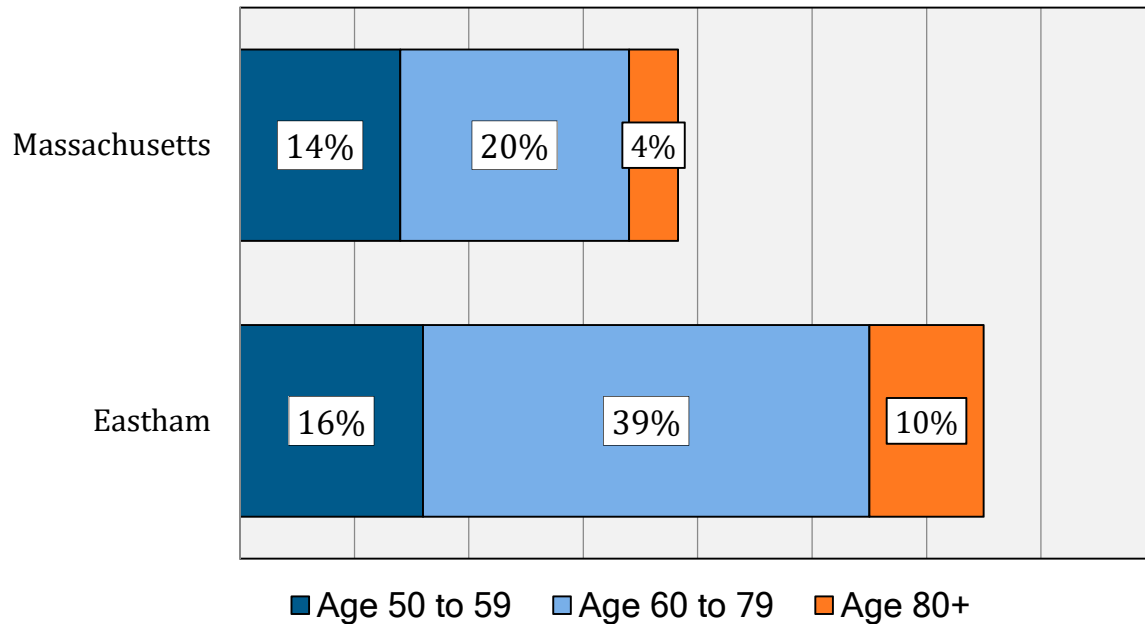
**Table 1.** Number and percentage distribution of Eastham’s population by age category, 2021

Age Category	Number	Percentage
Under age 18	815	14%
Age 18 to 49	1,202	21%
Age 50 to 59	888	16%
Age 60 to 79	2,208	39%
Age 80 and older	561	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,674</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B01001. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.*

The share of Eastham’s population age 50 and older is significantly larger than the overall state of Massachusetts (**Figure 1**). About 38% of the Massachusetts population was in the 50+ age group in 2021, compared to 65% of the Eastham population. The share of Eastham residents age 60 and over is more than double that of the state of Massachusetts as a whole and the share of Eastham residents age 80 and over is close to three times the estimated amount for the whole state. In 2021, Massachusetts residents age 60 and over comprised about 24% of the population, including 4% age 80 and over. In Eastham, about 49% of the population was age 60 or older, including 10% who were 80 years or older.

**Figure 1. Age distribution in Eastham and Massachusetts**



*Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B01001. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates*

Population growth in the Town of Eastham has been concentrated in older age groups. Between 2010 and 2021, the population of all ages increased by 14% in Eastham (ACS, 2017-2021, Table B01001; US Census, Tables P012 and P12). In Eastham, the absolute numbers of residents age 60 and over also grew substantially during this time period from 2,169 in 2010 to an estimated 2,769 in 2021. The segment of Eastham's population age 60 to 79 increased in size by 31%. The population of residents who are age 80 and older increased by 15% in Eastham.

### Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Eastham's Older Population

Eastham is less diverse than the state with respect to race. For all ages combined, about 90% of Eastham residents report their race as White non-Hispanic, compared to 71% in Massachusetts (ACS, 2017-2021, Table B01001). The remaining percentage of the population age 65 and older reported 2 or more races (4%), Asian race/ethnicity (3%), 3% report Black race/ethnicity, and <1% Hispanic or Latino race/ethnicity. Among older adults, Eastham is less diverse. The majority of older residents (95%) report White race and ethnicity.

Additionally, almost 7% of older Eastham residents speak a language other than English at home (ACS, 2017-2021, Table B16004). Those who speak another language other than

English at home most commonly speak an Indo-European language (6%) and just 1% report speaking Spanish at home.

American Community Survey estimates on education suggest that Eastham residents are well educated on average. About 57% of persons 65 and older have either a bachelor's degree (27%) or a graduate/professional (30%); *ACS, 2017-2021, Table B15001*). This educational profile contributes to the vitality and character of the community, which depends on older adults who value opportunities to be involved through volunteer and civic engagement activities, as well as late-life learning opportunities— activities that are often present in highly educated communities (Fitzgerald & Caro, 2014).

Similar to older adults living in communities throughout the U.S., a large proportion of Eastham residents aged 65 and over remain in the workforce. More than 31% of adults age 64 to 74 are participating in the labor force. Of those age 75 and older, nearly 6% remain in the workforce (*ACS, 2017–2021, Table S2301*).

Nearly 15% of residents age 65 and older report veteran status (*ACS, 2017–2021, Table B21001*). As a result, many of the Town's older residents may be eligible to receive some benefits and program services based on their military service or that of their spouses.

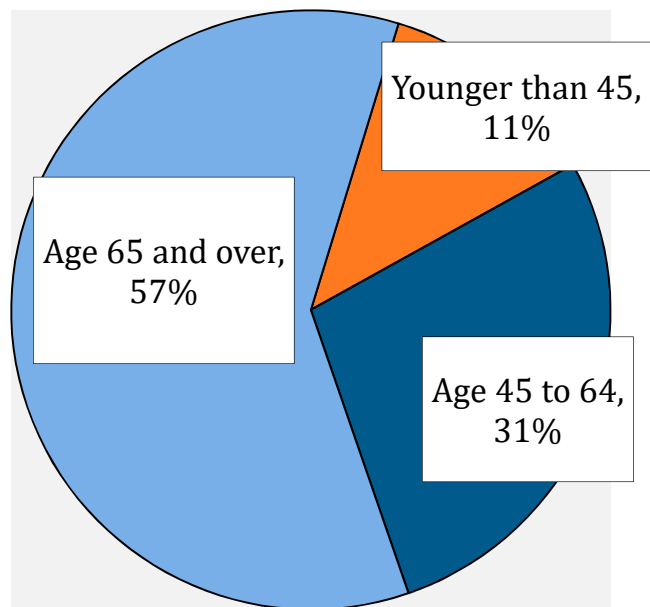
## Living arrangements and housing costs of Eastham's Older Population

A majority of Eastham's 2,525 households have householders who are middle-aged or older. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a "householder" is the person reported as the head of household, typically the person in whose name the home is owned or rented. Most residents age 45 and older are householders, in fact, about of 88% of all households in Eastham are headed by someone age 45 or older, including 57% of those who are age 65 and over (**Figure 2.**)

Most Eastham residents live in homes that they own or are purchasing (93%; **Figure 3**). Nearly 96% of residents age 45 to 64 own their homes, and 95% of householders 65 and older own

their homes. A sizeable share of Eastham residents who are 65 and older and live alone, also own their home (90%). The much higher number of older homeowners has implications for what amenities and services are likely to be needed and valued by members of the community. Home maintenance and supports are often necessary for older homeowners—especially those who live alone—in order to maintain comfort and safety in their homes.

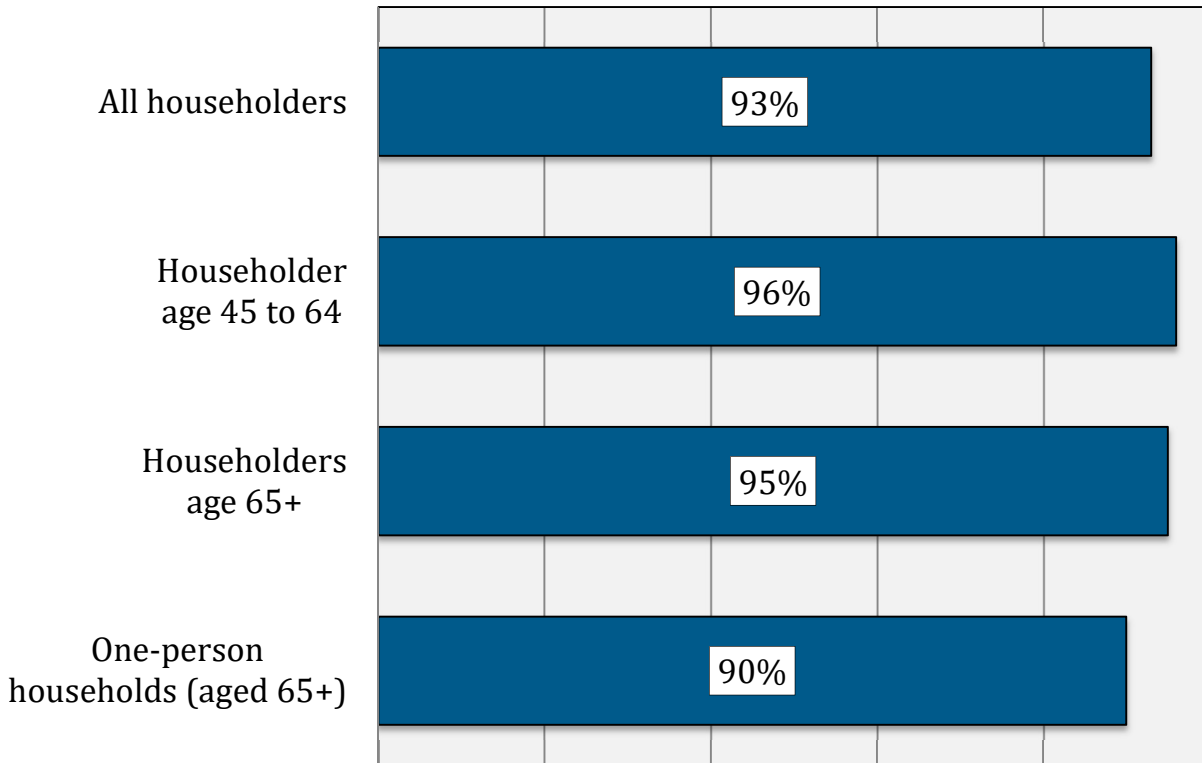
**Figure 2.** Age structure of Eastham householders



*Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B25007. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.*



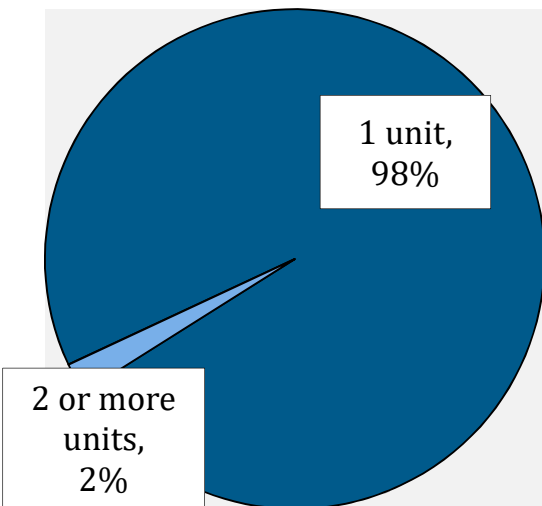
**Figure 3. Percent of Eastham householders who are homeowners by age category**



*Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Tables B25007 and B25011. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.*

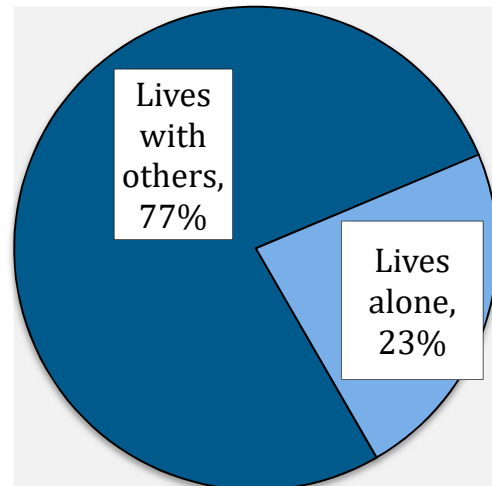
Additionally, 73% of Eastham’s 2,525 households have at least one individual who is age 60 or older (ACS 2017-2021, Table B11006). This high proportion— which is likely to increase in the future— generally reflects the widespread demand for programs, services, and other considerations that address aging-related concerns, including health and caregiving needs, transportation options, and safe home environments.

**Figure 4.** Number of units in Eastham housing structures



Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B25024. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

**Figure 5.** Living arrangements of Eastham residents, age 65 and older



Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B09020. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Among the 6,360 housing structures in Eastham (**Figure 4**), 98% are single unit structures and the remaining 2% are housing structures that contain 2-4 housing units, which include apartment complexes.

A large proportion of Eastham residents who are age 65 and older (23%) live alone in their household whereas 77% live in households that include other people, such as a spouse, parents, children, or grandchildren (**Figure 5**). Additionally, no older Eastham residents live within group quarters.

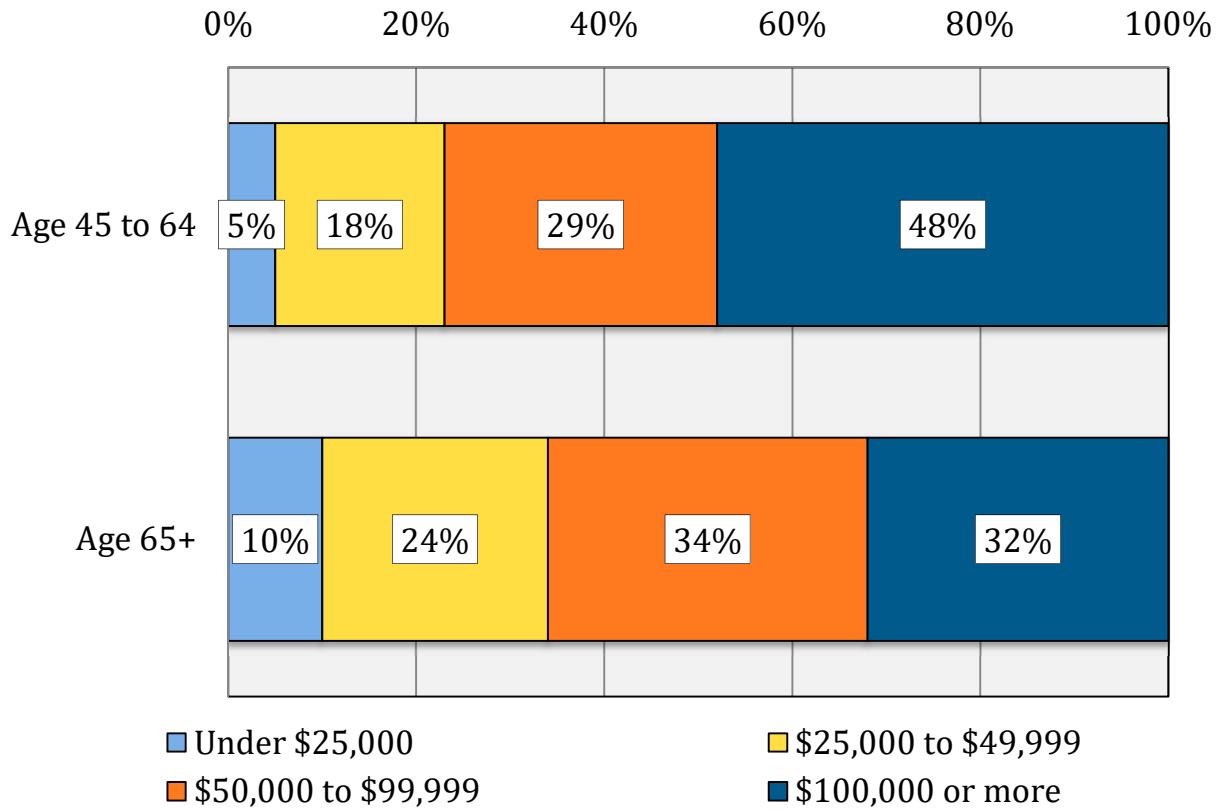
With respect to household income, there is some comparative disadvantage of some older residents in Eastham. Eastham residents' median household income is lower than the one estimated for Massachusetts as a whole, \$76,859 compared to \$89,026 (ACS, 2017-2021, Table B19049 and B19215). Among Eastham's householders those aged 45-64 have the highest median income at \$96,458—which is also less than the statewide median for this age group (\$109,641). Among householders 65 and older, the median income is \$67,522, higher than the statewide median for this age group (\$56,483), but lower than the median income of younger Eastham householders. Older residents living alone are at the greatest disadvantage in terms of household income. Older men living alone have considerable higher median income (\$51,875) than women (\$30,114). Given that close to 23% of residents age

65 and older live alone in Eastham, these figures suggest that a sizeable number of residents are at risk of economic insecurity.

The economic profile of older Eastham residents relative to younger residents is further illustrated in **Figure 6**, which shows that the older adult population lives on a modest income. It is estimated that 32% of Eastham residents age 65 and older report incomes of \$100,000 or more. By comparison, 48% of households headed by younger residents report this level of income. Nevertheless, a share of households headed by someone age 65 and older (10%) report annual incomes under \$25,000. This compares with 5% of households headed by individuals age 45 to 64 having incomes under \$25,000. Thus, there is a sizeable segment of Eastham's older population that is at risk of financial insecurity or economic disadvantage.

As well, costs associated with housing make up a significant share of monthly costs for older householders. Estimates indicate that 20% of householders spend 35% of their monthly household income on housing costs (*ACS 2017-2021, Table B25093*).

**Figure 6.** Household income distribution in Eastham by age of householder (in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars)

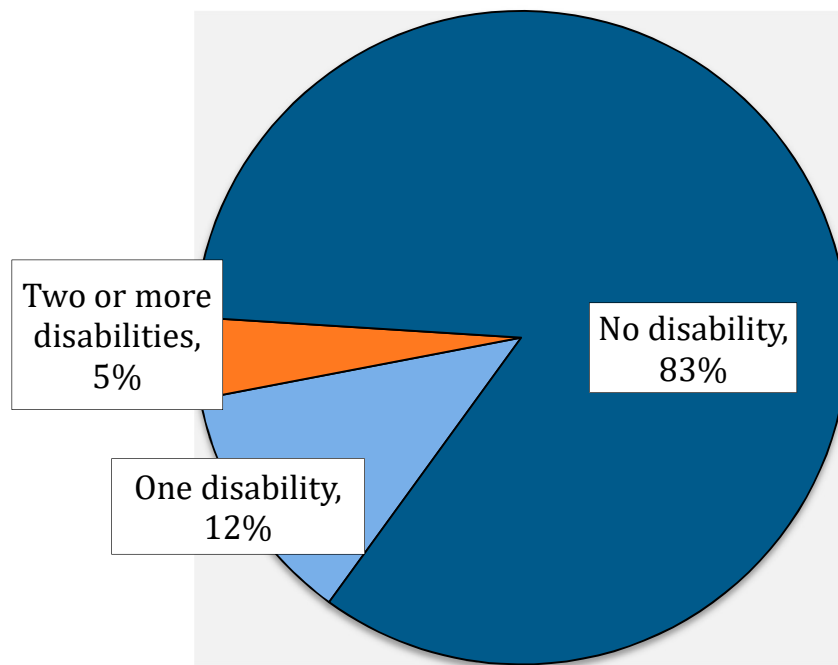


Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B19037. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates.

Note: Includes only community households, not group quarters such as nursing homes.

The increased likelihood of acquiring a disability with age is evident in data from the ACS. 17% of Eastham residents age 65 and older experience some level of disability that could impact their ability to function independently in the community. About 12% of Eastham's residents age 65 and older have one disability, and nearly 5% report two or more disabilities (Figure 7). Among the different types of disability that are assessed in ACS, the most commonly cited by older Eastham residents 65 and older were vision (8%) AND hearing (7%) difficulties followed by independent living difficulty (5%) (ACS 2017-2021, Table S1810). Other disabilities experienced by older Eastham residents include cognitive difficulty (3%), ambulatory difficulties (3%).

**Figure 7.** Percentage of Eastham residents age 65+ reporting at least one disability



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table C18108.

## Results from Key Informant Interviews

Seven key informant interviews were conducted during the summer and fall of 2022. Community leaders shared their insights related to Eastham's growing population of older adults; the Town's unique features and resources; unmet, as well as foreseeable community needs; and potential solutions that promote aging in place and wellness among Eastham's residents.

During the key informant interview process, several characterizing themes and associated challenges were acknowledged. As well, several key planning developments were cited as actions being taken to address current needs of the Town. As coordinated planning efforts gain momentum, it is clear that leaders are striving to build opportunities that honor Eastham's cultural heritage and natural resources while recognizing Eastham's unique features which include: the large and growing demographic of older adults; seasonal population fluctuations; a remote location which limits access to community resources; and rural infrastructure, which limits opportunities for commercial and residential development. The community impact of these features was woven among the key informant conversations summarized below.

### **The Council on Aging Needs More Space & Capacity**

Eastham's Council on Aging (COA) staff collaborate with other Town departments to provide a valuable range of programs and services to the community including health supports, food distribution services, transportation, and social engagement opportunities. In addition to the COA, programming is provided by the library, and the Recreation department is building accessible features in parks and at the beaches to increase engagement opportunities. There was recognition among interviewees that the physical space available at the COA is limited by size and features to draw and accommodate larger levels of participation.

There is also a need to reinstate an Adult Day Health program for the community. Prior to the pandemic, an Adult Day Health program provided services to 25 participants and respite opportunities for caregivers. The T-Time project<sup>24</sup>, a component of the North Eastham Master Plan, is exploring opportunities for the development of a Community Center that would physically bring together departments and residents while expanding programming and services. The opportunity to host larger on-site programming would also provide a bridge for residents to learn more about the COA's supportive role within an intergenerational environment.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.easthamtime.org/>

## **Community-Based Supports & Transportation will Support Residents' Goals of Independence**

A significant challenge related to aging in Eastham is the lack of access to health and community resources. Supportive services are expensive and limited due to staffing shortages. Nauset Neighbors is a valued volunteer-based resource, but the organization is experiencing demands that exceed the availability of volunteers, in part due to the pandemic. Eastham's remote location and seasonal nature further challenge access to resources. Key informants expressed the need for expanded transportation resources beyond the medical rides and van services provided by the COA. Increasing opportunities for on-demand services and flexible scheduling would facilitate access to transportation for needs such as running errands and social activities. The COA experiences increased demand—and urgency—for services during the summer, when family members reunite after colder seasons spent apart. Many express concern about health status changes experienced by their older family member. Finding care can be difficult for individuals who are not connected to the local network of service providers.

During the pandemic, there was an increase in older adults moving to Eastham full time and individuals purchasing second homes, prompting concerns exacerbating existing challenges. Particularly, that challenges experienced during the summer have potential to become more prominent year-round in the future. Currently, there are insufficient medical resources, wastewater capacity, and housing infrastructure to support the population; increasing pressure on existing resources is a troubling concern. The Cape Cod Commission's 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners survey<sup>125</sup>, conducted in 2021 to inform estimates of population growth on Cape Cod, echoes concerns related to the impact of growth on increasingly exhausted community resources.

The COA, Police, and Fire Departments work closely to build programs and resources that address community needs. Efforts to fill gaps by creating regional health sites are also underway and recognition that raising awareness of these programs and continuing to create new avenues for residents to be supported are needed. Programs and initiatives are highlighted below:

- A community paramedicine project is under development. Town leaders are exploring opportunities to increase local community health supports while reducing unnecessary medical transport to the hospital. The concept pairs a paramedic with a social worker for dispatch, assessment triage, short term case management, and referral for additional services.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/second-homeowner-survey/>

- Dementia training is conducted among police and fire staff. Emergency response tools including GPS tracking, SafetyNet system, and a scent device are available to support the safety of individuals with dementia.
- Outer Cape Community Solutions is working with Outer Cape Health Services to increase partnerships where towns are experiencing similar public health challenges. Through the Community Resource Navigator program, a social worker is available in Eastham for residents and Town staff seeking counseling resources.

