

Growing Older in Fort Collins: Silver Tsunami as Golden Opportunity

April 17 and 26, 2012

Participant Worksheet and Survey Results

Senior Center Primary Functions

At both meetings, as participants were completing the keypad process concerning the Senior Center functions and activities, we also asked them to write down any additional comments or questions on written surveys they had at their tables. The document includes all the comments provided on those forms.

Function 1. A senior center should offer a range of services and activities that respond to participants' needs, interests, and differences

April 17 answers

- With Red Cross and/or fire department, offer free or less expensive training in first aid and CPR
- Gate keeper
- More workout equipment; you have a good woodshop area but its use is not readily available.
- It does this well but will have to do more to accommodate older populations
- There is an incredible amount of programs that are offered. Really need dedicated rooms for the specific activities
- I don't use senior center for any of the programs or services they offer. All these sound like worthwhile uses of space.
- Senior center does a great job, but can probably do even more to meet the baby boomers' needs. They are very different, I believe than in the past.
- If classes/programs fill up quickly, maybe we need more classes.
- You are doing a great job but as mentioned, many one of us (including me) are moving here
- Crafts needs a separate room from woodworking
- Art needs a room separate from woodworking. The dust and noise from woodshop is not compatible with a lot of art.
- I go to zumba 2x a week at N. Aztlan and there are many seniors. It's a very full class and a long way to . some of my friends will not go because it's too crowded.
- I use most of the services at the Senior center
- What about senior Sports leagues?
- We do pretty good with this—more computer space and computerize library—a place to donate books and encourage this
- Improve variety of program and times; program should meet the need of special populations; programs need to incorporate emerging populations

April 26 answers

- Doing great
- Need better facilities for exercise programs
- Bocce court
- We need to somehow let all seniors know more about this
- Need more rooms
- Yes although sometimes I feel its too much and can be over whelming

Function 2. A senior center should function as a community focal point for service delivery to older adults through partnerships

April 17 answers

- Income tax assistance would be a great service!
- Not all services here but gatekeeper
- I use income tax assistance and wellness education
- Congregate meals are great—need to add more people coming and more room (presently limited to ~45)
- Estate planning by someone not selling living trusts
- Financial consultation; coordinate volunteers to help seniors.
- Sound like good ideas.
- Better communication needed on website such as fcgov.com, recreator, and monthly SC emailed newsletters.
- Yes, I've participated in these programs—they may be the only preventative services some people get. Senior center is uniquely positioned to be a focal point for community services and community awareness building/knowledge.
- Authorized non-profit service deliveries authorized by the SC and city (ie Computer Maintenance)
- There needs to be more room for popular events like help with taxes and somehow extra parking for such events. Maybe there could be a farther out parking lot with shuttle service.
- Improve on the marketing aspect of reaching out.

April 26 answers

- I would like to see the Sr. Ctr. Reach out to community services & invite them in to educate, inform & support members. Not in a marketing function but education
- The SC needs to do a better job of this. Everyone in the community who offers services to seniors should also view the SC as a focal point not just the seniors themselves
- Healthy selection of salads and low calorie foods
- Expanded hours and transportation
- This offers opportunities for efficiencies good idea
- Very important to coordinate offerings among all agencies in Larimer county don't attempt to reinvent the wheel or be all things to all people
- I do not think this is or should be the role of the SC
- It would be good to have a salad cart. Incorporated in the lunch program like pagosa springs senior center

Function 3. A senior center should improve older adults' knowledge of and access to community services at locations throughout the city.