### **Housing is Fragile for Many and Creative Solutions are Needed**

Key informant interviewees emphasized that Eastham’s housing inventory is not diverse and there are limited options for downsizing and aging in place. Housing stock is primarily single-family homes and there are no assisted living or skilled nursing facilities in town. Eastham’s rental inventory is extremely limited. According to the 2019 Housing Production Plan update, 200 rental units were lost during the ten years prior to 2019 due to conversions to 2<sup>nd</sup> homes. An increase in short-term activity (e.g., Airbnb) has also contributed to reduced availability of long-term home rentals. There is a need for a variety of housing options as well as affordable home maintenance and modification services to support the residents seeking accessible and suitable housing in the coming years.

Key informants shared that there are affordability concerns among a number of longtime residents. Home valuations have increased significantly in recent years with accompanying tax burdens for residents living with fixed income. There is also a dire need for housing to accommodate employees that are priced out of the expensive housing market.

Several planning initiatives and funding opportunities are being allocated by the Town to create housing solutions and tax relief in Eastham. These include: approved zoning changes related to reduced lots sizes and motel conversions, which facilitate the development of year-round housing; and funding to support the production of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by offsetting architectural and construction costs. Other programs include home modification support and emergency repairs provided by the Newcomers Club and the HELP (Housing Emergency Loan Repair Program) administered via the Community Development Partnership Housing Rehab program which offers a revolving loan program and zero interest. Property tax exemptions are available for seniors, veterans, and individuals with a disability.

### **Social engagement and Inclusion Are Crucial to Aging Well in Eastham**

Eastham’s remote location, with few gathering spaces, and a population with many individuals living alone prompt consideration of risks associated with isolation and the need to create opportunities for interaction and engagement in activities. Key informants shared



the challenge of identifying isolated individuals and ensuring that people are aware of supportive resources during times of need. During emergencies and weather events, the hardships of isolated and vulnerable residents become more visible and magnify the need for resources.

The Police department offers a Reassurance program for residents who live alone to ensure their safety and well-being. A dedicated phone line is monitored daily for calls from registered residents and alerts police dispatch to conduct a home visit. Additional Police department planning processes are underway to support the development of resources, training exercises, and collaboration beyond Police and Fire so that other departments' staff are informed and engaged during times of need. Recognizing the benefit of comprehensive shared case management, an addition to next fiscal year's budget reflects the goal of increased coordination of case management and additional staff.

The risk associated with extreme weather events also prompts evacuation planning in Eastham, particularly for older adults who may no longer drive or do not have a place to go during an emergency. The COA and Police department work together to ensure that vulnerable residents are contacted proactively before and after storms. Resources, including transportation to warming and charging centers, are available during emergency events.

### **Communicating about Available Resources & Programs is an Ongoing Effort**

The Town communicates with residents through the COA's email database and newsletter, Town website, telephone broadcast messages (e.g., robo-calls) and social media. The Police department also maintains an email database and leverages the reverse 911 and Code Red systems during emergencies. Despite these efforts, there is a need to build awareness of community resources and identify residents who aren't connected to existing communication channels due to technology barriers. Increased technology training support, potentially through a partnership with the schools, and an annual community resources fair were suggested as solutions to connecting residents with information about available resources.

Eastham's rural infrastructure contributes to challenges associated with the level of local residential and commercial development. Town staff are trying to accommodate growth in ways that channel and direct planning activities in an appropriate manner that is aligned with the preferences and needs of the community. There are growing pains because the Town can only accommodate so much growth due to infrastructure and environmental concerns.

## **Results from Focus Groups**

A total of 33 people participated in one of four focus groups that were conducted in support of this project. Representatives from Town departments, community organizations, and residents of a variety of ages participated in group conversations that lasted between 60-90 minutes. Three of the focus groups were conducted in-person at the Eastham Public Library and one focus group with seasonal residents was conducted via video conference (e.g., Zoom). A note taker was present at each focus group. Themes were derived from these notes and are reported below. Themes from focus group discussions echo the sentiments expressed by key informant interviews.

### **Strengths of Living in Eastham**

Nearly all residents who participated in a focus group had a long history of living, even if only during summer, in Eastham with deep family ties to the area of Cape Cod. It was a common story that participants continue to live large portions of the year in Eastham while spending some time in other communities near Boston or retreating to warmer weather; while others made a permanent move to Eastham to spend their retirement years. Perks of living in Eastham, without a doubt, include the beautiful natural landscape, beaches, and opportunities for walking and biking outside. It was also noted that the Public Library, local businesses, and volunteer opportunities are amenities that cultivate a social fabric that makes Eastham feel like home. As well, the opportunity to live in a place that is both quiet and serene in the off-season and more bustling during the summer months creates a sense of “having the best of both worlds”.

Finally, it was apparent that Town Departments, particularly those directly interfacing with residents (e.g., police, fire, COA, housing) are working together to address the communities’ needs with the resources available to them. As well, a network of nonprofit organizations including Nauset Neighbors, the food pantry, The Family Pantry of Cape Cod, Lower Cape Outreach Council, Elder Services of Cape Cod & Islands (meals on wheels), Homeless Prevention Council, and Housing Assistance Corporation, Habitat for Humanity, and others are active and thriving through their engagement of volunteers. Given the small size of the community in Eastham, and the unique region of Cape Cod, it is clear that residents are interested and engaged in creating an optimal community for all.

### **Challenges to Living in Eastham**

#### ***Costs of Living***

The “Cape tax” that many residents mentioned refers to the prices of things like groceries and gas being higher than they are on mainland Massachusetts. Coupled with the nationwide rise in prices, the high cost of necessities is squeezing residents of Eastham, particularly those living on fixed incomes (e.g., retirement) and those who are living alone (e.g., only one

income source). Consequences of this growing difficulty include an increased demand from older residents on social services provided by the Eastham COA and other organizations. As well, some residents forgoing seemingly unnecessary things like cable programming, going to dinner with friends, making small home repairs or modifications, and limiting the amount of travel to visit family and friends. It was also noted that in extreme cases it can mean going without healthy or adequate food, rationing prescription drugs or not being able to afford heating their home. Regardless, it was clear from the focus group conversations that due to increased costs of living, the quality of life for older Eastham residents is threatened and risk of crisis is also increased.

Many of the participating Town officials and resident volunteers also commented that continued municipal costs are expected: things like road and water infrastructure improvements are needed and surrounding ecosystems will require additional protection and maintenance as the climate changes.

### *Implications of the Housing Crisis*

Another example of a nationwide challenge that is exacerbated for those living on Cape Cod, including Eastham, is the lack of housing. This is a multipronged problem. First, the rising costs of property taxes is pushing older residents out of the community and forcing them to give up a lifestyle they have known for most of their life. Secondly, the lack of affordable housing is contributing significantly to the labor force shortage on the Cape. This is worsened by the fact that many rental properties are being sold and those renters are being evicted into an environment in which it is nearly impossible to find anything comparable. One focus group participant told the story of an older person who was evicted from their apartment and forced to rent a room in a boarding house. The challenges of securing safe, stable, and affordable housing are severe and have rippling effects in the community.

Subsequently, ramifications from lack of housing on the labor force are felt by older residents who are seeking in-home care or help with home maintenance and repair. There are simply not enough workers to provide essential services that support older adults living independently. Finally, a lack of appropriate downsizing options forces many older residents to choose between remaining in the area, facing substantial limitations challenges in staying and maintaining a home that is too big or no longer accessible or relocating elsewhere and dealing with the disruption to their social and health networks. It was noted by focus group participants that assisted living residences only exist elsewhere on the Cape and is cost prohibitive for many.

### ***Access to Healthcare is a Concern for Being Able to Age in Eastham***

The nearest emergency room is about 25 miles from Eastham, making reliance on local ambulance and emergency responders integral to the wellbeing of those aging in Eastham. Moreover, focus group participants cited a shortage of primary care physicians, making wait times very long between appointments. As a result, many residents travel back to the mainland to see doctors as needed. There was enthusiasm about a new urgent care clinic that had opened in a neighboring community; but that excitement was tempered by the fact the facility is only open seasonally, leaving residents particularly vulnerable to the healthcare shortage during most of the year. As well, the lack of pharmacy delivery services in the area was a future concern for some participants who are worried about what will happen when they can no longer drive or choose not to drive in the dark or during poor weather.

### ***Transportation Options are Limited***

In all focus groups, the notion that without a vehicle, living in Eastham is quite restricted. It was noted that though CCRTA passes through Eastham, the designated stops can be difficult to access and the set routes are not always convenient to chosen destinations. Residents do have access to the transportation offered by the Eastham COA, known as the Eastham COACh, which takes members to local grocery stores, pharmacy, and other local destinations, though advanced reservations are required and spots are limited. It was noted that transportation is challenging to schedule in the area and having to call far in advance to make arrangements is a deterrent to use available options. Additionally, the costs of trips can limit how frequently residents use the service. The lack of a local taxi service is a barrier for people getting to where they want and need to go. It was observed that much available transportation uses volunteer drivers, but some situations are not well suited for volunteers, such as when a rider needs help getting in and out of a vehicle. The lack of transportation options and barriers to existing resources were noted obstacles to participating in the community. Especially for those who do not drive or do not drive at night, transportation limitations make it difficult to engage with COA programs and services and to take part in civic events, such as Town Meeting.

### ***Increasing Demand for and Complexity of Services and Programs offered by the Eastham COA***

The combination of the workforce shortage, being geographically far from family members, economic insecurity, and the housing crisis—has created a fragile existence for older residents of Eastham. As such, many older residents of Eastham are turning to local resources to seek information and assistance with navigating the aging process and the changes it entails. This has created a significant increase in the demand for services and programs offered by the Eastham COA and other local nonprofit organizations. The small

staff of the Eastham COA is providing information and referral services, case management, and providing direct services to a high volume of residents, each with their own unique set of circumstances and needs. Adding to this load is the complexity of mental and physical health conditions and the limited supply of supports available. In other words, many hours can be spent on helping an individual meet some of their needs. Additional social work and human service supports are needed.

While the Eastham COA is highly valued for its services and programs, there were observations drawn by focus group participants that increasing the diversity of programming could draw in new participants to the Center and engage a wider swath of the community. Focus group participants generated ideas related to local trips and outings, film or performance art presentations, lifelong learning courses, and opportunities for informal social interaction among residents. Of course, limits to physical space and staffing to provide these programs prevent progress towards this goal.

## Results from the Community Survey

In this section we report key findings from each section of the survey. Tables illustrating results in detail are included in **Appendix A**.

Respondents to the community survey included 1,563 individuals age 50 and older, representing a response rate of 33% (see **Table 2**). This is a strong return rate and reflects interest among community residents. Compared to the age distribution of Eastham as a whole, we heard from more residents in their 50s and 60s and from fewer residents over age 70<sup>26</sup>. To facilitate comparison of younger and older segments of the population with respect to needs and interests, we often present results grouped into four age groups; age group 50-59, age group 60-69, age 70-79, and age 80 or older.

**Table 2. Community Survey Respondents**

	Number of Responses	Age Distribution of Responses
<b>Age 50-59</b>	606*	40%
<b>Age 60-69</b>	611	40%
<b>Age 70-79</b>	256	17%
<b>Age 80+</b>	54	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,527**</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*5 respondents reported ages under 50 and were included in this group.

\*\*36 respondents did not report their age

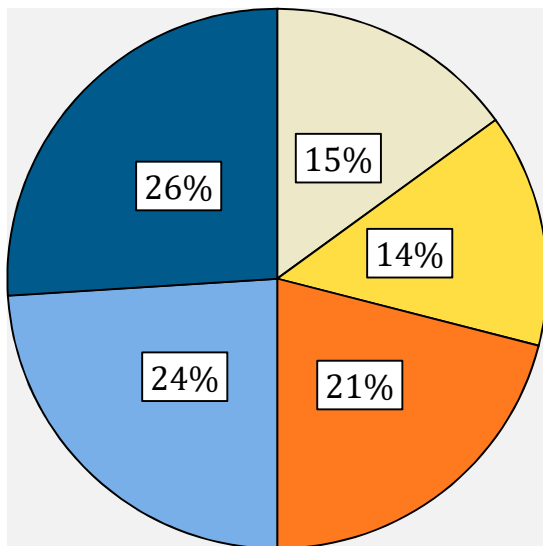
<sup>26</sup> Among residents age 50+ in Eastham, 24% are age 50-59, 28% are 60-69, 32% are 70-79, and 15% are age 80+ (Source: American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table B01001. Numbers are calculated from 5-year survey estimates).

## Community and Neighborhood

A commonly expressed goal of older adults is to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible. Aging in place implies remaining in familiar home and community settings, with supports as needed, as opposed to moving to institutional settings, such as nursing homes (Salomon, 2010). By aging in place, older adults can retain their independence, as well as maintain valued social relationships and engagement with the community. In turn, aging in place may promote wellness by supporting physical activities that reduce risk of chronic disease and by accommodating disabling conditions.

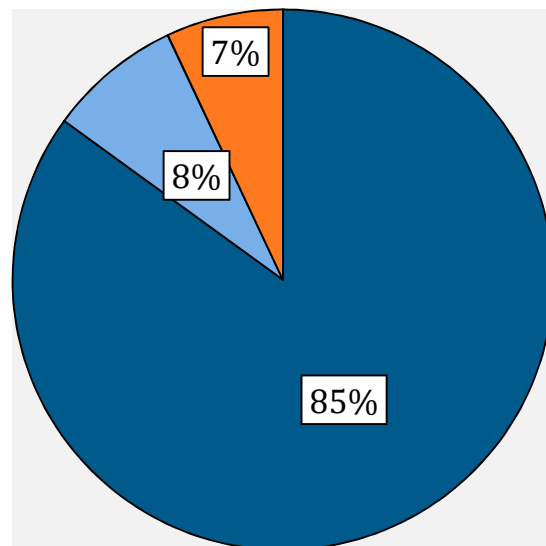
Survey respondents included residents who have lived in Eastham for many years, as well as relative newcomers. Duration of residing in Eastham varies from 29% of respondents who have been in Town less than 10 years compared to 26% who have lived in Eastham for more than 30 years (see **Figure 8**). These individuals offer insight based on their years of experience of living in Eastham. It is also helpful, however, to hear from those who are new to Eastham. Interestingly, 27% of survey respondents age 50-59 have been in Eastham for less than 10 years.

**Figure 8.** How long have you lived in Eastham you lived in Eastham?



- < 5 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-19 years
- 20-29 years
- 30 years or more

**Figure 9.** Seasonal residency of survey respondents

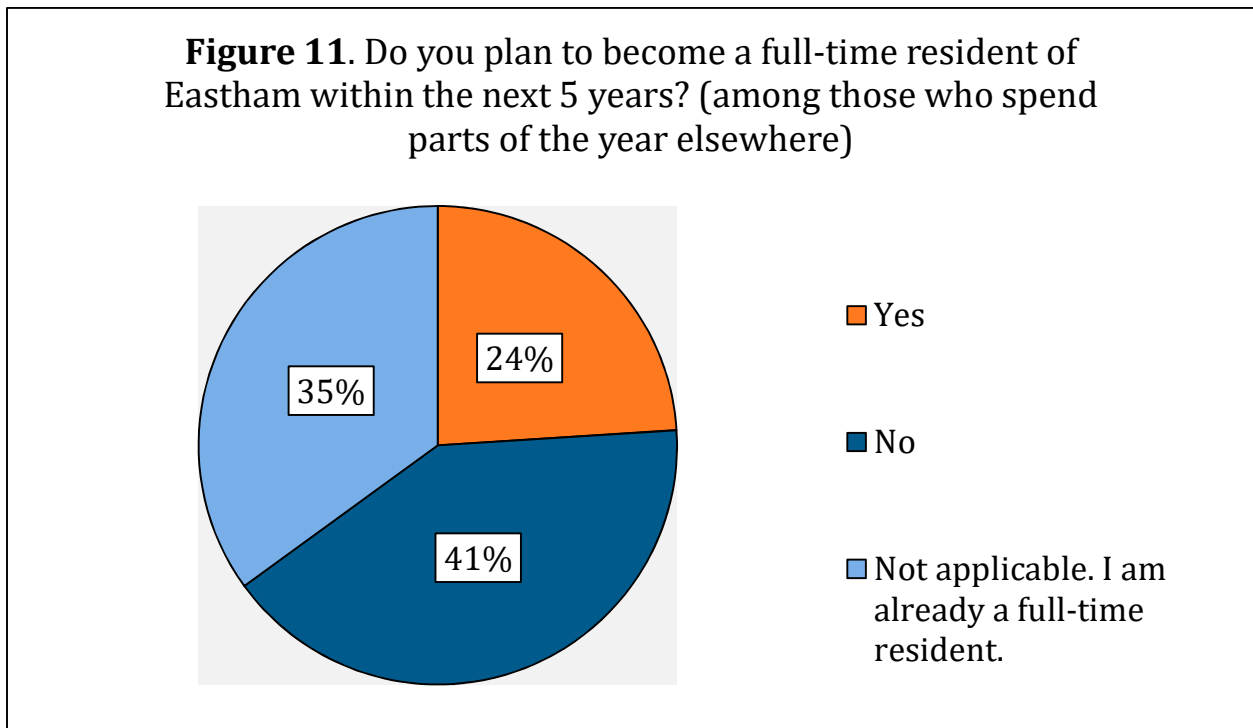
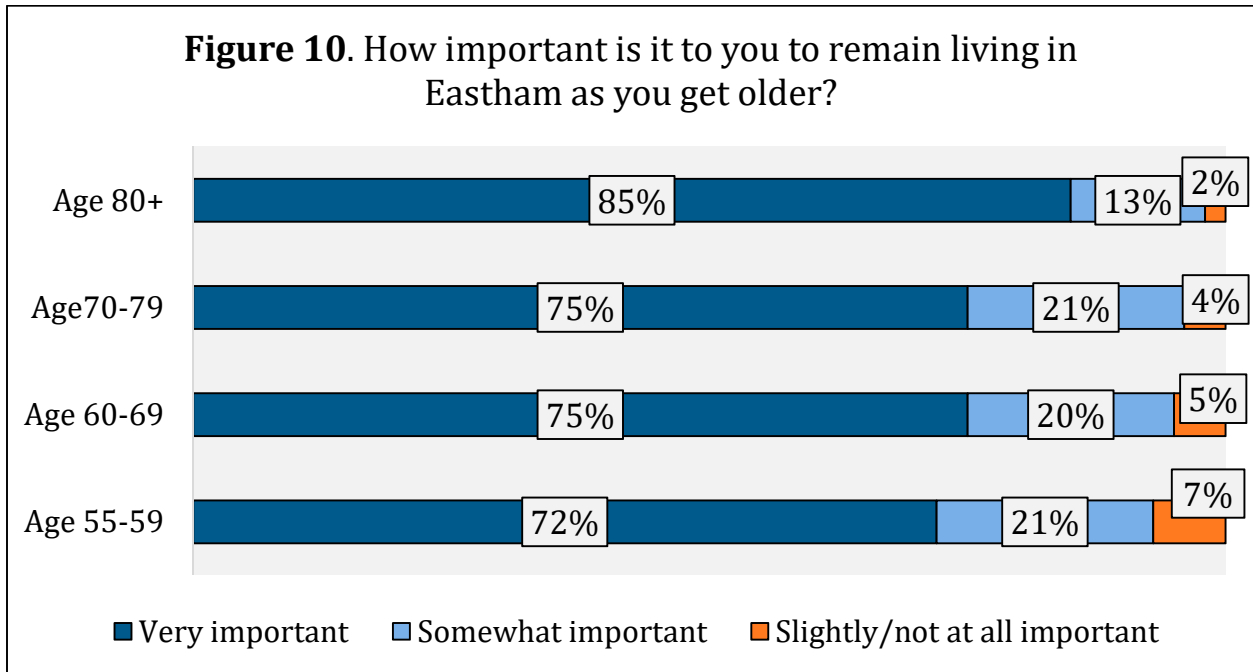


- I live in Eastham year-round
- I primarily live in Eastham, but spend winters living elsewhere
- I primarily live elsewhere, but spend parts of the year living in Eastham

Most survey respondents (85%) live in Eastham year-round (see **Figure 9**). One focus group of seasonal residents emphasized the importance of having ways to ease back into the community and connect with peers and neighbors. During the focus groups, Eastham residents shared many benefits of living in Eastham, discussing reasons why they love Eastham and want to remain living in Eastham as they age. One reason is safety of the community. When asked about feeling safe in the neighborhood where they live, 97% of survey respondents reported feeling safe “always” or “most of the time” (see **Appendix A**). Given the coastal location of Eastham, it is important to consider preparations for responding to weather and other local emergencies. Respondents were asked if they felt informed about what to do in case of such emergency and a majority responded “yes” (89%; **Appendix A**). Feeling safe and prepared to respond to emergencies are among some reasons why respondents are committed to aging in Eastham.

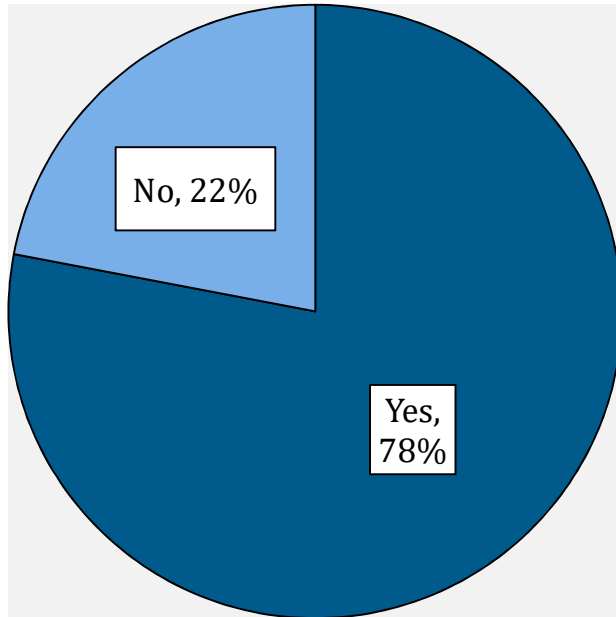
This finding is reinforced by the survey data that suggests more than two-thirds of respondents are committed to remaining in Eastham as they age (see **Figure 10**). Among respondents who are currently living parts of the year elsewhere, 24% (n=54) report plans

to make Eastham a permanent residence in the next 5 years and 35% (n=79) of those same residents already consider themselves full-time residents, despite their spending parts of the year elsewhere (see **Figure 11**).





**Figure 12.** Would you know whom to contact in Eastham should you or someone in your family need help accessing social services, health services, or other municipal services?



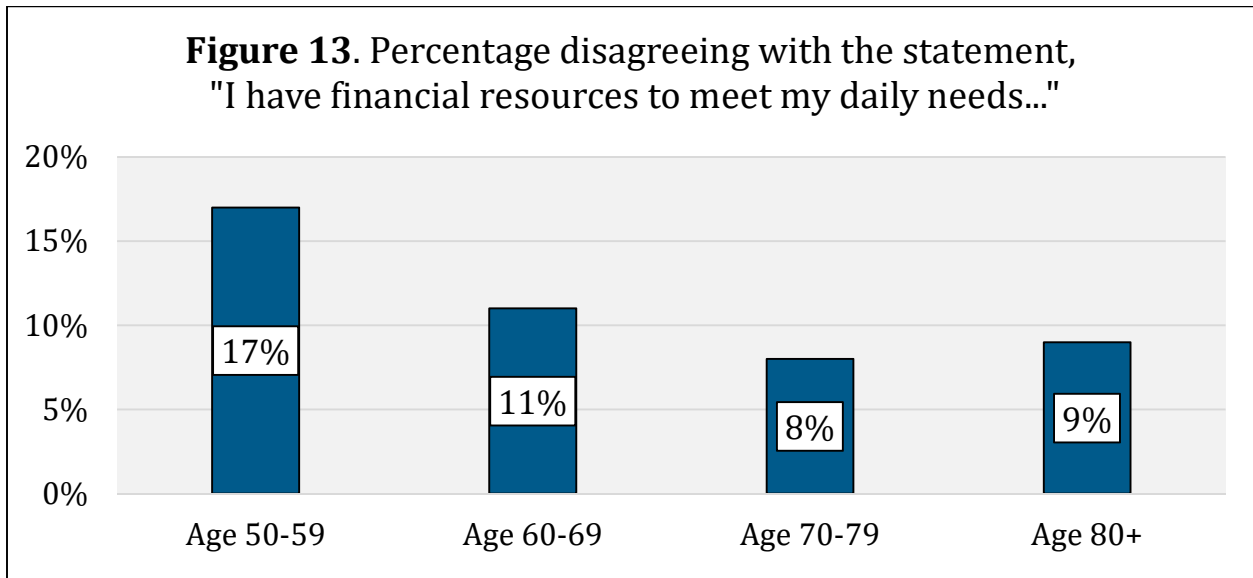
In order to understand survey respondents' awareness of local resources, we asked them if they would know who to contact in the Town if they or someone in their family needed assistance (see **Figure 12**). While a majority said yes, more than 1 out of 5 respondents (22%) reported not knowing who to contact in Eastham. Interestingly, among younger respondents (age 50-59), this rate was highest with 28% reporting that they did not know who to contact should their family need assistance compared to 15% of those over age 80 (see **Appendix A**). It may be that these survey respondents have never had the need for services—and therefore have not investigated the matter. It may also be indicative of a need for continued outreach about basic functions of both municipal departments but also local organizations to consider targeting some outreach to younger residents or newcomers to the Town.

A large majority of survey participants took the time to respond to the open-ended question, "What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Eastham?" Despite the high number of comments, they could readily be categorized into five key areas of concern: 1) cost of living; 2) access to healthcare; 3) remaining healthy and independent; 4) access to support services; 5) transportation to maintain quality of life. **Table 3** summarizes these concerns, drawing on verbatim responses from the survey.

**Table 3.** Sample responses to question, “What are your greatest concerns about your ability to continue living in Eastham?”

<b>Affordability, cost of living, and taxes</b>
Possibly not being able to pay my property taxes or utility bills as the current inflation situation seems to constantly be increasing other expenses as well; especially the rising cost of supplemental health insurance
Affordability. Real Estate taxes keep increasing along with everything else: gas, groceries, home repairs, other services.
I worry that I might not be able to afford to continue to live here. Taxes keep going up and assessments for town projects strain the budget.
<b>Access and transportation to amenities and services</b>
Access for transportation such as buses for shopping, doctors' appointments, etc.
Not being able to drive. The fear of aloneness because of not being able to drive to stores, doctors, lunches, library.
Availability of support services and convenient sources of needed items such as medication and essential food items
<b>Access, proximity, and availability of healthcare</b>
Accessing medical care - it is very hard to find a primary care doctor who is not far away. Right now, I can get around on my own, but I have concerns about later if I lose mobility
Poor access to medical care, most of my medical professionals are off-Cape
Health care and support systems. We're traveling 4-6 hours for doctor appointments. Also concerned about aging in place support systems. I had a severe health issue last fall and it was hard to get even visiting nurse support.
<b>Home upkeep and lack of housing options</b>
Ability to downsize from single family home (can't take care of large home, don't need it), but no options to do so
Handling property + home upkeep. Safety issues w/ affordable housing
Housing. Due to circumstances beyond my control, I am now living with my daughter. Others are living in their cars!
<b>Remaining healthy and independent in their home</b>
Maintaining my physical health and independence
Ability to age at home. There is no real accommodation for elderly in Eastham
Ability to maintain independence and be healthy enough to continue to live here

Given that the number one concern about aging in Eastham is the cost of property taxes and living, it is important to note that 13% of survey respondents (about 200 people) do not believe they have the financial resources to meet their basic needs (see **Figure 13**).

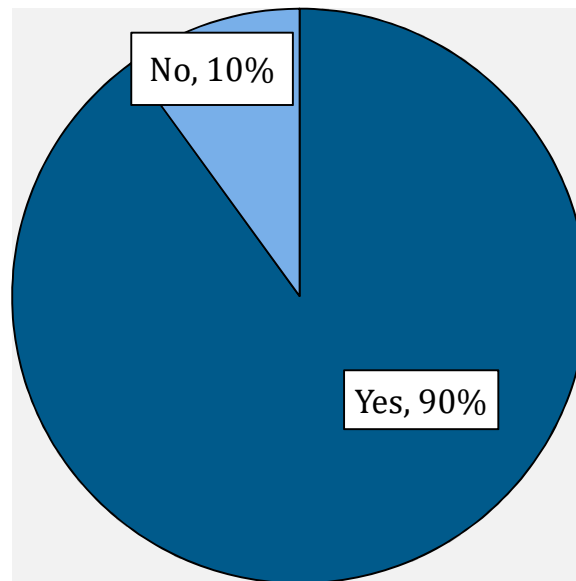


## Housing and Living Situation

The availability and affordability of housing that is suitable to meet the changing capacity of older people are key factors that influence the ability of residents to age in place, and to lead fulfilling and healthy lives into old age. Many people are attached to their current home, even if the “fit” between individual capacity and the home environment decreases. Homes may become too large for current needs or may become too expensive to maintain on a fixed income. Design features of homes, such as the number of stories and manageability of stairs, may challenge older residents’ ability to remain living safely in their home. Home modifications, including installation of bathroom grab bars, railings on stairs, adequate lighting throughout the home, ramps, and/or first floor bathrooms, may support residents’ safety and facilitate aging in place. Programs that connect older homeowners with affordable assistance for maintaining and modifying their homes and their yards can help protect the value of investments, improve the neighborhoods in which older people live, and support safe living. The availability of affordable housing options, especially those with accommodating features, including assisted living, may allow residents who are no longer able to stay in their existing homes to remain in their community.

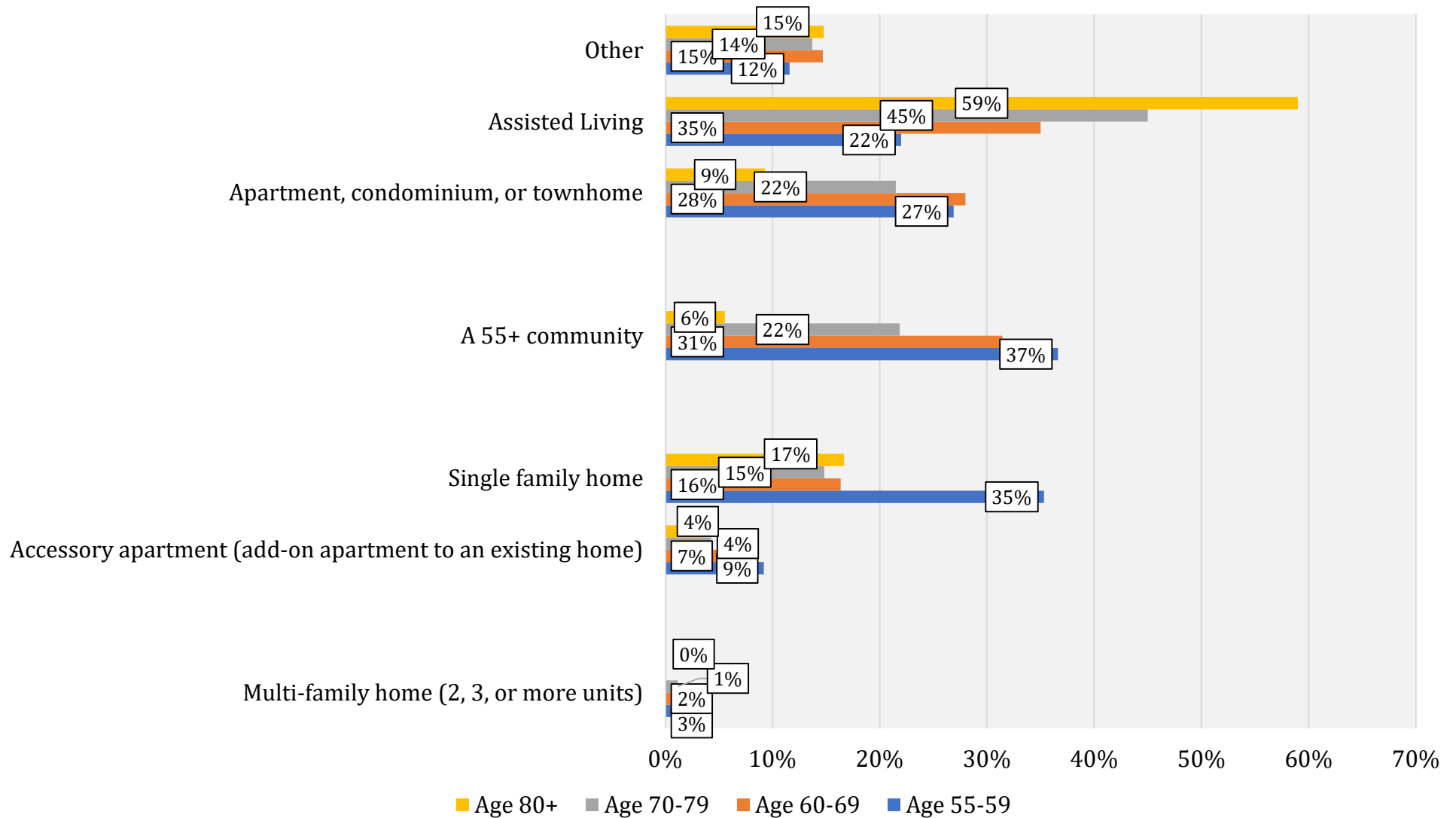
In order to assess the “age-friendliness” of the housing stock in Eastham, respondents were asked if they currently had a bedroom and bathroom on the entry-level of their home—an important feature as occupants age and mobility (up and down stairs) becomes more challenging. **Figure 14** shows that a majority of respondents do have this feature in their home (90%).

**Figure 14.** "Does your current residence have a bedroom and bathroom on the entry-level?"



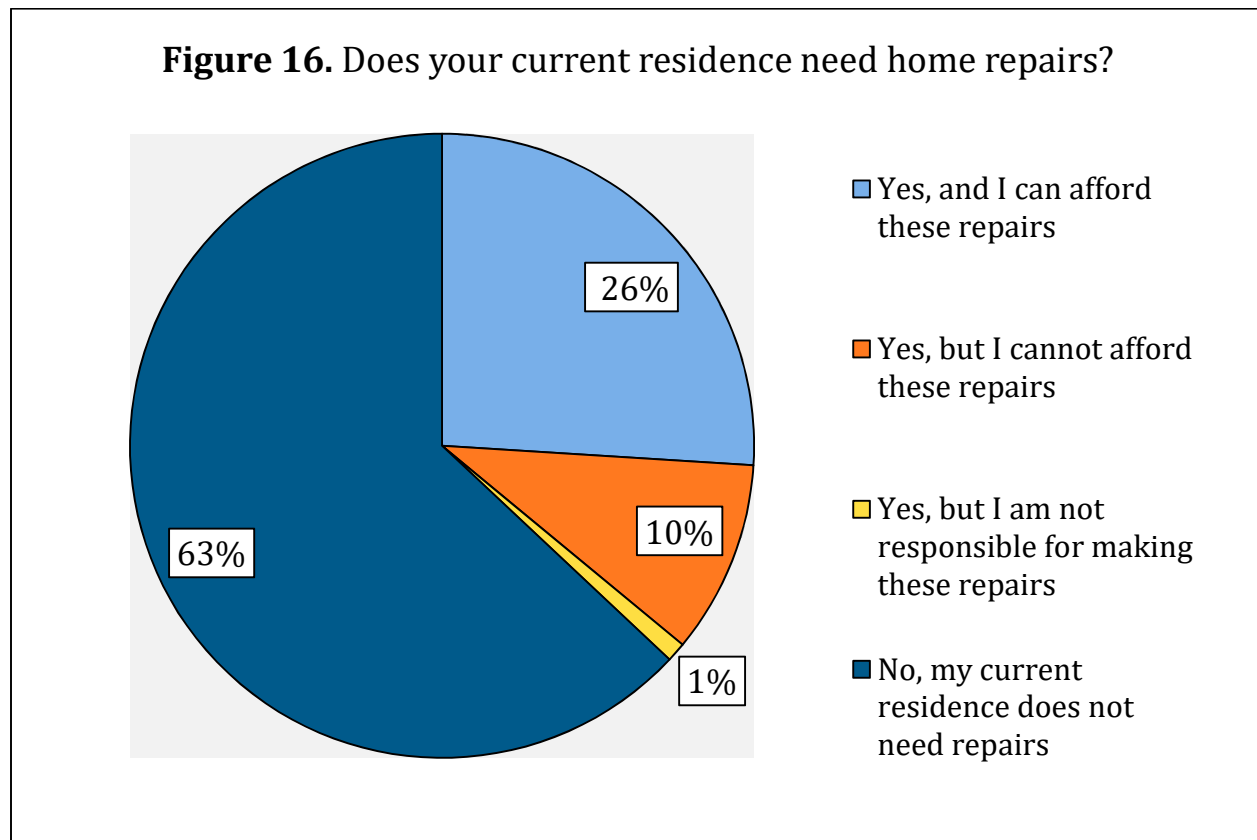
Survey participants were asked the type of housing they would prefer if a change in health or physical ability required moving from their current residence. Responses varied greatly by age group. Among the youngest respondents, the highest rated type of future housing is a 55+ community (37%) and among respondents age 60+ the most preferred type of future housing is assisted living rated by 39%-59% of respondents in these age groups (see **Figure 15**). This interest in senior housing options by those age 60 and older has implications for housing stock needs in Eastham.

**Figure 15.** In the next 5 years, if a change in your health or physical ability required that you move from your current residence, what kind of housing would you prefer? (check all that apply)

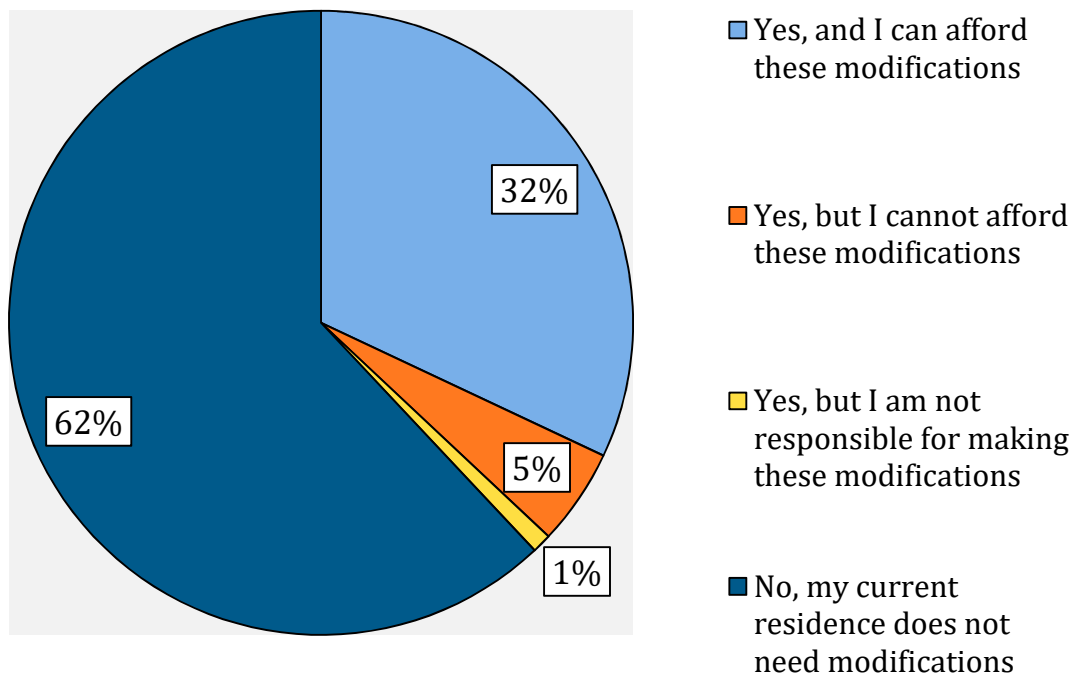


The majority of survey respondents live with at least one other person (88%), but not surprisingly, this number is smaller for the older cohorts. Eighty-five percent of participants age 50-59 live with someone else whereas about 48% of people age 80 and older do. In contrast, 22% of survey respondents age 60-69 report living alone and among respondents age 80 and older, this proportion is significantly higher (52%). Living alone has the potential to lead to social isolation and has implications for services that may be needed by the older segment of the Eastham population. Additionally, 11% of respondents reported living with another relative (e.g., children, grandchildren, or parents). This suggests that for a small percentage of Eastham’s older residents, significant childcare or other family responsibilities could play a role in their lives.

Maintaining a home requires resources, including people who can make repairs and the finances to pay for these repairs. In response to the question, “Does your current residence need home repairs (e.g., a new roof, electrical work, etc.) to improve your ability to live in it safely for the next five years?”, 47% respondents stated that their home would need repairs (**Appendix A**). Of those whose current residence needs repairs, 10% stated that they could not afford these repairs (see **Figure 16**).



**Figure 17.** Does your current residence need home modifications?



Modifying one's home (e.g., installing railings or grab bars in showers) in response to changing needs and preferences can promote independence and quality of life. While a majority of respondents do not need such modifications as this time, 38% report that modifications are needed (see **Figure 17**). Among them, 5% cannot afford to make these changes. Given the share that need such modifications and have the resources to implement them, suggestions for connecting residents with handyman services or information about taking action are made.



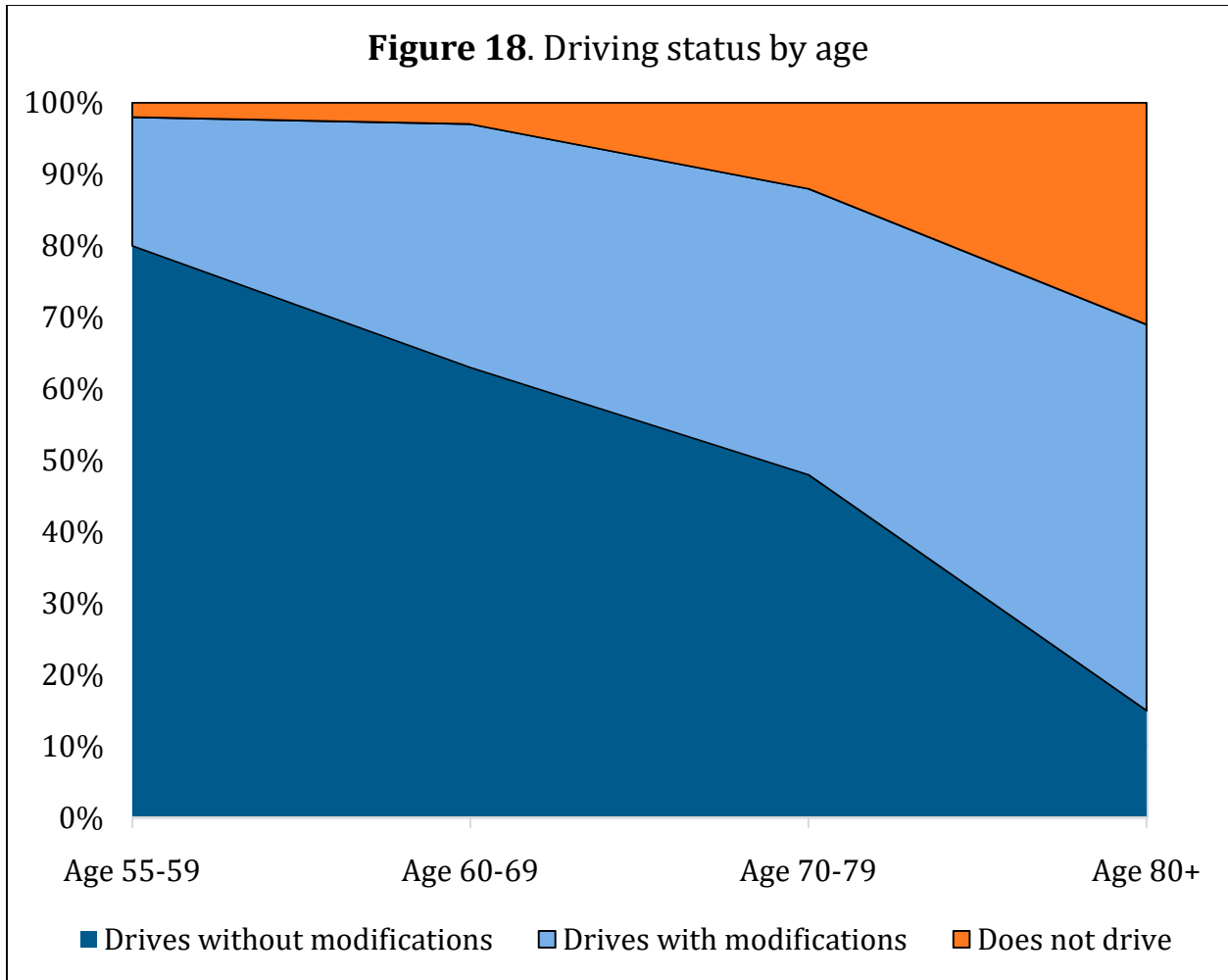
## Transportation

Transportation is a basic need for people of all ages who desire to lead independent, meaningful, and socially engaged lives. For older adults specifically, limited transportation options can lead to challenges in socializing, attending appointments, and fully participating in their community. The vast majority of Americans rely primarily on private transportation to meet these needs, and most individuals drive their own automobiles well into old age. Due to difficulties with transportation, individuals with health conditions and disabilities that adversely affect their ability to drive safely may be unable to participate in activities they previously enjoyed and valued. Indeed, a national survey of people aged 50 and older conducted by the AARP (2005) found that compared to older drivers, non-drivers reported lower quality of life, less involvement with other people, and more isolation.

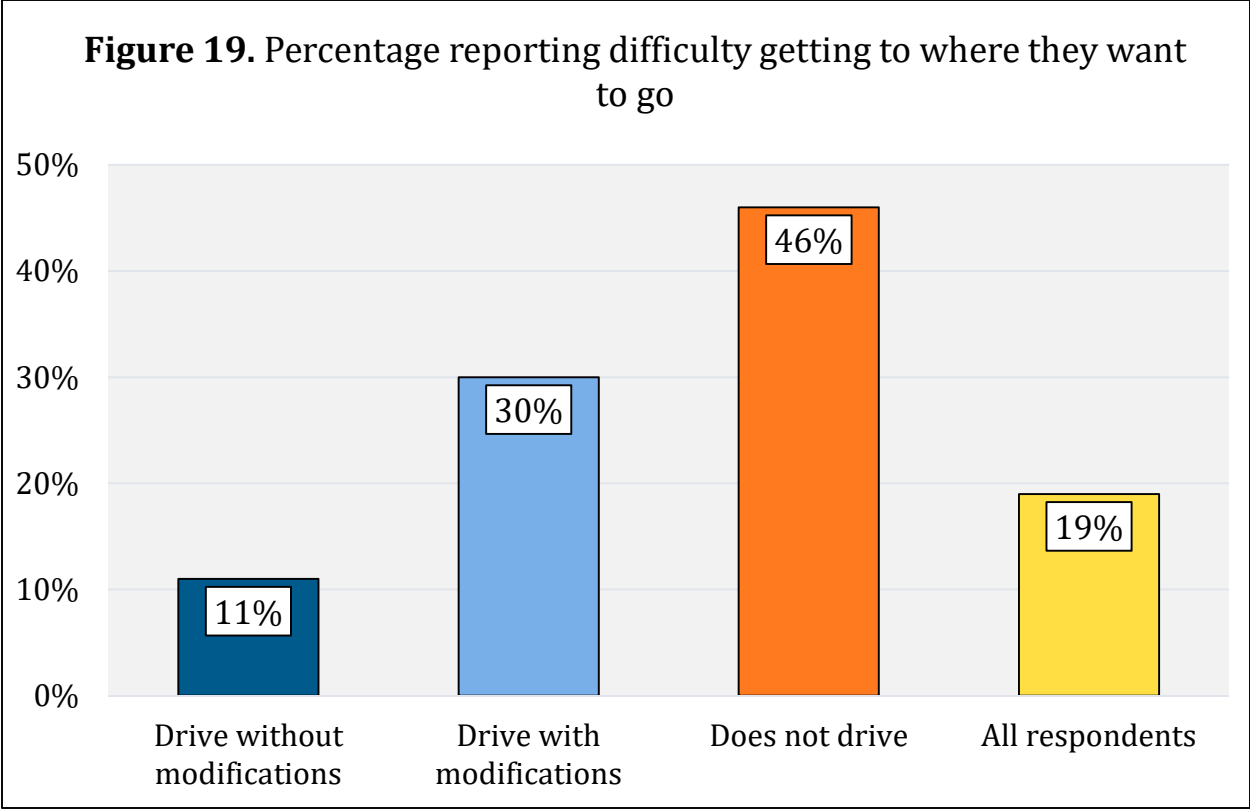
There were several questions on the survey related to transportation. Eastham is a town with limited public transportation options. Served by the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA), Eastham has access to a fixed route bus service that connects Eastham to other Cape communities and a paratransit service (e.g., the DART or FLEX bus) that operates by appointment. CCRTA also has limited medical transportation services available to take residents to Boston area medical services. In addition to transportation provided by the Eastham Senior Center, the Eastham COAch, takes residents to local grocery stores, pharmacies and other local destinations. Reservations are required.