April 16 answers

- very limp
- if it does, it's not well known
- Not enough staff to do this

- Advocating for seniors at city advisory boards.
- I can't comment on how or where they might/should do this but it seems like a reasonable idea.
- More outreach needed; presentations at library and community groups
- Great! Exposure of the senior center has much improved over the years I have lived in Fort Collins (since 1985), when the senior center (downtown) almost seemed like a sheltered workshop setting. Now it is a crown jewel of Fort Collins! Keep up the good work!
- Church groups?
- "hub" for dissemination of information for all seniors in Fort Collins area.
- Link to newcomers club or other ways (realtors, doctor's offices, etc.) to inform new residents of what is already in Ft. Collins
- Printed material is available. Would be nice to be able to schedule appointments here with Larimer ARCH, social security, etc.
- Senior Center resource enter w/online access
- Need to work on this; need to advertise more
- Marketing of programs is critical; flyers, Recreator, webpage, not really user friendly.

April 26 answers

- This is extremely important as it is very difficult for anyone to navigate our service web but alone a senior we need to offer them as much help as possible
- Would be good to get staff away from the computers day in and day out
- No booth at new west fest
- Other agencies do this (aspen club, office on aging) and that's ok
- Did not know SC was for age 50+ thought it was 60 or 65
- Need a social services coordinator
- Work with county transportation issues
- I do think the SC should educate and guide seniors to resources
- Yes but first step is to get seniors to the center or connected to the center via computer or other media
- Needs to increase awareness of programs
- Aspen club has information to help

Function 4. A senior center should connect low income, socially isolated, and at-risk older adults to programs and services

April 16 answers

- Very important—present participation appears to be middle and upper income folks
- Not just low-income, but quality housing. Who determines criteria? So is SC gatekeeper (?)
- Not well publicized if it is done.
- Vital function here—transportation, important; speaks up to community of Seniors
- Provide transport access; possible satellite units such as north side Aztlan center.
- Yes there are lots of these folks in our community, sometimes they seem invisible; yes—it will be even more important we assist the groups in the future.
- Case management, (something) around seniors
- Limited transportation
- Don't know.
- Are there sign up fees for low income populations or scholarships? Outreach workers whose job is specific to this function? Bilingual?

April 26 answers

- a kiosk of the office on aging would be helpful
- need a social services coordinator
- we need to do such a better job at this there are so very many seniors located behind closed door that are struggling and isolated with very limited mobility
- provide more transportation options for seniors who no longer drive
- churches social services organizations already doing this
- this is important and could be handled largely by senior volunteers
- not (in my mind) a real function of the senior center
- this is a major issue and should be a top priority
- this is very much a needed function
- that for nursing homes SC are for active seniors

5. A senior center should educate the community concerning senior issues and enhance the image of older residents.

April 16 answers

- Education is always a need; with input from community
- Need to use volunteers to do this, not only staff. Senior spokesperson
- Advocacy for seniors is important
- No response reflects my opinion. I do not think a senior center should be advocating
- More outreach needed
- Yes we need to be integral to the community; passing on legacies to young people, interface of seniors and children and town/gown (?) activities all important.
- Have a regular page/column in the Coloradoan
- Seniors=dedicated to the topic on aging. But need diverse publication

April 26 answers

- We need to educate neighbors and community members about the aging issues so that they can help be involved and keep the quality of life in FC solid
- SC is in a good position in the community to do this seems appropriate SC should do this
- Need social services coordinator or office
- Not as important as the others except as connecting seniors to the services of the center
- Low priority
- Very important
- YES there can never be enough opportunity to educate and learn
- More in senior voice

Function 6. A senior center should provide training opportunities and support research on issues related to aging,

April 16 answers

- good place for this. Is it done currently? Not publicized if so.
- Need better membership program, better parking.
- I don't think they need to support research, it's enough to partner with CSU/extension for research
- Good idea. A win-win for students and seniors
- Extend to FRCC and other educational institutions as well.

- Yes this would be a good research topic.
- Begin this now! The resources are close and they are eager to connect with the senior center for academic research!
- I would like to see/hear about this
- Not aware that this is even happening. Is it really a priority of our community?