Survey results suggest that most respondents (93%) drive themselves. Being driven by a spouse or family member (20%) and walking or biking (17%) were among the other primary ways that respondents meet their transportation needs (see **Appendix A**). Survey results show that only 5% of respondents do not drive, although this number is significantly larger when looking at just those age 80 and older, as 32% of this older segment of the population do not drive (see **Appendix A**).

More than one out of four respondents (29%) who do drive modify their driving to make it easier or safer. Modifications include avoiding driving at night, in rush hour, or during bad weather. While 80% of survey respondents age 50-59, 64% of respondents age 60-69, and 48% of those age 70-79 drive without modification, only 15% of those age 80 and older drive without making any modifications (see **Figure 18**). Modifying driving habits promote safety, but may limit independence and participation, especially if other transportation options are inaccessible, costly, or inconvenient. For example, older adults who avoid driving at night will struggle to participate in evening community meetings and programs. Those who avoid driving in bad weather may become isolated during the winter months.

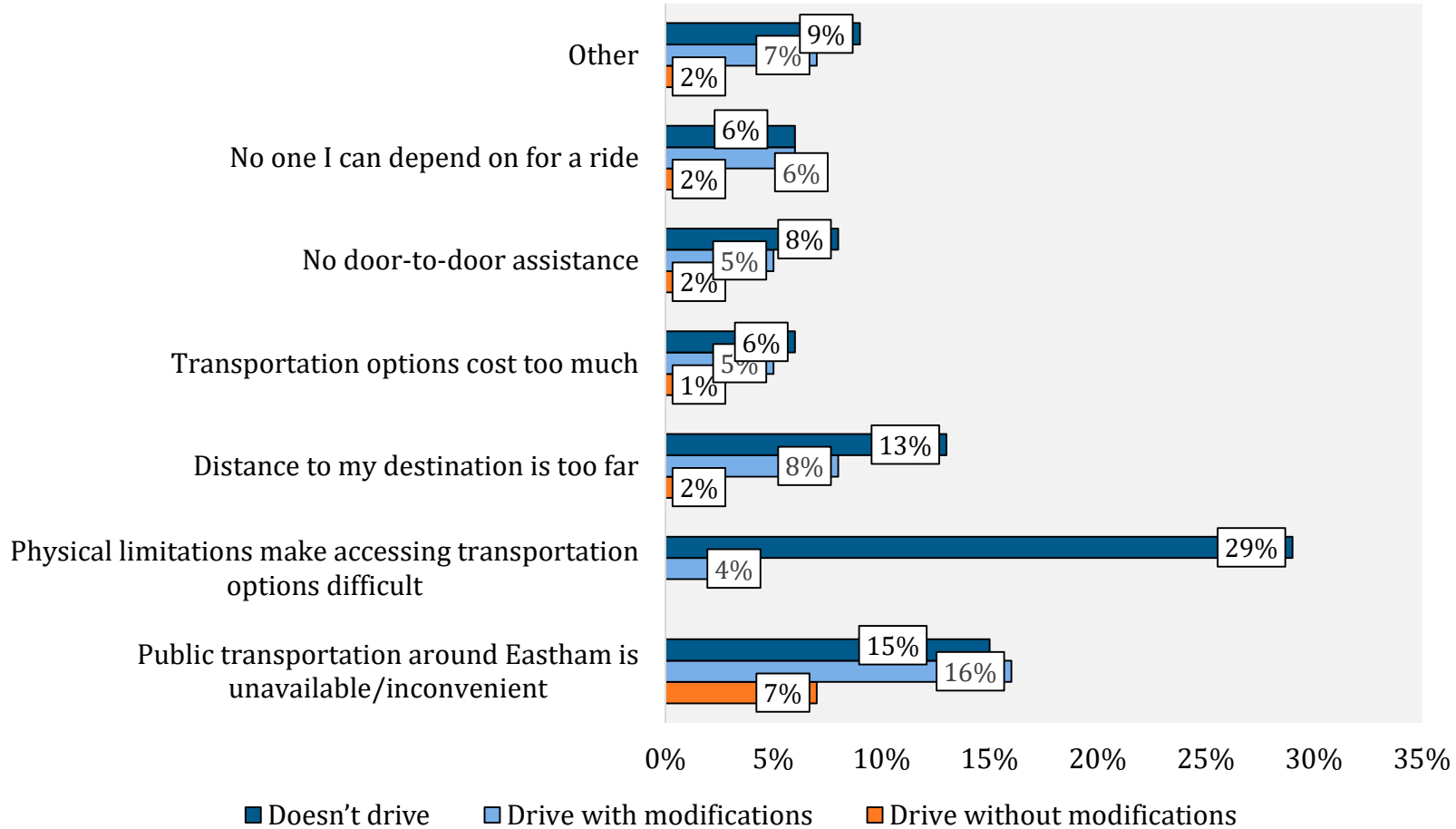


In response to the survey question, “What kind of difficulties do you have in getting where you want to go?” 19% of all survey participants reported at least one challenge (see **Figure 19**). Those who drive without modifications had the least difficulty getting where they want to go, while 46% of respondents who do not drive and 30% of those who drive with modifications mentioned at least one obstacle to them getting around.

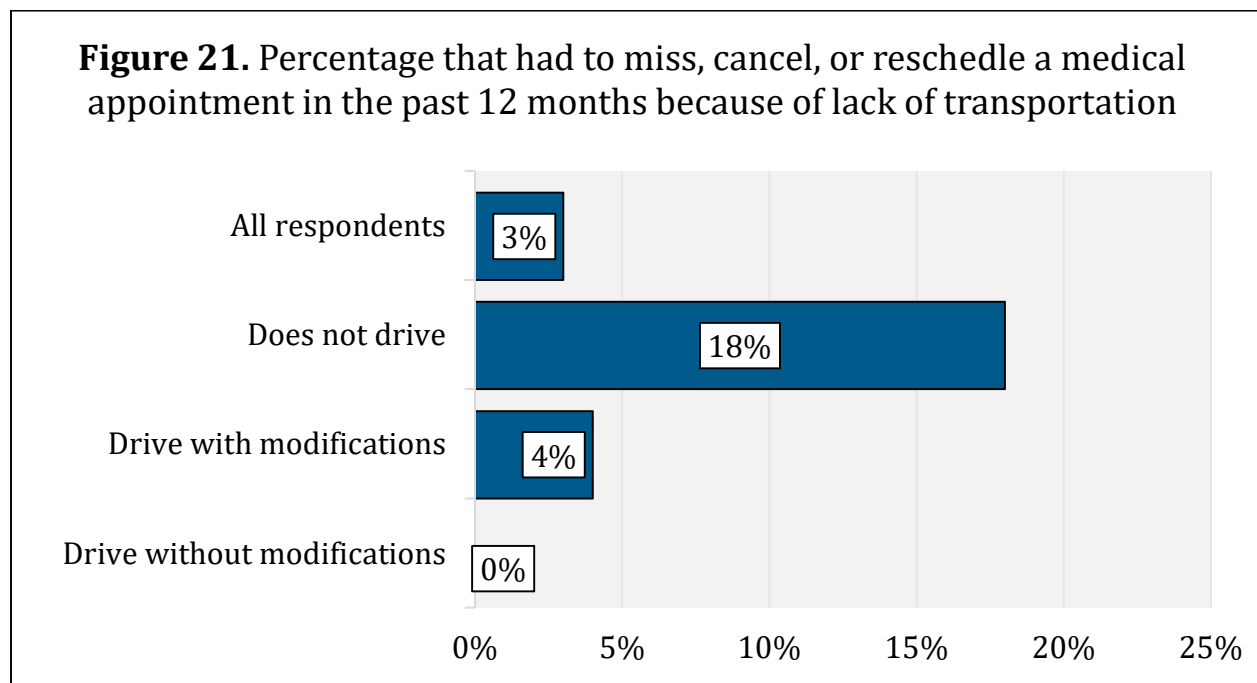


For those who do not drive, physical limitations making accessing transportation options difficult was the most common reasons for transportation difficulties (**Figure 20**). For the group of individuals who limit their driving in some way, where transportation options are critical, the most common barrier was public transportation not being available or convenient.

**Figure 20.** Difficulties getting where you want to go, by driving status



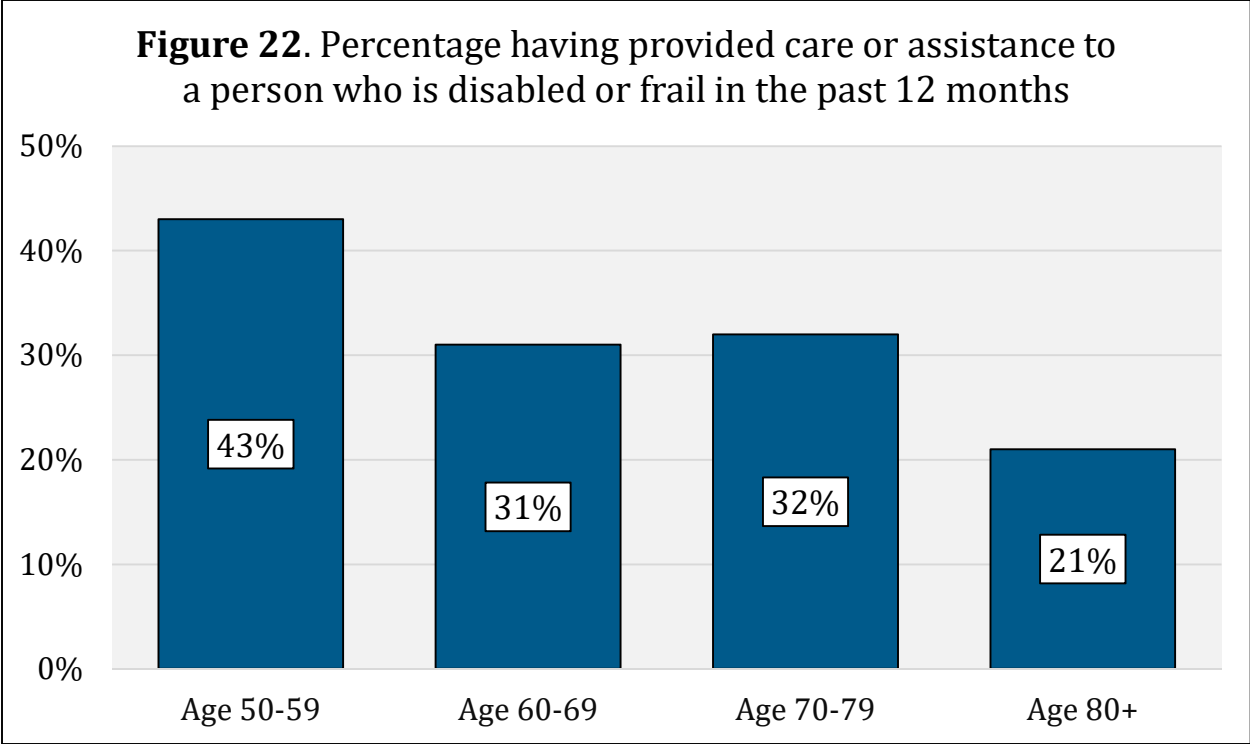
Transportation barriers can limit a person’s access to obtaining necessary services such as medical care. Respondents were asked if within the previous 12 months they had missed, cancelled, or rescheduled a medical appointment because of a lack of transportation. Among all respondents, only 3% reported this experience, and even among those who drive with modification, few indicated that this had occurred (see **Figure 21**). However, 18% of respondents who don’t drive missed, cancelled, or rescheduled a medical appointment within the past year. These findings suggest that transportation limitations appear to negatively impact accessing medical care for the most vulnerable segments of Eastham’s older resident community. This is particularly salient in Eastham as often residents have to travel to other communities to access healthcare.



## Caregiving

Nationally, most of the care and support received by older adults due to health difficulties or disability is provided informally by family members or friends. Informal caregivers throughout the country contribute millions of hours of care without financial compensation.

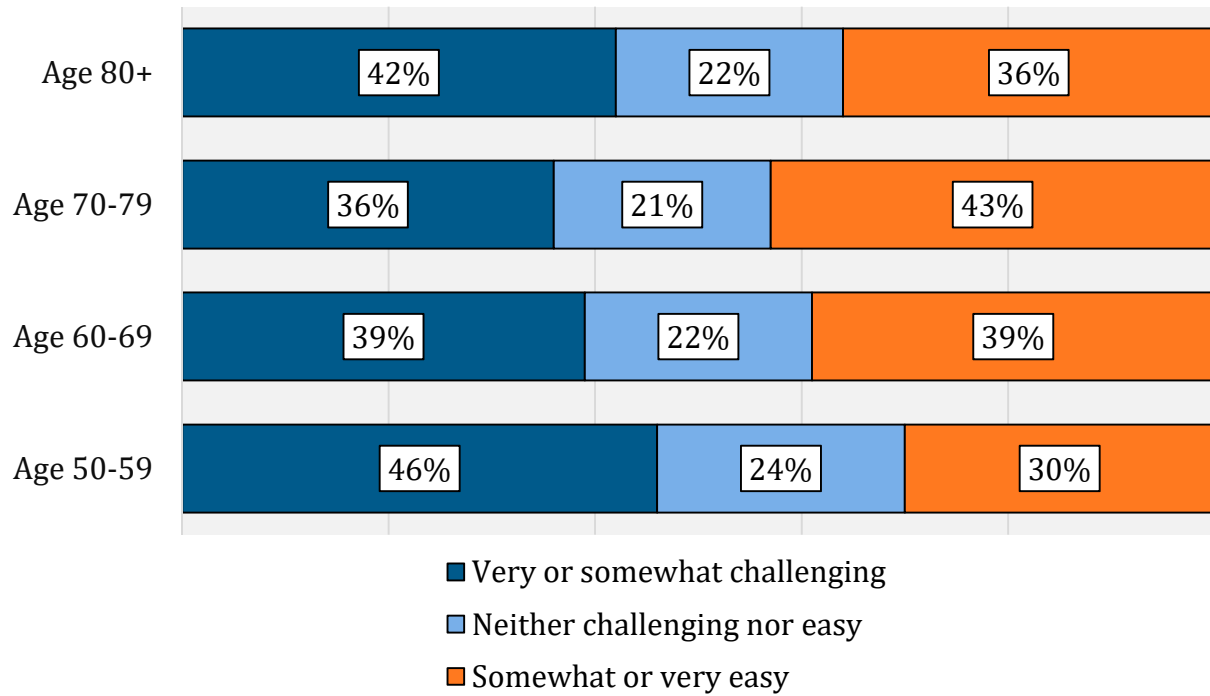
More than one third (36%) of survey respondents stated that they currently or have in the past 12 months provided care or assistance to a person who was disabled or frail (see **Figure 21**). That number is highest among those age 50-59 (43% reporting having provided care) Notably, a fifth of respondents over age 80 have reported recent caregiving experience.



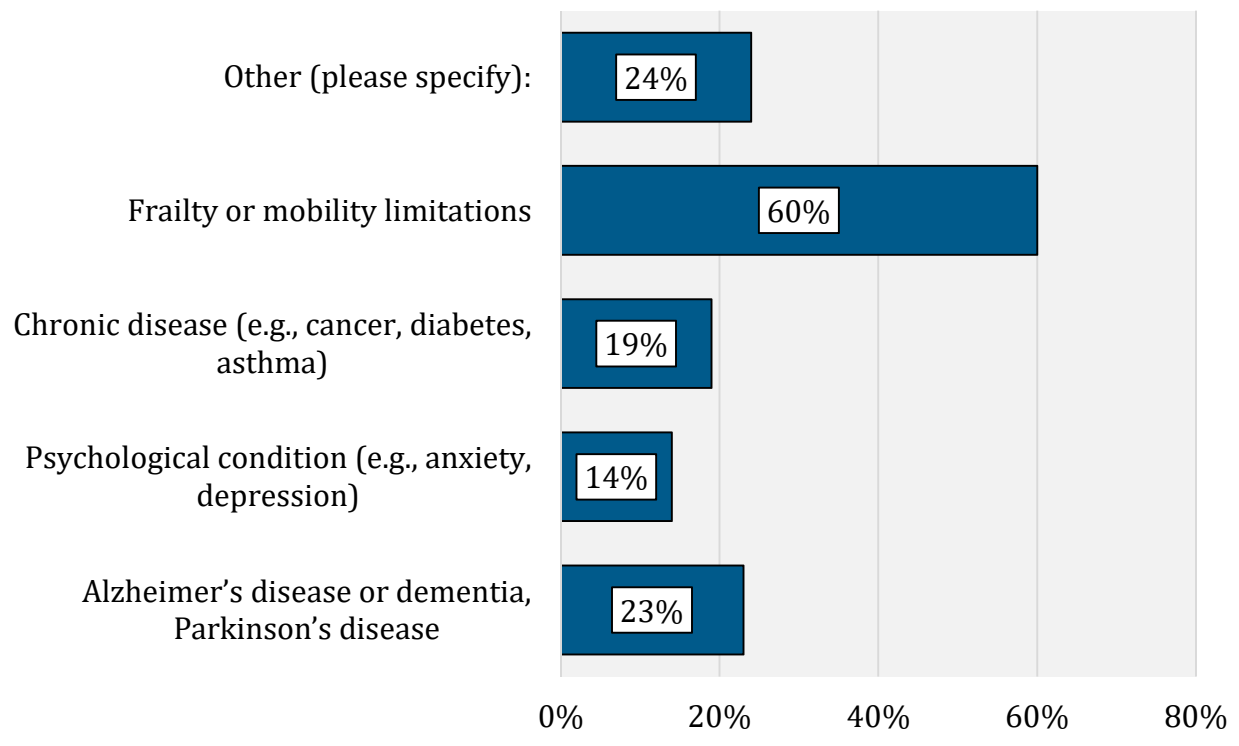
Many of those who have provided care or assistance to someone within the past 12 months stated that it was very or somewhat challenging to provide this care and meet other family and/or work responsibilities. This was especially true for those age 50-59, where 46% of those providing care reported this was very or somewhat challenging (see **Figure 23**). Many in this age group are likely still working and therefore may be struggling to meet the demands of both caregiving and work. Even for the other age groups, more than half of those who provide care find it very or somewhat challenging. Services (e.g., transportation to adult day programs) and programming (e.g., support groups) might be needed to support caregivers.

Caregivers were asked to indicate which conditions were experienced by their care recipient; the most frequently marked condition was mobility impairment (such as difficulty walking or climbing stairs) (60%; see **Figure 24**), while 23% of the people the survey respondents cared for were living with Alzheimer’s or dementia. Many respondents checked multiple responses to this question, indicating that their care recipient had more than one disability.

**Figure 23.** Among caregivers, how challenging was it for you to provide care and meet your other responsibilities?



**Figure 24.** Conditions requiring care (Check all that apply)

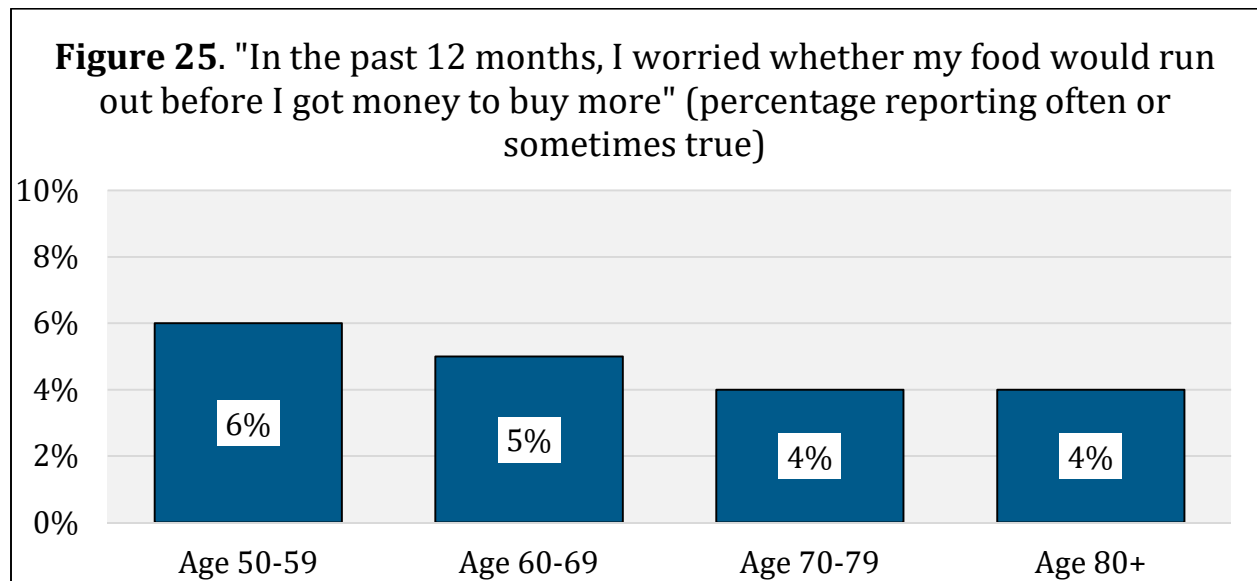


## Health & Disability

Physical ability to engage in one's environment is key component to aging well in the community. With age can come different and new health needs and preferences. Having access to opportunities to engage in health promoting activity and seek medical and mental health care is crucial to keeping residents living active, meaningful, and independent lives.