April 26 answers

- Need social services coordinator/ office
- Leave this to the experts at CSU and the Center on Aging
- Work with the aspen club

7. A senior center should provide opportunities for facility users to inform and advise the senior center administration

April 16 answers

- I'm aware this is a function now, but do not know the quality of their participation or how useful it is to the administration
- Expand role of SC council and SAB
- Yes advisory boards are great focus group and carry the interests of constituents. With surveys, remember that lots of seniors don't have internet so the easier done the better.
- Get more feedback from members in every activity area
- Email info on events
- Not aware of this.

April 26 answers

- You do a great job at this and it is so important in our community
- Not serve as slaves to cook clean tables etc
- Its not clear how to influence the programs offered
- Remember some do not drive at night

Function 8. A senior center should train staff who will encourage participants' personal growth,

April 16 answers

- good enough to be kind; not necessary to be psychiatrists
- good idea/goal
- Work more with aspen club, PVHS and CSU in this issue.
- Could be better. How about having programs particularly addressing this? I don't see a lot happening focused on what I would call "personal growth"
- Not a function of the Senior Center!
- Staff should be volunteers and seniors to encourage participant's personal growth
- Issue of professionalism and well trained staff; all staff unaware of all programs or not considerate

April 26 answers

- The staff is the glue that can really make the difference in the life of a senior
- Staff not qualified to do this not appropriate use of building on staff time
- Money to staff to improve

- Does this mean have a staff psychologist available
- Need to be more proactive
- This should be a naturally occurring function of all staff
- Excellent

Function 9. A senior center should provide significant volunteer opportunities for older adults at the senior center

April 16 answers

- Not a lot of recruitment; not very meaningful
- Social (something) staff
- Good for seniors to be with multi-generational volunteer places, not just at senior center.
- I don't think this is a function of a senior center. Non-profits, schools, hospitals, united way, etc. offer training. All the other community organizations need the volunteers
- It takes skill/finesse to get seniors into niches that meet the needs of seniors and the agency or people for whom the volunteer... It's good to make a really good match.
- Need an online or hard copy newsletter to inform folks of opportunities. Also need to share now to link to school volunteer programs
- Activity credits for volunteers
- Not aware of them. Is there a volunteer coordinator position dedicated to this function?

April 26 answers

- Senior center should be a hub for linking seniors to meaningful volunteer options throughout city-linking to schools and business community
- Excellent
- If this being done, more communications is needed
- Makes people feel appreciated and valued also could potentially reduce staffing budget
- No need to recruit use volunteers of America and United Way VOA RSVP program
- Volunteers clearing house

Participants were also asked to comment on other Senior Center functions not mentioned above:

April 16 answers

- Forums on important issues: local, state and national and international (in cooperation with educational institutions); a center for continuing education: Front Range Forum is great!
- Could really use (useful) to have woodshop in different room from basketry. Need bigger and more art rooms!
- What about seniors who can't get to the senior center?
- More city-wide advertising of senior center activities
- Better Yoga facility
- Computerize drop in to class instead of green card to give to teacher

April 26 answers

- I think that it is important to include services for all ages if we can get the young and old together we can promote respect and work to eliminate agism and prejudices multigenerational activities benefit both the young and the old
- The community should be made more aware of SC activities

- Only my 2nd time here so don't really know what the SWC am unable to say more or less good or bad in terms of these functions
- SC focus efforts don't spread to thin utilize the exsisting resources make community instead of recruiting
- I don't think the SC does a good enough job of tooting its own horn

Senior Center Programming and Activities

Similarly, participants we asked to provide any additional comments or suggestions about

1. Aquatics – *lap swimming, water walking, water volleyball, aqua fitness*

April 16 answers

- Water aerobics
- Add therapy pool (similar to Eldora)
- Lots of good opportunities and fun instructors
- Hydropool
- Need bigger pool/locker room
- Additional or larger pool

April 26 answers

- Need another or a larger pool
- I have used
- Priority to more classrooms for educational programs

2. Arts/Crafts – *drop in groups for crafts, quilting; open shop for projects; classes in basketry, drawing, painting, stained glass, and more*