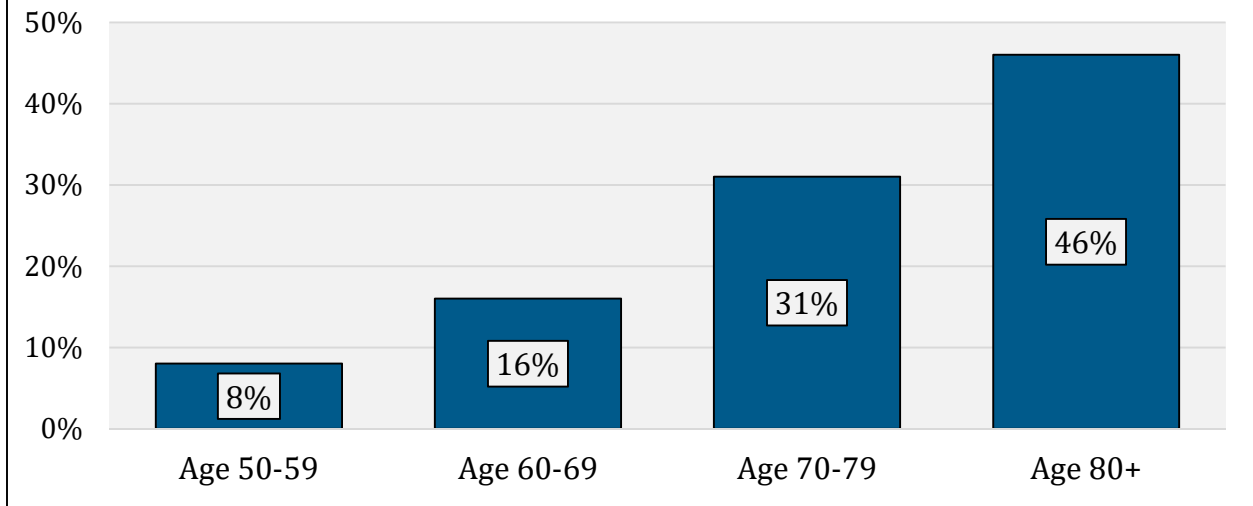
About 80 survey respondents, or 5% of the sample, reported worrying that they would run out of food before they got money to buy more over the past year. This was slightly more prevalent among younger respondents (see **Figure 25**) and indicates a crucial need facing an albeit small portion of survey respondents.

Not surprisingly, rates of disability increase with age (see **Figure 26**). More than 30% of those in their 70s and nearly half of those in their 80s report some level of difficulty in participating in the community. Considering ways to include persons with disabilities in the community is an ongoing priority.





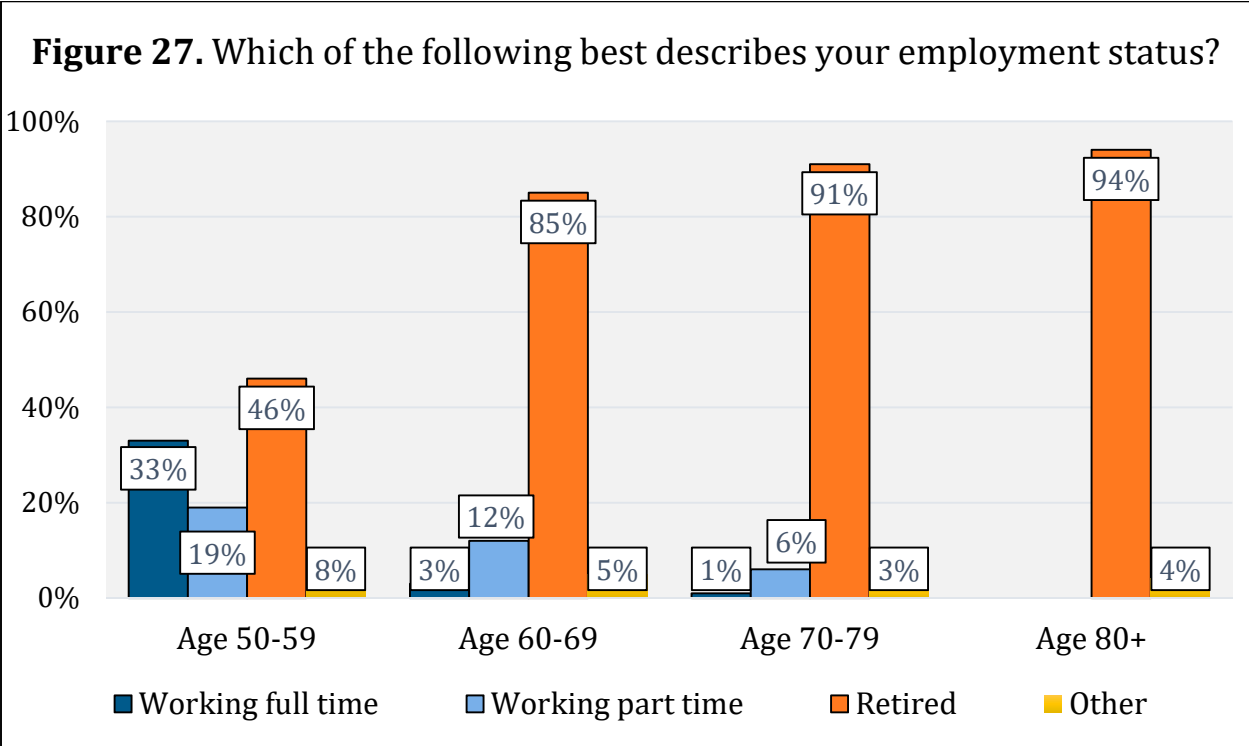
**Figure 26.** Percentage Reporting an impairment or condition that limits their ability to participate in the community



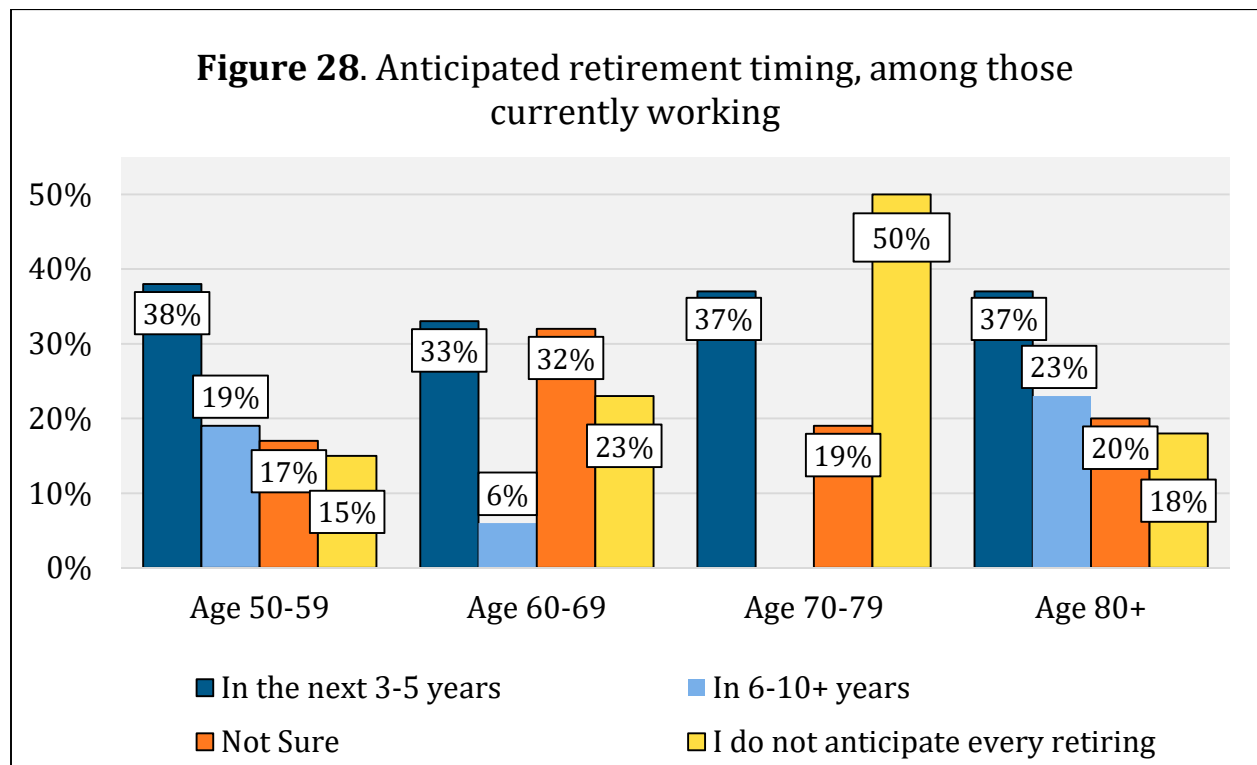
## Employment and Retirement

Remaining in the workforce due to financial necessity or personal preference is a decision that shapes later life for most older people. For those still working, their experiences can mean less hours, different schedules, and an interest in maintaining professional relationships. For those who have chosen retirement, maintaining active lifestyles and contributing to the world around them can be important factors when considering how to spend their time. Regardless of employment status, the ability to pay for necessary expenses and maintain quality of life can be challenging due to age-related shifts in health, ability, costs, and streams of income.

Many people across the country continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65, but this is less evident in Eastham. Survey data suggests lower rates of employment among older residents in Eastham, perhaps because of its attraction as a retirement destination. **Figure 27** shows that only one-third of respondents in their 50s (33%) are working fulltime, 19% are working part-time. Only 15% of those in their 60s (12%) are still working at all. These results suggest that a large share of survey respondents may have time to pursue personal interests and activities



For those who responded they are still working, more than one-third anticipate retiring in the next 3-5 years. (see **Figure 28**). Thus, the Eastham Senior Center could experience an increase in attendance, which has implications for the capacity of senior center. Interestingly, many older adults who are still working do not know when they expect to retire. Implementing evening and weekend programming might be one way to engage older workers with the Eastham Senior Center. Additionally, developing new programs that would particularly attract older workers would be useful. For example, convening a job fair for part-time or volunteer positions or hosting seminars on retirement planning—both financial and social.

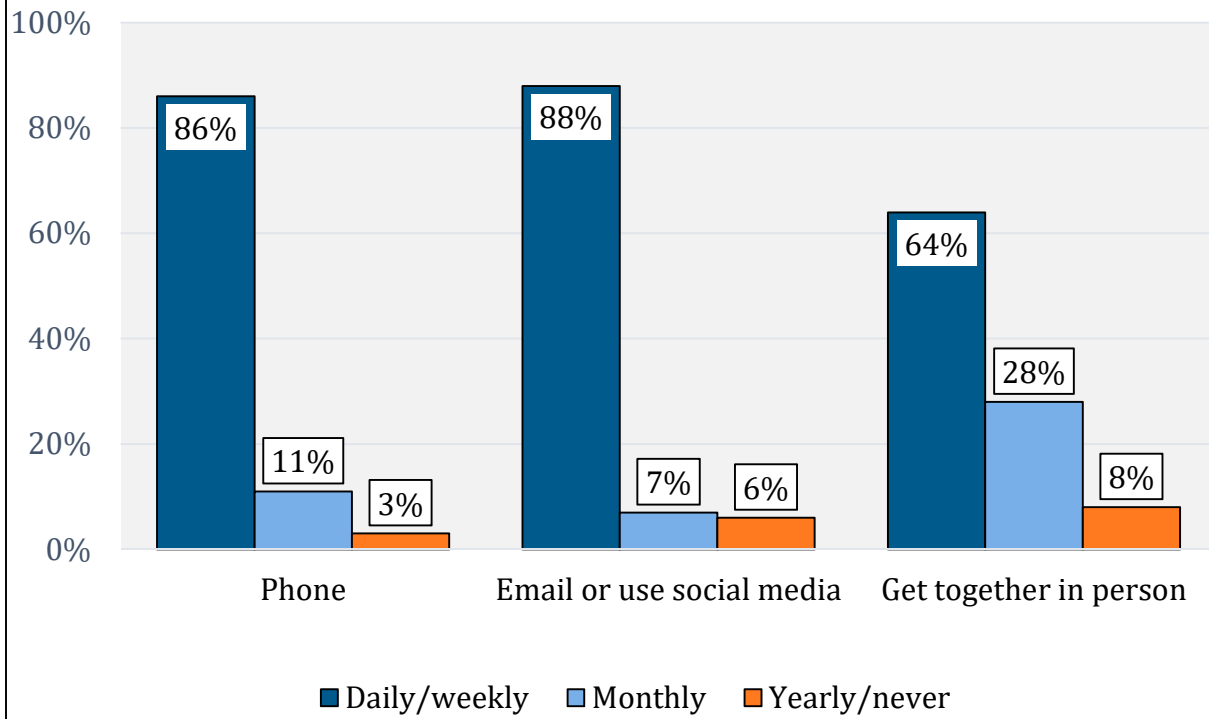


## Social Activities and Relationships

Social activities and relationships shape well-being for individuals of all ages. Indeed, the absence of social relationships may have as substantial a negative impact on health as behaviors such as smoking or overeating. Many older adults are at high risk for social isolation, especially if their health and social networks break down. These risks are exacerbated if accessible services and transportation are not readily available to them as a means for maintaining contact with the world outside their homes. Providing opportunities for social engagement and participation in community events—through volunteer programs, learning opportunities and exercise programs, as well as social activities—can help community members maintain social support, remain active, prolong independence, and improve quality of life

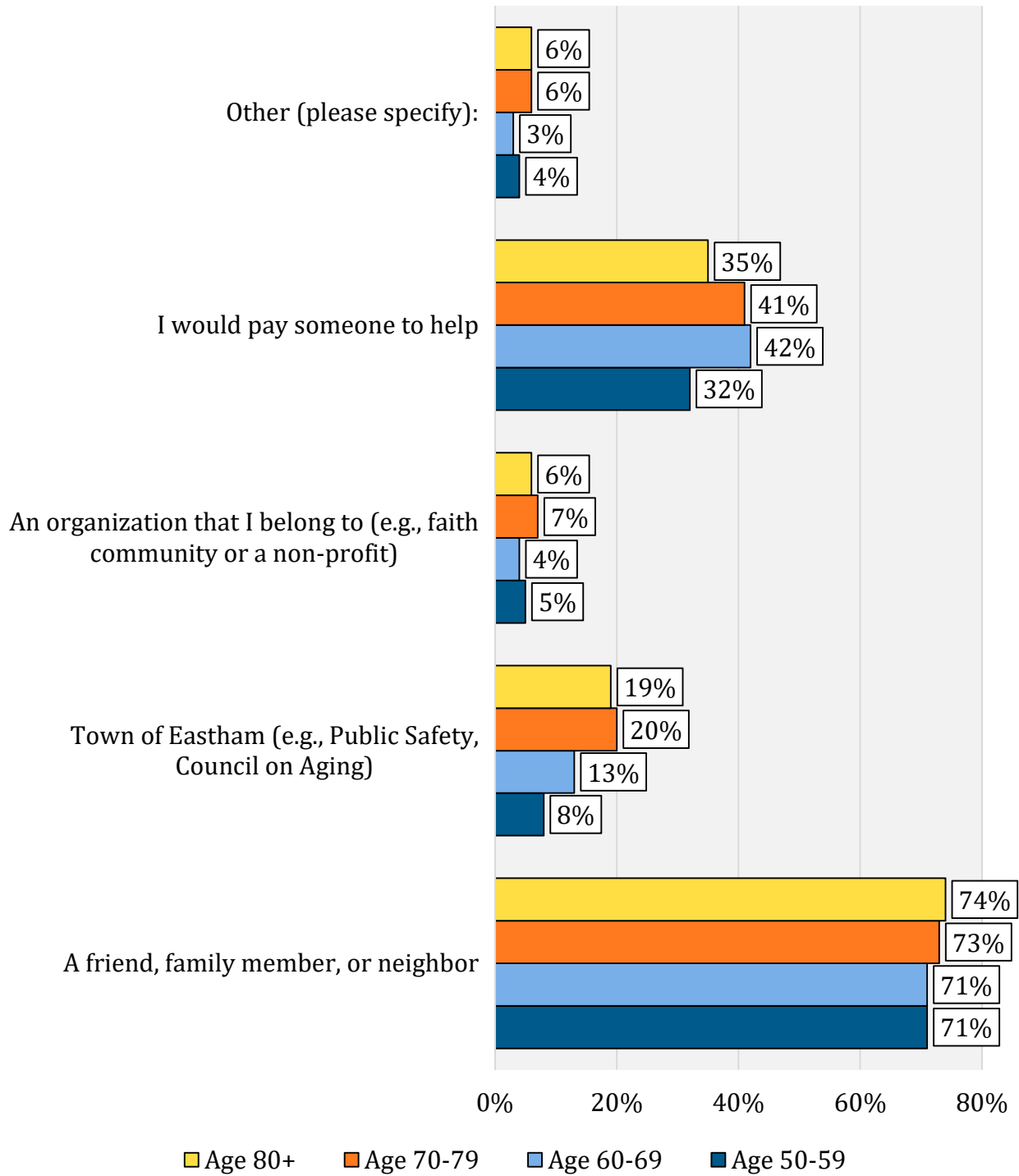
The majority of survey respondents speak with someone or use email or social media on at least a weekly basis to connect with family, friends, or neighbors (see **Figure 29**). Although 64% of the respondents get together in person with someone at least weekly, more than one-third only get together monthly or less frequently. Individuals who have infrequent contact with friends or relatives represent important groups to target for efforts aimed at reducing isolation and, more generally, improving emotional wellbeing.

**Figure 29.** How often do you talk on the phone, send email/use social media, or get together to visit family, friends, or neighbors?



Over 70% of respondents of all ages said they would ask a friend, family member or neighbor if they needed help with a minor task or errand (see **Figure 30**). A significant share of respondents also reported that they would pay someone to help them (32%-42% across age groups). Focus group participants also highlighted the lack of available workforce to help with small in-home projects. These findings illustrate a strong network of informal support in Eastham and offer an opportunity to strengthen neighbor-to-neighbor relations and community wide initiatives in Eastham as a way of supporting older residents wishing to age in place.

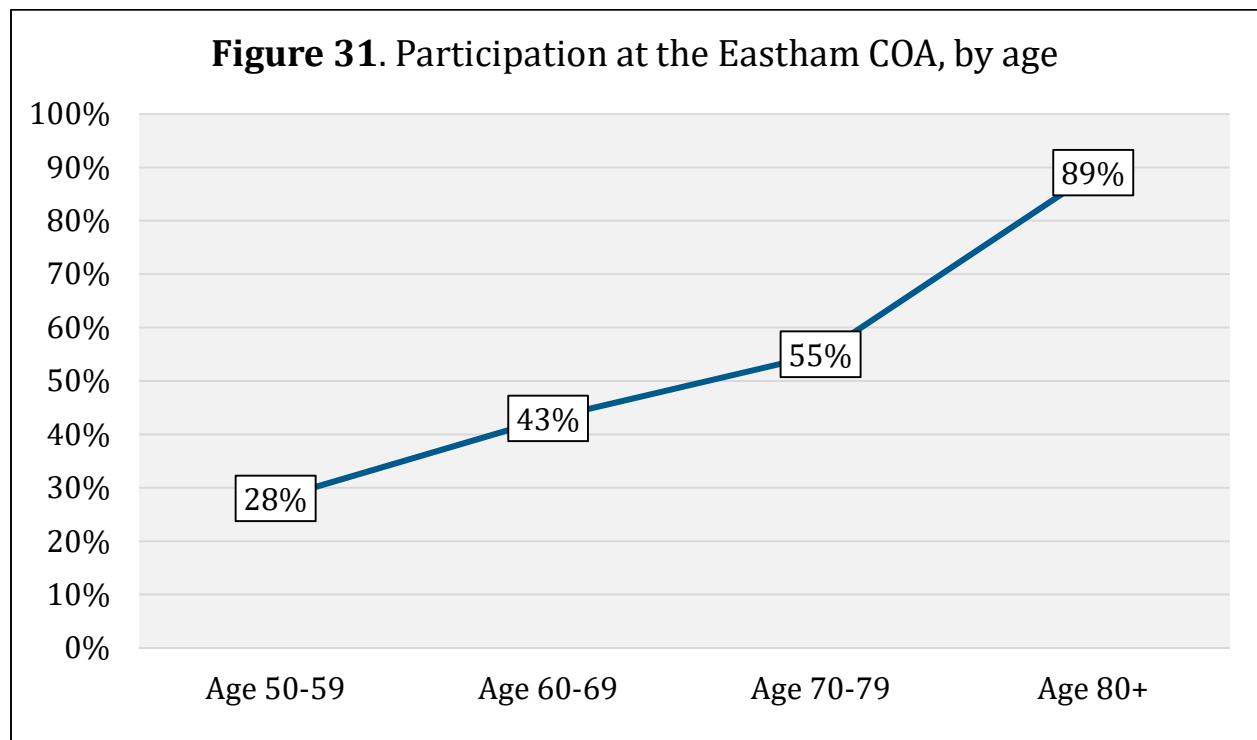
**Figure 30. Who would you ask for help, if you needed it?  
(Check all that apply)**



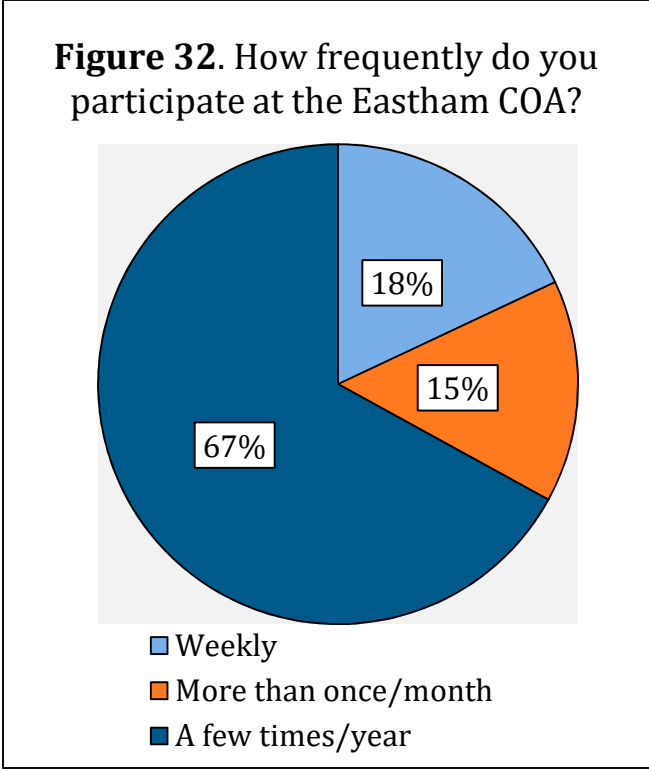
## Eastham Senior Center

Local senior centers play a part in helping older adults age in place and in community. Residents may obtain transportation, health screening, or social services through their local COA. Older adults may seek opportunities for engagement and socialization through volunteer programs, learning opportunities and exercise programs, as well as social activities. These involvements can help community members maintain social support, remain active, prolong independence and improve quality of life. Some research suggests that participating in a Senior Center may reduce one's sense of isolation, a highly significant outcome given the negative consequences of being disconnected socially (Hudson, 2017).

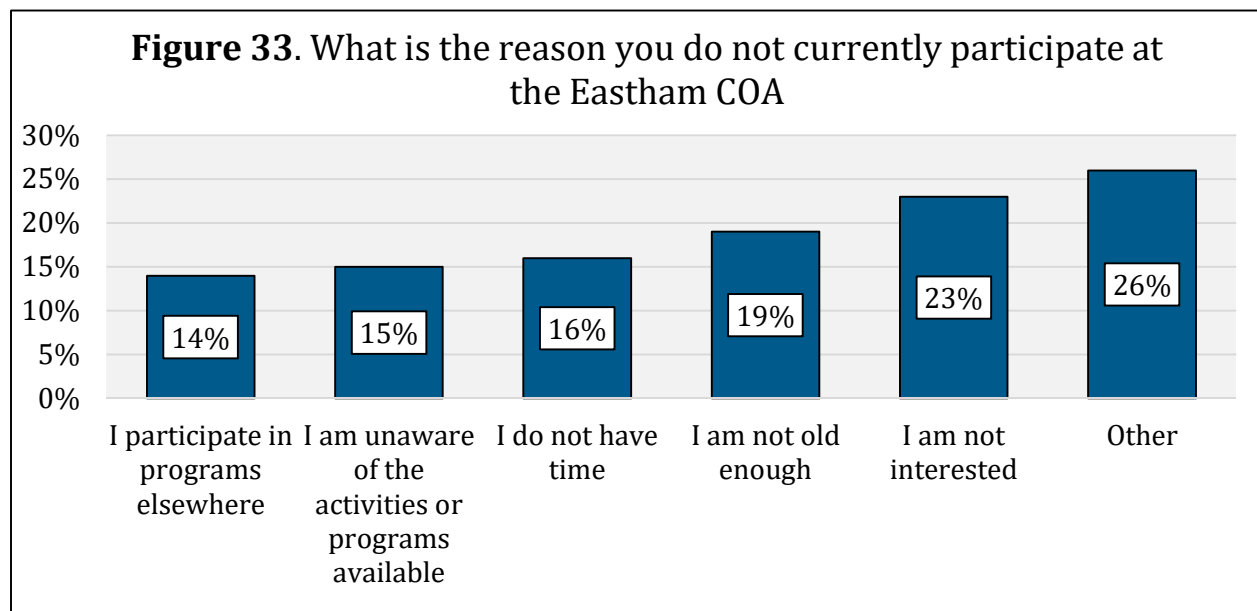
A majority (61%) of survey respondents report that the Eastham Senior Center plays a role in their lives or the lives of their loved ones, neighbors, or friends—making it clear that the Eastham Senior Center is a revered community asset for many (see **Appendix A**). Survey results suggest that participation in the Eastham Senior Center is considerably more common among older residents. As shown in **Figure 31**, just 28% of those age 50-59 and report never using programs or services offered by the Eastham COA, while 89% of the respondents age 80 and older indicated they have participated in the Eastham Senior Center. This age-graded pattern of participation is not unusual in senior centers and may reflect the increasing value of the Eastham Senior Center to older residents.



Of those who do use the Eastham COA, 67% only visit the Center a few times a year, while 18% of COA users participate at least weekly (**Figure 32**). This range of participation levels highlights the broad continuum of affiliation with the Eastham COA, with many residents participating just periodically, while others include visits to the Eastham COA as part of their regular weekly schedule. Note that participation on a weekly or more frequent basis was reported by just 4% of respondents who are age 50-59 and 7% among those age 60-69 while 22% of those age 80 and older participate weekly, suggesting that older participants attend more frequently during the course of a month or a year (**Appendix A**).



Of survey respondents who never use the Eastham Senior Center, 33% are still working, which may be a reason for not attending programs offered by the Eastham Senior Center (tabulations not shown). As well, 23% of respondents of all ages state it is because they are not interested or because they are not old enough (19%) (**see Figure 33**). Of note is that 34% of respondents in their 50s report not being old enough to use the Senior Center. (**Appendix A**).





For those who wrote in a response, the most common responses centered around not having time and still working. In addition, the perception of “not needing” to visit the Senior Center or “not knowing” what goes on at the Senior Center was extracted from these write-in responses, suggesting that communicating the purpose of the Senior Center and defining its target audience is a possible future step that could draw in a wider range of residents. See **Table 4** with sample comments regarding why survey respondents don’t use the COA.

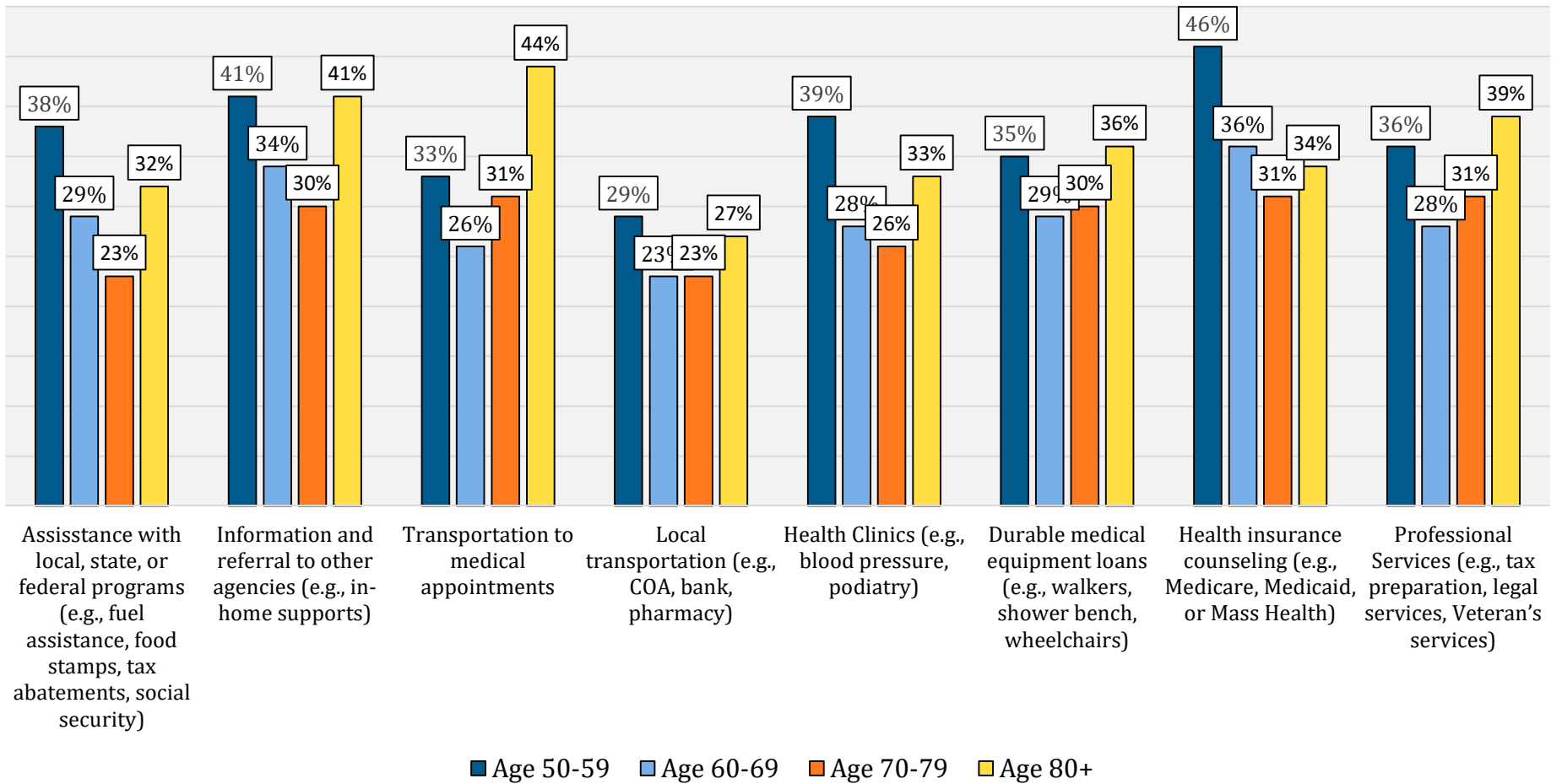
**Table 4.** Sample responses to question “What is the reason that you do not currently use programs or services offered by the Eastham Senior Center”

<b>Not needed</b>
Generally, I feel too independent at this point + not "old enough"
Although approaching 80 years of age, I don't feel elderly and, although I often don't know what to do with myself, somehow going to the Sr. Ctr. for social activities seems "not for me"
Currently have no need + have friends to do stuff with. As time goes by, I may participate more
<b>Too busy</b>
I am busy with family, friends, neighbors
I work full time and have a full schedule outside of work as well
I just turned 70 and still am active in my own social circles, but I surely will be more interested as I age and my 'orbit' gets smaller
<b>Not interested</b>
I've looked at the website to see if there was anything of interest but didn't note too much information or many activities other than perhaps elder care
If there was a workout center a gym like in Harwich where I used to live I would definitely participate
Programs repetitive and do not meet newly seniors/ retirees 65+. Better programs elsewhere
<b>Facility deters participation</b>
Our facility needs major improvements
Sadly, I find the facility depressing
Not comfortable there

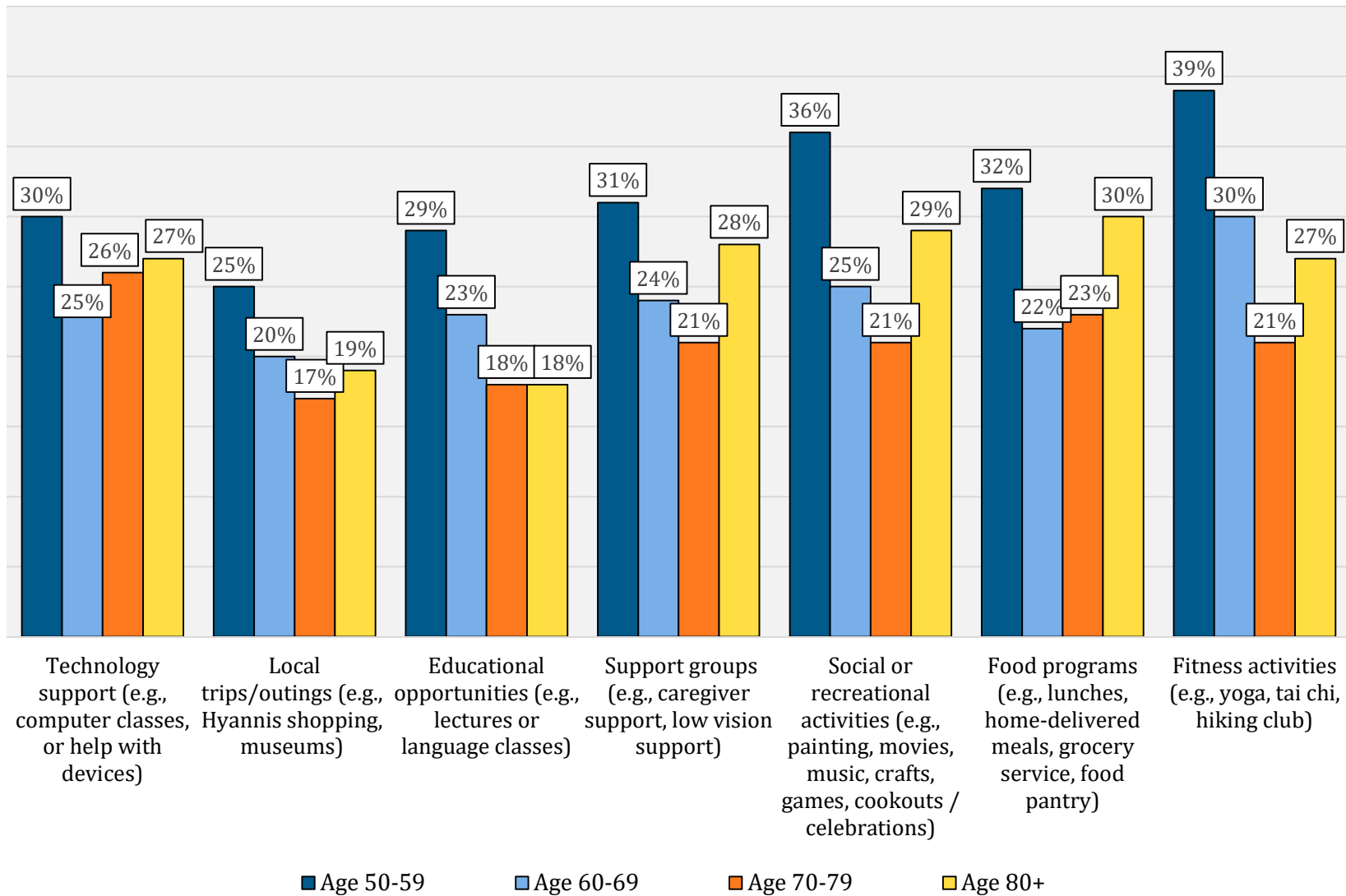
There are a few ways that respondents were asked to identify their preferences for programs and services. First, respondents were asked to rate the importance of existing programs and services offered by the Eastham Senior Center. **Figure 34** shows the percentage of respondents who identified services as being very important or important to themselves or someone in their family. The top-rated service for respondents age 50-69 was health insurance counseling (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or MassHealth), which was rated important by 36-46% of respondents across those age groups. Among those in their 80s, the most important service provided is medical transportation rated important by 44% of respondents in that age group. Among respondents in their 50s and 60s, the second most important service provided by the Eastham COA is information and referral to other agencies/services (41% and 34%, respectively). For those in their 70s, medical transportation, professional services, and health insurance counseling were all rated as important by 31% of respondents in that age category. For those in their 80s, information and referral (41%) and professional services (e.g., legal or financial) (39%) was the second most important service.

When it comes to programs, fitness programs are valued by those in their 50s and 60s (see **Figure 35**). Food programs and social and recreational programs are among the second most valued programs. For those in their 60s and 70s, there is an interest in technology skills programming and for those in their 80s, caregiver support is a highly valued program.

**Figure 34.** Please rate the importance of the following services currently offered by the Eastham COA by age category (% reporting important or very important)



**Figure 35.** How important are the following programs currently offered by the Eastham COA to yourself or someone in your family?

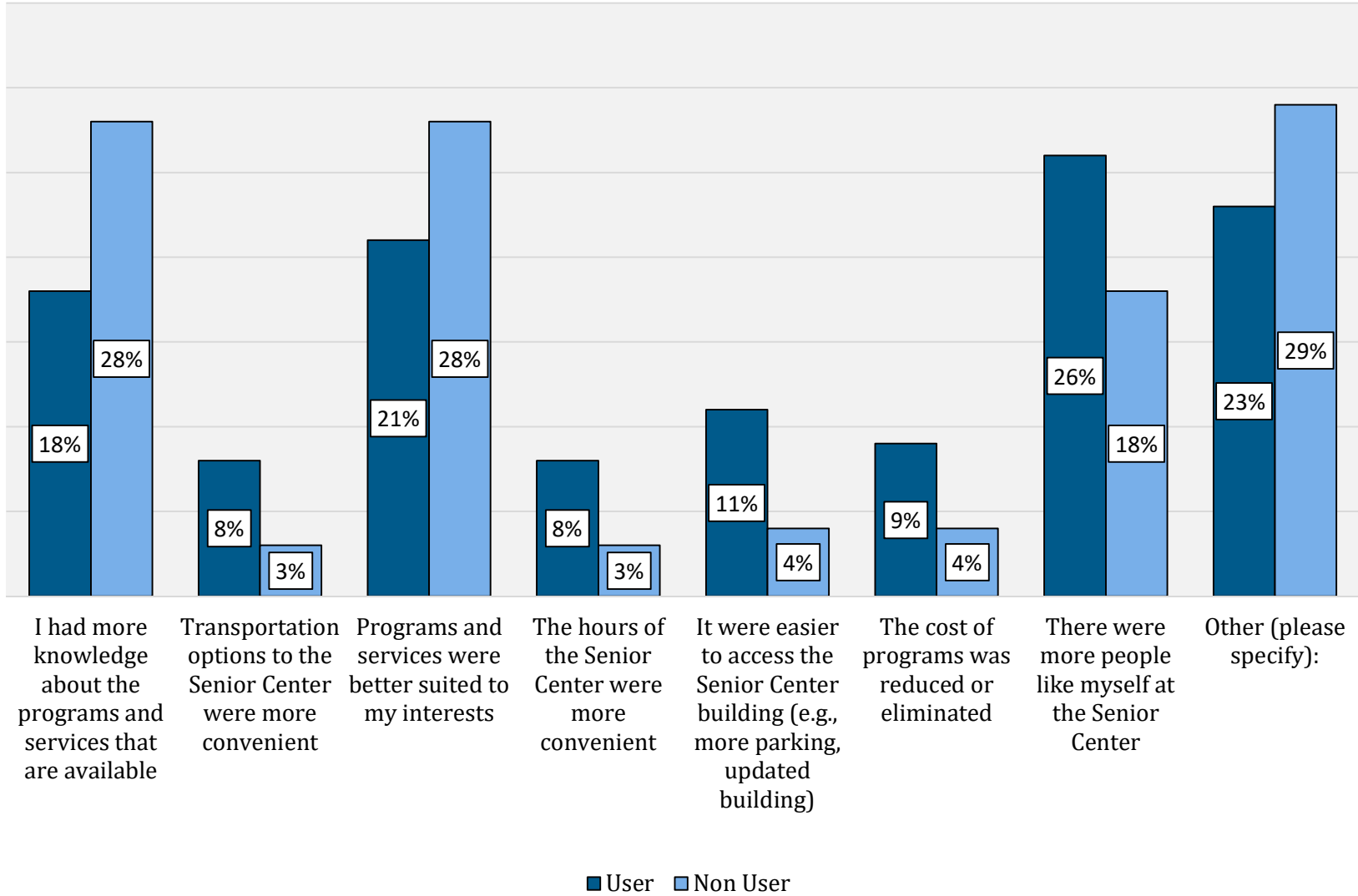


The second way respondents were asked about their preferences for programs and services was by asking them to select the factors that would increase likelihood of participating at the Eastham Senior Center (**Figure 36**). For those who do not participate at the Eastham Senior Center (“non-users”), the most commonly reported reason that would increase their likelihood of participating was “Other” (29%). Upon reviewing responses, the most common theme related to “having a need” for participation. For example, one respondent wrote “*I had more need - currently active volunteering, etc. but I suspect I will need more of these programs in the future*” and a different respondent wrote *they would be more likely to participate if “I had some specific needs. I used them in the past when my dad lived with me. They were invaluable with their support and services!”*. The second most commonly reported factors that would increase non-users’ participation were having more knowledge about the programs and services that are available (28%), and if programs and services were better suited to my interests (28%).

For those who use the Eastham COA, the number one factor that would increase their participation is “If there were more people like myself at the Senior Center” (26%). About 23% of those who do participate reported “Other” and provided written elaborations that mirrored the theme of “if I had more needs or more time.” A fifth (21%) of those who use the senior center selected, “if programs and services were better suited to my interests,” as a factor that would increase their participation.

Understanding reasons for lack of participation provides direction and opportunities for change. Overcoming the obstacle of unfamiliarity, increasing outreach, adapting programming to meet the broad interests of the older adult population, and exploring strategies to update the image and space of the Senior Center may be areas to consider as future Eastham COA goals.

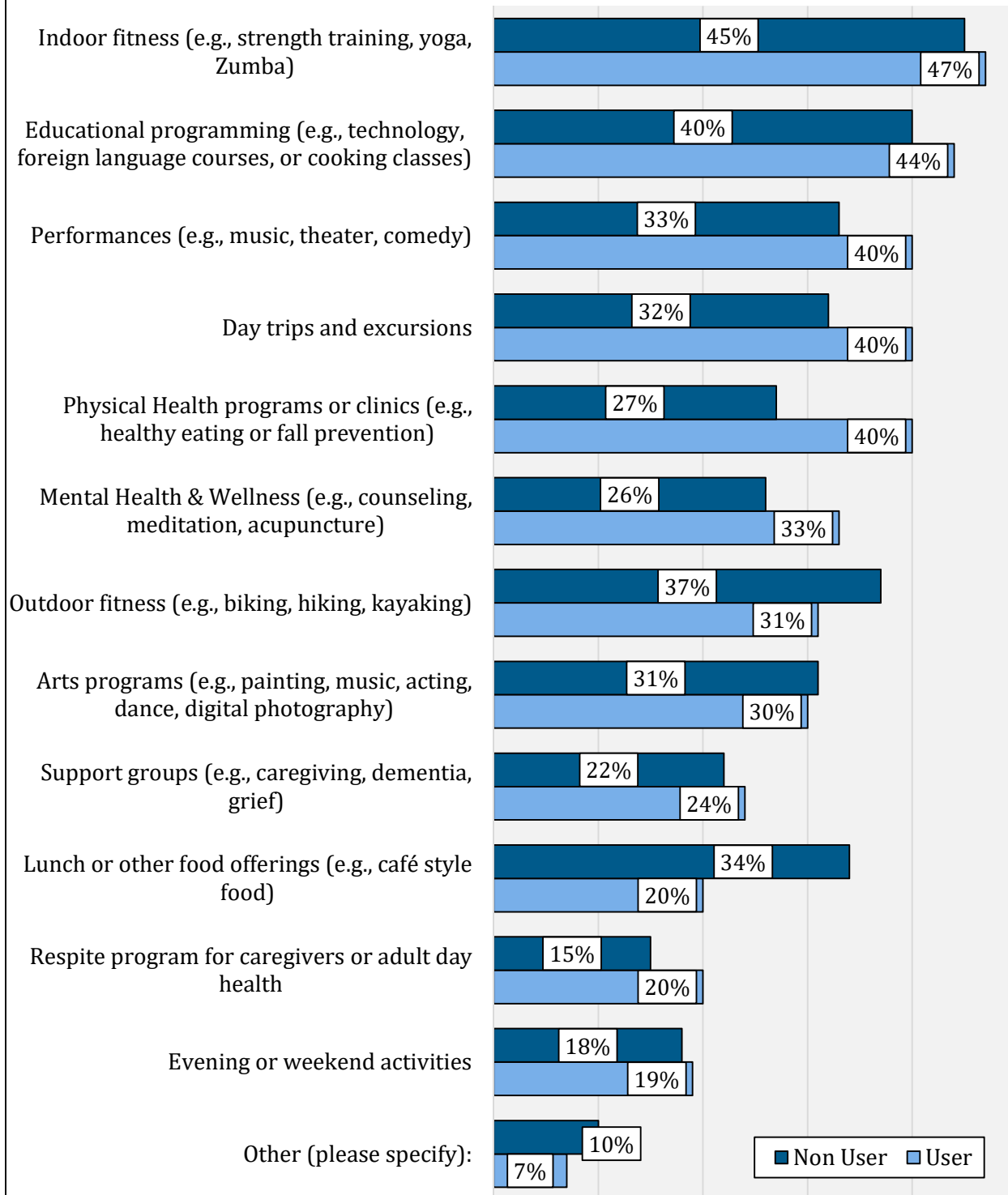
**Figure 36.** I would be more likely to use Eastham Senior Center programs and services if...



Another way that the survey assesses the preferences for future programming was by asking, “Thinking about your own future needs and interests, which of the following areas would you prioritize in expanding the programs available through the Eastham Senior Center”. **Figure 37** illustrates how responses vary between those who currently participate at the Eastham Senior Center compared to those who have not yet visited the center. Among users, the highest priority for expanding programming was given to indoor fitness classes (47%), educational programming (44%), and performances, day trips, and physical health and wellness programs (40%).

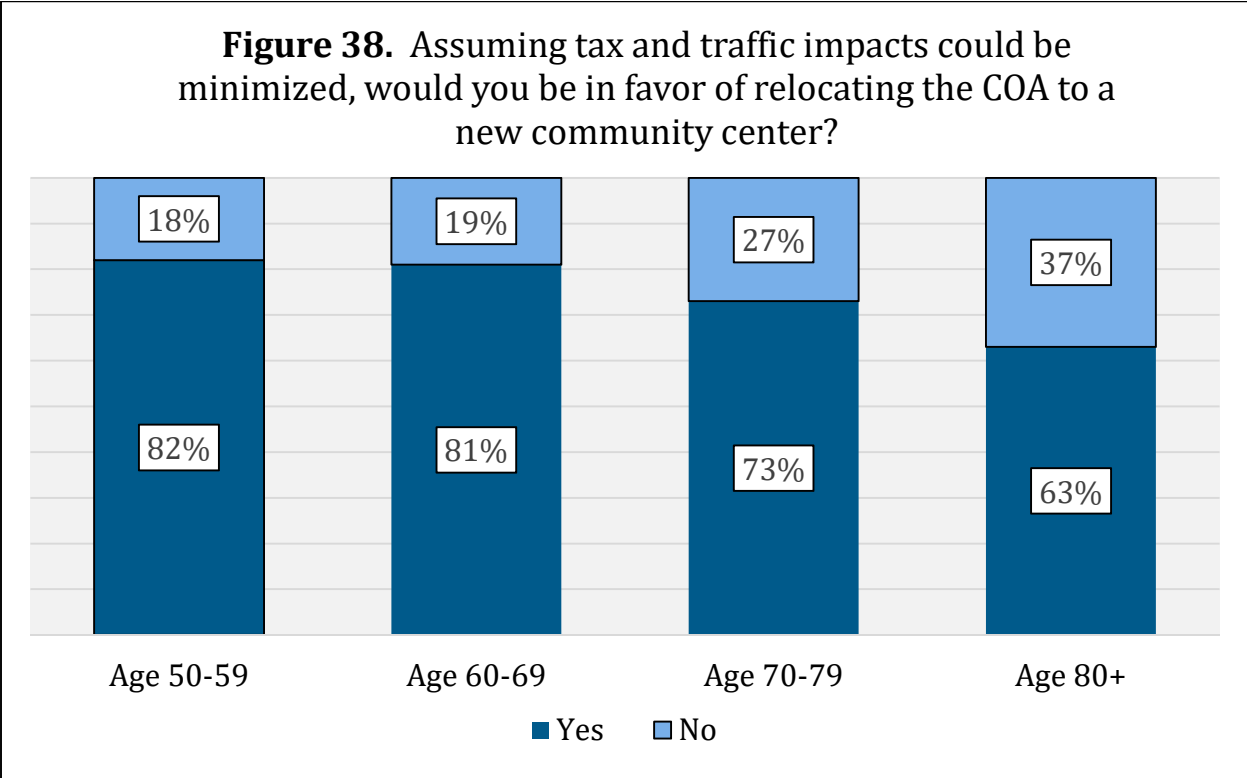
Comparatively, among those who do not participate at the Eastham Senior Center, priority was given to indoor exercise programming (45%), educational programs (40%), and outdoor fitness opportunities (37%). Interestingly, 34% of non users reported an interest in lunch programs, compared to just 20% among users—suggesting that the addition of lunch programming could draw in new participants. These results indicate an overall preference for active programming that promotes physical health, intellectual stimulation, and active engagement in the world around them—and obviously facilities that would allow for such programs to be delivered comfortably and safely.

**Figure 37.** Thinking about your own future needs and interests, which of the following areas would you prioritize in expanding the programs available through the Eastham Senior Center?



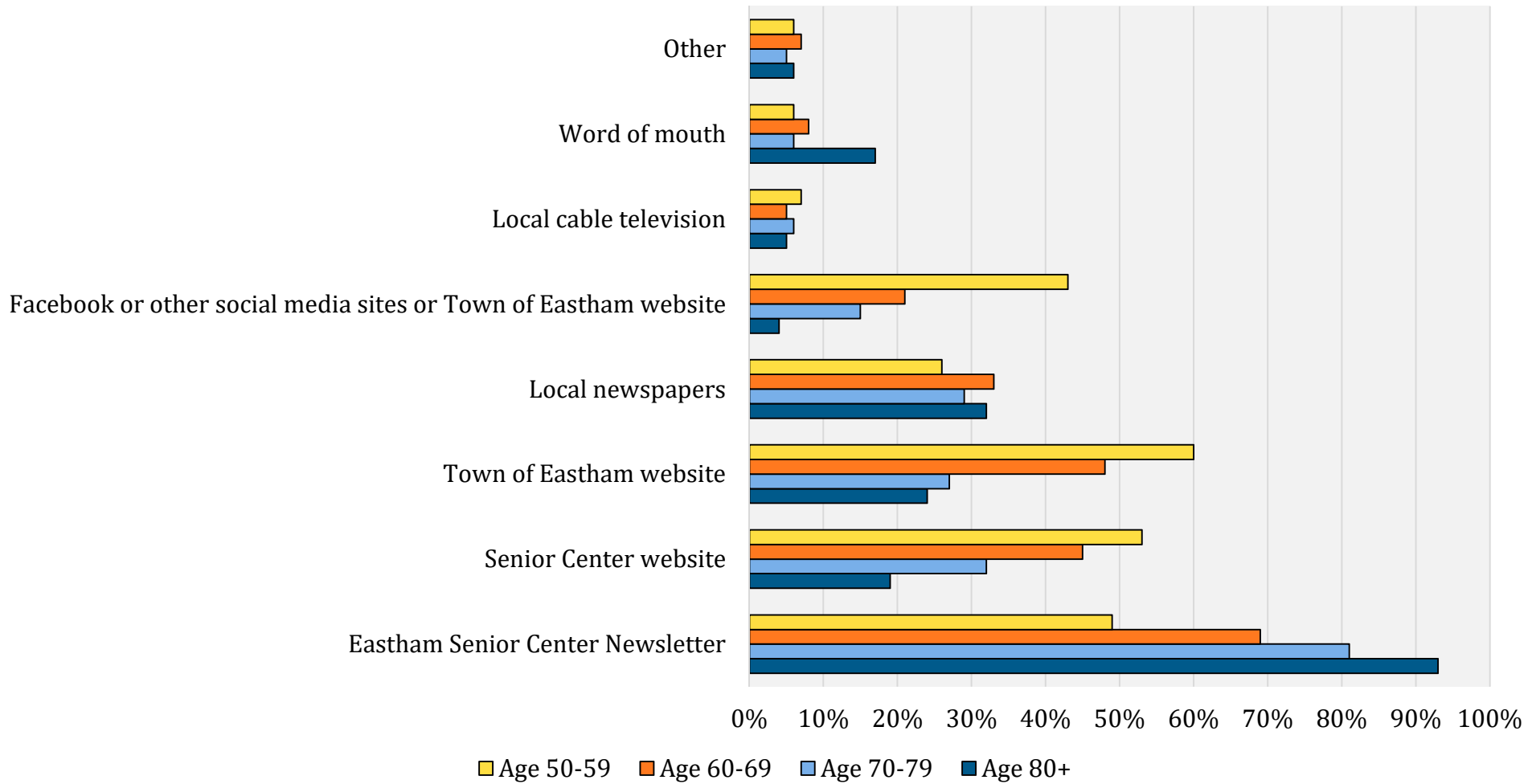


Survey respondents were asked the following question, “The Town has been developing concepts for the T-Time (property) for the COA and Recreation Department. This plan would accommodate the future growth of our senior community and increase programming for all ages. Assuming tax and traffic impacts could be minimized, would you be in favor of relocating the COA to a new community center?” Regardless of age, there was substantial support for this proposed arrangement, with 80% of all respondents responding favorably (see **Figure 38**).

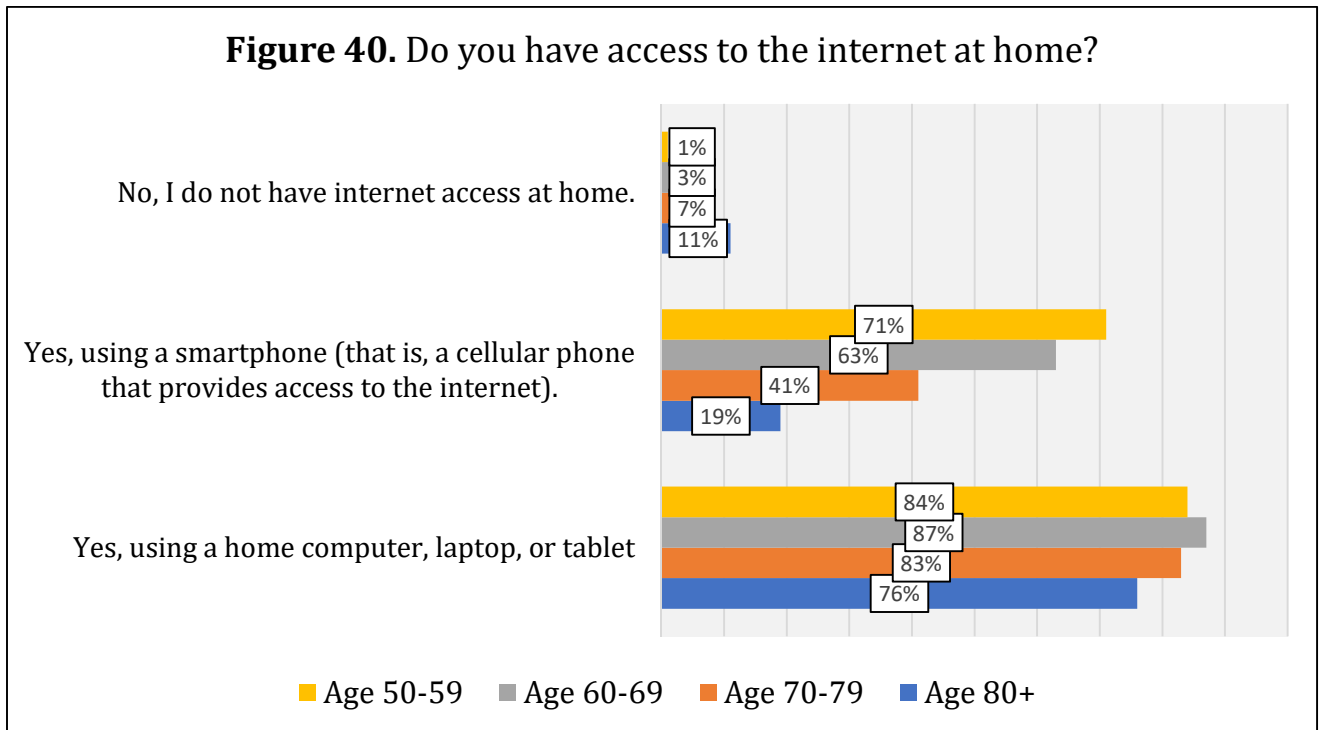


Communication and accessing information regarding activities and programs emerged as a theme from the focus groups. There was one question included on the survey related to preferred method of getting information. Preference for email, website, or social media communication varied by age (see **Figure 39**). Among respondents age 60 or older, the Senior Center newsletter is the most consistently preferred source of information. That share increases with each age category, with 69% in their 60s, 81% in their 70s, and 93% of those age 80 and older choosing the newsletter. Nearly 60% of respondents age 50-59 prefer to find information about activities and services on the Town website. Given that current Eastham Senior Center participants are somewhat older; thus we conclude that continuing to make information about the Senior Center available through print media remains important. Considering ways to amplify the distribution of the Senior Center Newsletter in conjunction with expanding the existing digital presence will aid in effectively reaching both older and younger residents.

**Figure 39.** Where would you prefer to find information about the activities and services offered by the Eastham Senior Center?



While most community survey respondents do have access to the Internet from their home via computer (85%) a majority also use smartphones (61%) (see **Figure 40**). It is important to note that 7% of respondents age 70-79 and 11% of those age 80 and older **do not**. This is important information both for outreach mechanisms but also to highlight the need for public access to Internet services for those who do not have connectivity in their homes.



At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were invited to write in any additional thoughts or comments about the Town of Eastham and more than 500 participants took the time to provide additional feedback. A sample of additional comments are presented on **Table 5**. The majority of the comments were positive, about the Town of Eastham in general, and about the Eastham Senior Center, more specifically. It is evident from the comments that while some of those who complimented the Senior Center take advantage of the programs and services, others do not at this time, but are comforted to know that the Senior Center is available for their future needs.

In addition, there were many suggestions regarding additional programs and services. Some respondents provided specific ideas, such as evening socials, handy-person services, dog-walking clubs, or visiting local museums and parks. Other suggestions focused on broader issues such as reaching a more diverse population of residents. Many commented on the limited affordable options for downsizing and the costs of property taxes that burden older residents in particular. As for services, the most mentions included a call for better gathering

spaces in Eastham for residents to socialize, partake in programming, and collectively engage in the community as volunteers.

Many survey respondents commented on the current capacity of the Eastham Senior Center—both building and staff. While many suggestions included ways to increase the number of residents who participate at the Senior Center, others recognized that the current space and staffing are not adequate to accommodate the growing number of older residents in Eastham. As well, findings from this needs assessment suggest that there is a local perception that one must demonstrate “need” to participate at the Eastham Senior Center—as opposed to participating by choice to maintain social connections and contribute to quality of life. More outreach to the community and more transmission of information about existing resources are things that respondents identified as needs—but would require additional workforce capacity..

**Table 5. Additional thoughts or comments about the Town of Eastham**

<b>Suggestions for programs and services</b>
A community center, all ages, drop-in center, lunch available 1-2x week, programs on nutrition, wellness, friendly welcoming place to meet new friends. I used to go 3x wk., but programs declined so went to Orleans + Chatham
I think this is a fantastic idea. Our seniors need a place they enjoy. A monthly newsletter is also a great idea due to elderly not using computers. Thank you too
I would like support or a list of local cape suppliers/recommended trades people (plumber, electrician, handyman, etc.) to get help when needed.
<b>Thoughts about a Community Center</b>
A new community center would bring more people to join thus COA Eastham has great people working for them- friendly, helpful and go out of their way to help.
I would like to see a combined center for all Eastham residents, with programs for seniors and others age groups as well.
This town needs a community center for the children and the elderly much like the one in Harwich.
<b>Thoughts about the senior center</b>
I think the senior center does a great job of providing services and programs for aging residents. I know you'll be there when I need to access them.
I think the senior center desperately needs a new building ..Also, to encourage more interactive activities to promote social health and well-being. I would love to see an Osher lifelong learning program on the outer cape.
The Eastham senior center is excellent. It is all inclusive- food, activities, transportation and accessible to all senior needs.
<b>Affordability of the community</b>
I am worried that in the future I will not be able to pay my taxes & all other bills if i retire & taxes increase, especially with all the new properties & projects that the town is taking on
I anticipate that in the future I will be financially unable to afford living in Eastham because of the housing situation
The Cape needs to be more affordable for both young and old. I'm retired but can't afford to live here without working. I'm concerned about what I'll do to be able to live here when I can no longer work
<b>Grateful for senior center</b>
I am grateful for the Eastham Senior center and all the services offered. It is a great comfort to know I have a place so accessible if i need help.
The COA is outstanding. I much appreciate the facility- have spent many happy times there.
Always have been both grateful and satisfied with my contacts with the Senior Center and very glad to know it is available and very "user friendly".

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The population of Eastham is comprised of about half older adults (49%); and, as a community that is a retirement destination for many, growth in the number of older Eastham residents is expected within the next few years. This central, overarching observation—that the older population of Eastham is already large and will continue to expand—makes clear the importance of considering how well features of the Town, the services and amenities available, and virtually every aspect of the community align with the age demographic moving forward.

In preparing for this demographic shift, the Eastham Council on Aging and the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging at the University of Massachusetts Boston partnered to conduct a study to investigate the needs, interests, preferences, and opinions of the Town’s residents age 50 and older. As part of this assessment, we conducted interviews and focus groups to hear from Eastham leadership, key stakeholders in the community, and specific cohorts of residents. In addition, a survey was developed and administered to Eastham residents age 50 and older. A total of 1,563 questionnaires was returned, reflecting a strong return rate of 33%. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other sources were examined in support of the project aims. Information from peer community Senior Centers was reviewed, as well.

A broad range of findings are reported in this document, highlighting the many positive features of Eastham as well as concerns expressed by older residents. The report is intended to inform planning by the Eastham COA as well as other Town offices, private and public organizations that provide services and advocate for older people within Eastham, and the community at large. While many of our findings, and the recommendations that follow, intersect with the scope of responsibility of the Eastham Council on Aging, it is understood that responding to many needs and concerns expressed in the community will require the involvement of other municipal offices or community stakeholders, and some will require substantial collaborative effort.

We summarize key findings and make the following recommendations to the Eastham Council on Aging:

- **The demand for Senior Center programs and services is expected to escalate in coming years.**
  - Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau show that in 2021, there were 2,769 residents age 60 or older living in Eastham—comprising nearly half of the population (49%).

- Eastham is a retirement destination—29% of survey respondents age 50+ have lived in Eastham for less than 10 years. Among those who are not currently full-time residents, 24% anticipate moving to Eastham full-time in within the next 5 years.
- Not only is the size of the older population growing in Eastham, but the complexity of their needs is increasing. In addition to basic needs (food, housing, transportation), participants identified meaningful opportunities to be engaged in their community and maintain physical health as key elements of community living.
  - Among survey respondents, the most important service offered by the Eastham COA is health insurance counseling and information and referral to available resources.
- The desire, among Town staff and residents, to address capacity and scheduling limitations at the Senior Center is reflected in collective planning to create a Community Center in Eastham. While these efforts continue, there is a parallel opportunity to build resident engagement through satellite programming and collaboration among stakeholders.

#### Recommendations:

Plan for escalating demand for Senior Center programs and services –including the expansion of both staffing and space.

- Advocate for more dedicated space for older adult programming. Specifically, space to accommodate lifelong learning courses and exercise programs is needed to meet the current and future preferences of Eastham residents.
- Currently, the Eastham Senior Center provides the only public social services in the Town. As needs for social services are expected to increase in quantity and complexity, address the need for additional social service staff to meet the needs of current and future older residents and their families.
  - Given the need for an increase in outreach staff, perhaps a new hire might be a LICSW who could offer clinical guidance to residents and provide supervision to social work interns.
  - Having more outreach staff dedicated to community outreach and education could widen awareness of the Senior Center’s offerings.
- As the space for additional programming becomes available, expand the programming staff to include an additional “activities coordinator” position that assists with scheduling and planning the programming aspects of the Senior Center.
- Consider selectively increasing the involvement of volunteers in staffing the Senior Center. Recognize that recruiting, training, and managing a strong volunteer program will require additional paid staff effort.

➤ **The perception of the Eastham COA is that it is “needs-based”—which deters participation.**

- The number one (26%) reason for not currently participating at the Eastham COA was “other”. For those who wrote in a response, the most common responses centered “not needing” to visit the Senior Center or “not being interested” what goes on at the Senior Center was extracted from these write-in responses, suggesting that communicating the purpose of the Senior Center and defining its target audience is a possible future step that could draw in a wider range of residents
- Similarly, among those who do not currently participate at the Eastham COA, developing “a need for something” was the most commonly reported factor that would motivate them to participate (28%).

**Recommendations:**

- Consider changing the name to be more inclusive. Creating an image that reframes aging as a positive and active experience may empower residents to participate.
  - Consider soliciting ideas for a new name by facilitating a Town-wide contest.
- Form an ambassadors program where informed residents can promote the COA to their networks and clarify the offerings of the Eastham COA.
- Further collaborate with local organizations and Town departments to host satellite programming around the Town to promote Senior Center programs and draw-in a wider range of residents. Consider meeting quarterly to establish consistent and coordinated efforts.
- Partnerships with the library, local businesses, and schools could help meet the needs for additional programming opportunities targeted for older adults and offer intergenerational opportunities.
  - For example, working with the schools to utilize gym equipment, track space, or even art equipment/space during off hours.
  - Consider occupying a table or two at a local coffee shop or the library and offer “technology drop-in” help for residents looking to learn more about their devices or how to hone their technology skills. Consider recruiting local residents with technology backgrounds to serve as the coaches.

➤ **Programming at the Eastham COA does not currently align with the range of interests of residents.**

- Regardless of whether respondents use the Eastham COA or not, indoor and outdoor exercise were among the most preferred types of programs to be expanded at the Eastham COA and educational programs were the second most preferred.
- Among those who do not currently use the Eastham COA, 34% would like to see the Eastham COA expand on its lunch program or other food offerings.



- Given the opportunity to write in their own ideas, respondents focused on programs that enabled them to develop or hone a skill (e.g., woodworking, gardening, dance, business) and social programs that were focused on bringing like-minded people together (e.g., film discussions, LGBTQ programs, intergenerational programs).

### Recommendations:

- Advocate for new space that includes ample space for indoor exercise classes that can accommodate large groups and offers access to exercise equipment (e.g., weights, stationary bikes etc.). Also consider a walking track that is available to all residents.
- Consider a community wide contest that provides an opportunity for residents to share programming ideas that reflect their interests and talents.
- Extend the satellite model to the business community through a partnership with the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce to increase socialization, while supporting local business infrastructure during the off-season.
  - Explore opportunities with local restaurants and performance theaters such as The Academy Playhouse, Cape Rep Theater, and Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater to create dine and engage events that include lectures, entertainment, and wellness programs.
  - Encourage Cape Cod resorts to offer short term access to their amenities through the Resort Pass system.<sup>27</sup>
- Partner with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) to provide transportation for an around the Cape Senior Center bus tour where members have an opportunity to experience programming and events in other communities through a monthly day trip.
- Support the expansion of current Hiking Club by developing a Trailblazers club<sup>28</sup> to link with adults seeking to connect via outdoor activities.
  - Construct, or incorporate at an existing playground, intergenerational fitness and play features with accessible gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Consider a walking trail or labyrinth; partner with the Recreation department to offer outdoor yoga and meditation programs.
  - Create parklets.<sup>29</sup> at the beachside and in frequented locations to provide comfortable spaces for interaction and enjoying scenic views. Partner with local food trucks to offer convenient dining options.
- Explore opportunities to hold regional senior sports tournaments on Cape Cod, potentially through a partnership at Cape Cod Community College. For inspiration and sponsorship ideas, look to the Massachusetts Senior Games<sup>30</sup>, a volunteer

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.resortpass.com>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/SouthboroughTrailBlazers/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.boston.gov/transportation/boston-parklets-program>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.maseniorgames.org/2023-schedule>

driven non-profit organization that promotes health and fitness among older adults through education programs, fitness activities, and competitive athletic events. On a smaller scale, conduct a fitness fair with paddle and field events at Eastham High School.

- Coordinate with residents to identify topics and skills they can share with others and pilot-test a lifelong learning program.
  - Perhaps COA Board members could facilitate special interest groups to develop programs.
  - Explore the possibility of providing a stipend or opportunity for tax-relief for volunteer instructors.
- Create an intergenerational committee with representatives from the High School and Senior Center to establish a “Reverse Mentorship” or a “Sages and Seekers”<sup>31</sup> program. Create and publicize shared theater, educational, and recreation events among residents. Consider an intergenerational book club, debate team, or choir group that is led by adult mentors.
- Expand access to LGBTQ events and activities by collaborating with other COAs and organizations.
  - Connect with existing LGBTQ events on the Cape and provide transportation for Eastham residents.
  - Consider occasionally hosting such events locally.

➤ **Opportunities to adapt current housing, downsize, or obtain housing with services are perceived as challenging in Eastham.**

- Cost of living, particularly rising property taxes, is named as a top concern among respondents as they think about being able to stay in Eastham as they age.
- Nearly a third of survey respondents report needing some kind of home repair to remain living safely over the next 5 years. Among them, 10% are unable to afford such repairs. Among those who wrote-in about their concerns, maintaining property and homes was also a top concern, specifically citing the lack of knowledge about finding a handy person or contractor to help with small repairs or modifications.
- When asked about preferences for type of housing, more than one-third (37%) of respondents aged 50-59 would prefer to live in 55+ community, and among those respondents age 60+, assisted living is the most preferred housing type for the future.

**Recommendations:**

- Conduct a home safety workshop that includes a panel with COA and First Responder staff, local architects, real estate professionals, and Eastham Ace Hardware to discuss home safety evaluation tools and related solutions, including supportive aging in

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<sup>31</sup> <https://sagesandseekers.org>

place products. Refer to the AARP HomeFit Guide<sup>32</sup> and consider the development of a Lifelong Housing Certification Program.<sup>33</sup> Through safety and accessibility improvements properties can be certified as age friendly

- Work with partners to offer a more extensive list of contractors or handypersons who will provide home modifications to support safety within the home. Continuously update the list.
- Promote awareness of various housing options across the lifespan and continue to contribute to local conversations about housing options for older adults who wish to find supportive housing.
  - Advocate for options that current residents prefer, including condominiums and other types of housing that offer low maintenance and single-floor living. Assisted living communities and senior independent living units are desirable housing options.
  - Host a virtual forum to promote community conversations and awareness related to home sharing opportunities. Include representatives from Nesterly, a social enterprise that is dedicated to building intergenerational engagement and access to affordable housing through home sharing. Distribute Nesterly's<sup>34</sup> digital toolkit in advance of the meeting to Town leaders and residents.
  - Design a "housing choice" lunch and lecture series to encourage pro-active thinking about aging in place and inform residents of local creative and supportive resources that support housing needs.
    - Invite local experts (e.g., real estate agents, contractors, disability commission members, lawyers, financial professionals) who can share their perspective about future housing options based on a wide range of individual scenarios.
    - Include representatives from Cape Cod organizations fostering access to affordable housing and offering technical and financial assistance for the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
      - Community Development Partnership<sup>35</sup>
      - Housing Assistance Corporation<sup>36</sup>
      - TRI, The Resource, for Community and Economic Development, Inc.<sup>37</sup>
- Promote awareness of existing property tax relief programs.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/homefit-guide.html>

<sup>33</sup> <https://rvcog.org/home/sds-2/lifelong-housing-program/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.nesterly.com>

<sup>35</sup> [Community Development Partnership | Homepage \(capecdp.org\)](https://www.capecdp.org)

<sup>36</sup> <https://haconcapecod.org>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.theresource.org>

- Document the number of residents who are “turned away” from existing programs due to eligibility requirements or other reasons to establish recommendations for expanding access.
- Explore other incentive programs for volunteers.

➤ **Obtaining supplementary and accessible transportation is a concern for Eastham’s residents as they age.**

- More than one out of four respondents (29%) who drive modify their driving to make it easier or safer; and 5% of respondents do not drive at all.
- 30% of those who modify their driving and 46% of those who do not drive at all report having difficulty getting to where they want to go.
- When asked about barriers to using existing transportation in Eastham, top barriers reported by those who modify their driving or do not drive at all include having physical mobility challenges that make accessing transportation difficult and not having enough information about what is available.

**Recommendations:**

- Ensure that segments of the community at high risk of experiencing barriers to transportation are aware of available options: residents aged 80 and older, non-drivers, and those with significant mobility limitations.
- Consider developing a local “travel training” program where residents can learn about options and navigation.
- Explore the development of a formal volunteer transportation program (e.g., Friends in Service Helping <sup>38</sup>(F.I.S.H.). to expand door-to-door transportation to the Senior Center or other social gatherings or shopping excursions and appointments.
- Collaborate with Nauset Neighbors to expand existing options.
- Consider collaborations with neighboring COAs to coordinate transportation to medical services, adult day programs, or special trips.
- Promote availability and access for on-demand ride service through the Town’s commitment to educational events at the Senior Center and a partnership with Eastham High to increase local capacity as well familiarity with on-demand resources. Explore funding opportunities to offset costs associated with these services. See TRIPPS<sup>39</sup> for resources.

➤ **Many Eastham residents need support due to physical or cognitive conditions, and many caregivers need help. Partnership opportunities exist to expand safety**

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<sup>38</sup> <https://fishlexington.org/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.brooklinema.gov/1502/Transportation-Services>

## **features in homes and the environment through education and intergenerational support.**

- 36% of survey respondents reported having been a caregiver within the past 5 years, including 43% of respondents aged 50-59.
  - Among caregivers, 43% reported that it is challenging to provide care and complete their daily responsibilities.
  - Nearly a quarter of caregivers are caring for someone who is frail or has limited mobility, and 23% are caring for someone living with dementia.

### **Recommendations:**

- Look at options to expand supports for caregivers and create new ways of providing information about referral resources available through the COA.
    - Consider hosting a family caregiver “resource fair” as an opportunity to connect the Eastham COA with family caregivers.
    - Consider developing a volunteer respite program, which would require space and staff oversight, to offer residents a few hours of respite.
    - Explore ability to re-establish an adult day program or provide transportation to area programs.
    - Continue to coordinate with other COAs and organizations to connect Eastham caregivers with existing services.
  - Conduct community-wide dementia friendly training among Town Staff and residents through a partnership of the Council on Aging and Eastham Police Department. Explore opportunities to leverage the Community Navigator program to establish Mental Health First Aid training. Explore Dementia Friends<sup>40</sup> and Thrive NYC<sup>41</sup>; these training initiatives raise awareness about residents and families living with dementia and expand capacity to support residents through a train the trainer model.
  - Leverage Eastham’s S.A.F.E and Senior Safe programs to design intergenerational events which build awareness of safety challenges that affect residents of all ages, such as cyber security. The programs bring trained firefighter educators and residents together to discuss fire and life safety lessons. Eastham is one of many Cape Cod communities that receive funding through legislative earmarks to the Executive Office of the Public Safety & Security. Consider providing training opportunities for residents to support tasks related to safety in the community.
- **Eastham residents are a tight-knit group, but the risk of isolation is high.**
- There are features of life in Eastham that can make it easy to lose touch or self-isolate. For a wide range of reasons, residents are frequently traveling off the Cape for periods

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<sup>40</sup> <https://dementiafriendsusa.org/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://mentalhealth.cityofnewyork.us>

of time. As well, the seasonality of the local economy and the challenges of weather can make it seem desolate.

- According to American Community Survey data, more than one out of five residents of Eastham age 65 and older live alone (23%). Among survey respondents, this rate of living alone is highest among those in their 70s (34%) and 80's (52%).
- 36% of survey respondents get together in-person with someone once a month or less.

### Recommendations:

- Engage local faith communities<sup>42</sup>, restaurants, and nonprofits like the Family Table Collaborative<sup>43</sup> to host a monthly community dinner to provide a regular opportunity for residents to come together in a social setting.
- Work together with the Public Works Department to install new, or dedicate existing, "Chat Benches<sup>44</sup>" to create public spaces where socializing is encouraged.
- Identify land, or seek volunteers to share their property, to establish community gardens in Eastham. Consider a multigenerational approach<sup>45</sup> or a more informal arrangement<sup>46</sup>
- For residents with family off-Cape, consider creating an "Adopt-a-grandparent<sup>47</sup>" program in which local residents can meet up with younger families and do things together like celebrate Grandparents Day with a luncheon or bake cookies for the holidays.
- Consider celebrating National Good Neighbor Day (9/28) or Older Americans Month (May) with a series of "Let's Talk, Eastham" programs<sup>48</sup> in which residents come together to be in conversation with one another that are exhilarating, inspiring, and meaningful.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.saintlukesscitate.com/community-dinner>

<sup>43</sup> <https://familytablecollaborative.org/partners/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/09/17/metro/happy-chat-benches-encourage-strangers-sit-stay-while/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-in-action/info-2015/how-to-create-maintain-intergenerational-community-garden.html>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.capecodtimes.com/story/lifestyle/2011/08/14/treehouse-community-garden-bring-neighbors/49935281007/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://adoptgrandparent.org/>

<sup>48</sup> <https://conversationsnewyork.com/>

## Appendix A: Community Survey Results

**Note:** Appendix tables are based on 1,563 responses to the Town of Eastham Survey of residents age 50 and over, conducted in Summer 2022. 21% of respondents completed the survey online and the rest were returned my mail. See text for additional details.

### Section I: Community and Neighborhood

#### Q1. Which of the following best describes your status as a resident of Eastham?

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I live in Eastham year-round	85%	84%	85%	90%	92%
I primarily live in Eastham, but spend winters living elsewhere	8%	6%	9%	8%	8%
I primarily live elsewhere, but spend parts of the year living in Eastham	7%	10%	6%	2%	--
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

#### Q2. How long have you lived in the Town of Eastham?

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Fewer than 5 years	15%	27%	9%	4%	2%
5-9 years	14%	18%	15%	6%	--
10-19 years	21%	19%	25%	19%	11%
20-29 years	24%	16%	25%	40%	24%
30years or longer	26%	20%	26%	31%	63%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

#### Q3. How important is it to you to remain living in Eastham as you get older?

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Very Important	74%	72%	75%	75%	85%
Somewhat Important	20%	21%	20%	21%	13%
Slightly Important	4%	5%	4%	4%	--
Not at All Important	2%	2%	1%	--	2%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q6. Do you plan to become a full-time resident within the next 5 years?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	5%	8%	4%	3%	4%
<b>No</b>	6%	7%	6%	3%	--
<b>N/A I am already a full-time resident.</b>	89%	85%	90%	94%	96%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q7. Do you feel informed about what to do in the event of a weather or other local emergency?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	93%	90%	94%	98%	94%
<b>No</b>	7%	10%	6%	2%	6%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q8. Would you know who to contact in Eastham should you or someone in your family need help accessing social services, health services, or other municipal services?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	78%	72%	80%	84%	85%
<b>No</b>	22%	28%	20%	16%	15%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q9. How often do you feel unsafe in Eastham?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Frequently</b>	1%	--	1%	1%	--
<b>Sometimes</b>	5%	6%	3%	5%	4%
<b>Rarely</b>	40%	42%	40%	38%	43%
<b>Never</b>	54%	52%	56%	56%	53%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**Section II: Housing and Living Situation**

**Q10. Who do you live with? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I live alone	22%	15%	27%	34%	52%
I live with a spouse or partner	71%	77%	73%	58%	33%
I live with my adult children (age 18 or older)	8%	10%	5%	6%	13%
My children (under age 18)	2%	5%	--	--	--
My grandchildren	1%	2%	1%	--	2%
My parents	1%	3%	--	--	--
Another relative	2%	3%	1%	2%	--
Someone else	1%	1%	1%	--	1%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q11. Do you own or rent your current residence?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
The residence is owned by me or someone with whom I live.	97%	95%	98%	98%	98%
The residence is rented by me or someone with whom I live.	3%	5%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q12. Does your current residence have a bedroom and full bath on the entry level?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Yes	90%	90%	91%	91%	93%
No	10%	10%	9%	9%	7%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q13. Does your current residence need home modifications (e.g., grab bars in showers or railings on stairs) to improve your ability to live in it safely for the next 5 years?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes, and I can afford to make these modifications</b>	32%	28%	37%	31%	25%
<b>Yes, but I cannot afford to make these modifications</b>	5%	5%	6%	2%	6%
<b>Yes, but I am not responsible for making these modifications (e.g., I rent my current residence)</b>	1%	2%	1%	1%	--
<b>No, my current residence does not need modifications</b>	62%	65%	56%	66%	69%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q14. Does your current residence need home repairs (e.g., new roof, electrical work etc.) to improve your ability to live in it safely for the next five years?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes, and I can afford to make these repairs</b>	26%	25%	25%	29%	26%
<b>Yes, but I cannot afford to make these repairs</b>	0%	13%	7%	8%	6%
<b>Yes, but I am not responsible for making these modifications (e.g., I rent my current residence)</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	--
<b>No, my current residence does not need repairs</b>	63%	62%	67%	62%	68%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q15. In the next 5 years, if you needed move from your current home, what kind of housing would you prefer in Eastham? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Single-family home	24%	35%	16%	15%	17%
Multi-family home (2, 3, or more units)	2%	3%	2%	1%	--
Apartment, condominium, or townhome	26%	27%	28%	22%	9%
55+ community	31%	37%	31%	22%	6%
Accessory apartment	7%	9%	7%	4%	4%
Assisted Living community	33%	22%	35%	45%	59%
Other	13%	12%	15%	14%	15%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

### **Section III: Social Activities & Relationships**

**Q16. In the past month, how often did you talk on the phone, send email or use social media, or get together to visit with family, friends, or neighbors? (Check only one per item)**

**Q16. Talk on the phone, FaceTime, or Zoom or FaceTime with family, friends, or neighbors**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	50%	53%	47%	52%	49%
One or more times a week	36%	33%	38%	36%	39%
More than once a month	8%	8%	8%	6%	12%
About once a month	3%	3%	3%	2%	--
A few times a year (e.g., holidays)	2%	2%	2%	3%	--
Never	1%	1%	1%	1%	--
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q16. Send email or use social media with family, friends, or neighbors**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	65%	74%	64%	49%	42%
One or more times a week	23%	19%	24%	30%	23%
More than once a month	5%	5%	4%	4%	15%
About once a month	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
A few times a year (e.g., holidays)	1%	1%	1%	1%	6%
Never	4%	1%	5%	5%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q16. Get together in person with family, friends, or neighbors**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Every day	18%	29%	17%	18%	25%
One or more times a week	46%	45%	49%	41%	35%
More than once a month	22%	23%	21%	23%	21%
About once a month	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%
A few times a year (e.g., holidays)	7%	7%	5%	9%	10%
Never	1%	--	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q17. Who would you ask for help if you needed assistance with a minor task or errand (e.g., changing a lightbulb, shopping, shoveling snow)? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>A friend, family member, or neighbor</b>	72%	71%	71%	73%	74%
<b>Town of Eastham (e.g., Public Safety, Council on Aging)</b>	13%	8%	13%	20%	19%
<b>An organization that I belong to (e.g., faith community or a non-profit)</b>	5%	5%	4%	7%	6%
<b>I would pay someone to help</b>	37%	32%	42%	41%	35%
<b>Other (please specify):</b>	4%	4%	3%	6%	6%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

#### **Section IV: Health**

**Q18. In the past 12 months, I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Often True</b>	1%	1%	1%	--	--
<b>Sometimes True</b>	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
<b>Never True</b>	94%	92%	94%	96%	96%
<b>I don't know</b>	1%	2%	1%	--	--
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q19. Do you have an impairment or condition that limits your ability to participate in the community**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	16%	8%	16%	31%	46%
<b>No</b>	84%	92%	84%	69%	54%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Section V: Caregiving**

**Q20. Do you now or have you in the past 12 months provided care or assistance to a person who is *disabled, frail, or struggling with a physical or mental health condition (e.g., a spouse, parent, relative, or friend)*?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	36%	43%	31%	32%	21%
<b>No</b>	64%	57%	69%	68%	79%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q21. How challenging is/was it for you to care for this person(s) and meet your other responsibilities with family and/or work?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Very Challenging</b>	12%	14%	6%	16%	20%
<b>Somewhat Challenging</b>	31%	32%	33%	20%	30%
<b>Neither Challenging Nor Easy</b>	23%	24%	22%	21%	10%
<b>Somewhat Easy</b>	19%	14%	21%	30%	10%
<b>Very Easy</b>	17%	16%	18%	13%	30%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*\*This table only includes respondents who reported providing care to someone now or in the last 12 months.*

**Q22. If yes: Did this person have any of the following conditions? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages
<b>Alzheimer's disease or dementia</b>	23%
<b>Chronic disease</b>	19%
<b>Psychological condition</b>	14%
<b>Frailty/mobility limitations</b>	24%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Section VI: Transportation**

**Q23. What are the primary ways in which you meet your transportation needs?  
(Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>I drive myself</b>	93%	97%	95%	84%	63%
<b>Bus</b>	3%	3%	3%	2%	--
<b>Taxi or ride sharing service (e.g., Uber, LYFT)</b>	2%	2%	2%	2%	--
<b>My spouse or child(ren) drive me</b>	20%	12%	21%	29%	48%
<b>Friends or neighbors drive me</b>	8%	5%	5%	15%	28%
<b>Transportation provided by the Eastham Senior Center</b>	4%	1%	2%	9%	20%
<b>Walk or Bike</b>	17%	20%	17%	12%	--
<b>The Dial a Ride Paratransit</b>	--	--	--	--	--

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q24. Within the past 12 months, did you have to miss, cancel, or reschedule a medical appointment because of lack of transportation?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	2%	2%	2%	3%	17%
<b>No</b>	98%	98%	98%	97%	83%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q25. What kind of difficulties do you have in getting the transportation that you need? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Public transportation is unavailable or inconvenient</b>	10%	10%	9%	13%	11%
<b>Transportation options cost too much</b>	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Physical limitations or other impairments make accessing transportation options difficult</b>	3%	2%	2%	5%	19%
<b>No door-to-door assistance</b>	3%	3%	3%	3%	7%
<b>Distance to my destination is too far</b>	4%	4%	3%	7%	7%
<b>No one I can depend on for a ride</b>	3%	3%	4%	6%	3%
<b>I have no difficulties</b>	82%	85%	74%	61%	82%
<b>Other</b>	4%	4%	4%	4%	9%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q26. How satisfied are you with the transportation options available to you in Eastham?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	11%	9%	11%	14%	20%
<b>Somewhat Satisfied</b>	14%	13%	16%	14%	12%
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	9%	12%	9%	14%	12%
<b>Not at all Satisfied</b>	8%	9%	7%	8%	10%
<b>Not applicable</b>	56%	60%	55%	54%	45%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**Q27. Which of the following strategies do you use to modify your driving to make it easier or safer?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Not Applicable -- I do not drive</b>	5%	3%	3%	12%	32%
<b>I limit my driving (e.g., I avoid driving at night, during bad weather, in unfamiliar areas)</b>	29%	18%	34%	40%	54%
<b>I drive with no limitations</b>	66%	80%	64%	48%	15%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Section VII: Programs & Services at the Senior Center**

**Q28. Do you see the Eastham Senior Center as playing a role in the lives of yourself, loved ones, or neighbors?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	61%	43%	62%	70%	85%
<b>No</b>	39%	46%	38%	30%	15%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q29. The following items refer to programs and services that are offered through the Eastham Senior Center. Please rate the importance of each program/service to you or a member of your family: (Check all that apply) % rated “very important” or “important”.**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b><u>Services</u></b>					
<b>Assistance with local, state, or federal programs (e.g., fuel assistance, food stamps, tax abatements, social security)</b>	31%	38%	29%	23%	32%
<b>Local Transportation</b>	25%	29%	23%	23%	27%
<b>Transportation to medical appointments</b>	31%	34%	26%	30%	44%
<b>Information and referral to other agencies (e.g., in-home supports)</b>	36%	41%	34%	30%	41%
<b>Durable medical equipment loans (e.g., walkers, showers, beds, wheelchairs)</b>	32%	36%	29%	30%	36%
<b>Professional Services (e.g., tax preparation, legal services, Veteran’s services)</b>	32%	36%	28%	31%	39%
<b>Health Insurance Counseling (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or MassHealth)</b>	39%	46%	36%	31%	34%
<b>Food programs (e.g., lunches, home-delivered meals, grocery service, food pantry)</b>	27%	32%	22%	23%	30%
<b>Fitness programs (e.g., yoga, tai chi, hiking club)</b>	32%	39%	30%	21%	27%
<b>Health Clinics (e.g., blood pressure, podiatry)</b>	32%	37%	28%	26%	33%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Programs</b>					
<b>Social or recreational programs (e.g., painting, movies, crafts, games, music)</b>	29%	36%	25%	21%	29%
<b>Support groups (e.g., caregiver support or low vision support)</b>	26%	30%	24%	22%	28%
<b>Technology support (e.g., computer classes or help with devices)</b>	28%	30%	24%	26%	27%
<b>Educational opportunities (e.g., lectures or language classes)</b>	25%	29%	23%	18%	25%
<b>Local trips/outings (e.g., Hyannis shopping or museums)</b>	22%	25%	20%	17%	19%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q30. Currently, how frequently have you called, used services or attended programs offered by the Eastham Senior Center?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Two or more times a week</b>	3%	2%	3%	4%	11%
<b>About once a week</b>	4%	2%	4%	5%	11%
<b>A few times a month</b>	3%	1%	3%	7%	13%
<b>About once a month</b>	3%	2%	4%	4%	7%
<b>A few times a year (e.g., special events only)</b>	27%	20%	29%	35%	45%
<b>Never</b>	60%	72%	57%	45%	11%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q31. If never or only a few times per year: What is the reason that you do not currently use programs or services offered by the Eastham Senior Center? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
I am not interested	23%	18%	26%	34%	--
I participate in programs elsewhere	14%	7%	19%	19%	50%
I am unaware of the programs and activities available	15%	19%	13%	13%	--
I am not old enough	19%	34%	7%	3%	--
I do not have time	16%	16%	16%	18%	--
Other	26%	23%	30%	19%	33%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%.*

**Q32. Please check all factors that would increase the likelihood of your using the Eastham Senior Center programs and services more often...**

	All ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
If transportation options to the Senior Center were more convenient	5%	3%	3%	9%	15%
If it was easier to access the Senior Center Building (e.g., more parking, updated building)	7%	4%	8%	10%	11%
If I had more knowledge about programs and services that are available	23%	30%	20%	16%	17%
If the cost of programs was reduced or eliminated	6%	6%	7%	4%	7%
If programs and services were better suited to my interests	23%	21%	26%	23%	22%
If the hours of the Senior Center were more convenient	5%	6%	5%	3%	6%
If there were more people like myself at Senior Center events	21%	23%	22%	14%	13%
Other	26%	26%	28%	27%	17%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q33. Thinking about your own future needs and interests, which of the following areas would you prioritize in expanding the programs available through the Eastham Senior Center? (Check all that apply)**

	All ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Lunch or other food offerings (e.g., café style food)</b>	26%	23%	26%	29%	41%
<b>Arts programs (e.g., painting, music, acting, digital photography)</b>	30%	42%	26%	13%	17%
<b>Performances (e.g., music, theater, comedy)</b>	36%	39%	36%	29%	32%
<b>Educational programming (e.g., technology, foreign language courses, or cooking classes)</b>	41%	48%	41%	32%	15%
<b>Physical health programs or clinics (e.g., healthy eating or fall prevention)</b>	32%	37%	29%	29%	26%
<b>Mental health &amp; Wellness (e.g., counseling, meditation, acupuncture)</b>	29%	36%	25%	22%	19%
<b>Support groups (e.g., caregiving, dementia, grief)</b>	23%	25%	22%	22%	24%
<b>Day trips or excursions</b>	35%	35%	36%	35%	17%
<b>Evening or weekend activities</b>	18%	24%	17%	9%	13%
<b>Outdoor fitness (e.g., biking, hiking, kayaking)</b>	34%	49%	32%	13%	2%
<b>Indoor fitness (e.g., strength training, yoga)</b>	45%	56%	45%	28%	11%
<b>Respite program for caregivers or adult day health</b>	17%	20%	16%	14%	17%
<b>Other</b>	8%	6%	9%	11%	6%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q34. The Town has been developing concepts for the T-Time for the COA and Recreation Department. This plan would accommodate the future growth of our senior community and increase programming for all ages. Assuming tax and traffic impacts could be minimized, would you be in favor of relocating the COA to a new community center?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes</b>	80%	82%	81%	72%	62%
<b>No</b>	20%	18%	19%	28%	38%
<b>Total:</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q36. Where do you prefer to find information about the activities and services offered in the Town of Eastham? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Eastham Senior Center Newsletter</b>	64%	49%	69%	81%	93%
<b>Senior Center website</b>	45%	53%	45%	32%	19%
<b>Town of Eastham website</b>	49%	60%	48%	27%	24%
<b>Local newspapers</b>	30%	26%	33%	29%	32%
<b>Facebook or other social media sites or Town of Eastham website</b>	28%	43%	21%	15%	4%
<b>Local cable television</b>	4%	7%	5%	6%	5%
<b>Word of mouth</b>	7%	6%	8%	6%	17%
<b>Other</b>	6%	6%	7%	5%	6%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%.*

**Section VIII: Demographic Information**

**Q37. Please select your gender identity.**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Male</b>	39%	37%	39%	44%	37%
<b>Female</b>	61%	63%	61%	56%	63%
<b>Other</b>	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q38. What is your age range?**

Age	Percentage Responded
<b>50-59</b>	9%
<b>60-69</b>	30%
<b>70-79</b>	39%
<b>80-89</b>	17%
<b>90+</b>	4%
<b>No response</b>	2%
<b>Total</b>	100%

**Q39. Are you able to access the internet from your home?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Yes, using a smartphone (that is, a cellular phone that provides access to the internet)</b>	61%	71%	63%	41%	19%
<b>Yes, using a home computer, laptop, or tablet.</b>	85%	84%	87%	83%	76%
<b>No, I do not have access to</b>	3%	1%	3%	7%	11%

the internet at home.					
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q40. What is your employment status? (Check all that apply)**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Working full-time</b>	15%	33%	3%	1%	--
<b>Working part-time</b>	13%	19%	12%	6%	--
<b>Retired</b>	71%	46%	85%	91%	94%
<b>Other</b>	6%	8%	5%	3%	4%

*\*Figures do not sum to 100%*

**Q41. When do you plan to fully retire?**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>N/A, I am already fully retired</b>	67%	42%	82%	89%	94%
<b>Within the next 3 years</b>	6%	10%	4%	1%	--
<b>In 3 to 5 years</b>	6%	13%	1%	2%	--
<b>In 6 to 10 years</b>	5%	11%	1%	--	--
<b>In more than 10 years</b>	2%	6%	--	--	--
<b>Not sure</b>	7%	10%	6%	2%	--
<b>I do not anticipate ever fully retiring</b>	7%	9%	6%	6%	6%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Q42. Do you have adequate resources to meet my financial needs, including home maintenance, personal healthcare, and other expenses."**

	All Ages	Age 50-59	Age 60-69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	36%	34%	39%	32%	32%



<b>Agree</b>	51%	49%	50%	59%	58%
<b>Disagree</b>	10%	13%	9%	8%	9%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	3%	5%	3%	--	--
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%