April 16 answers

- Provide space for guild workshops, meetings etc. at little or no cost. Have work group time more often and more varied in times
- More art classes, drop in classes and workshops.
- Need a special room for arts
- You could expand these offerings I think
- Drop in groups for art; demonstrations of arts; exchange for supplies and books

April 26 answers

- I have not used
- Think this is a key function hub for senior involvement

3. Education – Lifelong Learning – *Front Range Forum; classes in computer skills, international cuisine, safety and first aid, and life skills, among others*

April 16 answers

- Free or less expensive training by Red Cross and/or fire department.
- More class rooms needed; dedicated bridge lessons
- Increase subjects and number offered

- You could be more creative and expand your offerings
- Book clubs

April 26 answers

- I have used
- Better technology for presentations ease of use better micro phones
- Need more classrooms

4. Fitness – *basketball, volleyball, table tennis, pickle ball, badminton; walking track; cardio equipment; fitness classes, including strengthening, toning, stretching*

April 16 answers

- Need more fitness equipment, more room; Personal trainer available without class
- It would be nice to have more strength training, chair yoga, etc.
- New equipment, larger classrooms, coordinate with other senior organizations ie. Aspen Club etc. too much lack of shared information
- Fitness wing for fitness medicine, etc. Yoga room (carpeted with entry way with cubbies for shoes, purses, etc.
- More fitness equipment, personal trainers.
- Need bigger fitness area/cardio equipment
- Tai chi

April 26 answers

- Indoor tennis courts
- Class rooms
- Tai chi yoga matter of balance

5. Health and Wellness - *wellness education; health services such as flu shot clinics, balance screenings, cholesterol checks, etc.; foot clinics; therapeutic massage; yoga and meditation*

April 16 answers

- Educate community about free in-home cholesterol and blood pressure checks by PVH ambulance services; determine how and apply better method of reaching 50% recovery from cardiac arrest.
- Opportunity to have a walking team or close (something) a certain time
- Yoga and meditation would be good.

April 26 answers

- Audio for every room
- Gymnasium is poorly lighted re lamp with optional medium and high light levels

6. Outdoor Recreation – *outdoor activities including walking, hiking, skating, skiing, exploring, taking risk*

April 16 answers

- Family canoeing: Fort Collins to I-25 on Poudre River. Family sailing and family water safety.
- With an increase in cost for ski lift passes, help create a mid-week discount for participants on the Wednesday ski bus program

- It's good to do these in a group. Reduces the isolation and increases fitness, emotional well-being. Lots of birds with one stone.
- Survey users to expand/update activities
- Gardens for volunteers to play in
- Do outdoor recreation with existing clubs or groups in the community

April 26 answers

- Biking groups/ hiking groups/ walking groups weekly basis
- Construct 2 or more outdoor pickle ball courts that could double as a dance floor

7. Social activities – events and programs, such as holiday and meal events, celebrations, performances, clubs

April 16 answers

- Make them more interesting to a diversity of boomer types.
- Singles club
- Dating service/connections. Be inclusive—transgendered, LGBT, English as a second language, no family, etc.

No April 26 answers

8. Theatre/Music/Dance – participate in a theatrical performance; dance instruction, social dance event; participate in a musical group, learn an instrument; or attend a performing arts event

April 16 answers

- Maybe multiple trips to stage shows in Denver
- Could improve

April 26 answers

- How about dancing with a fireman policeman and plumber you get the idea could be fun

9. Library/media center – access to resource materials on health, lending library, community access computers

April 16 answers

- On-going free or low-cost computer training, free coaching on a drop in basis
- Haven't used the media center; more advanced computer training.
- Update the equipment. Need computer tech to regularly purge trash from computers.
- City IT staff do not provide sufficient maintenance services on SC computers—use registered non-profit org recommended to help

April 26 answers

- Consistency in a volunteer coordinator needed (turn over) leads to gaps between recruitment and training

10. Travel – day trips, overnights, extended travel

April 16 answers

- I would like to see more trips
- Would like more day trips

- Services to add—housing locating, help to find a place to live. Help to find services to take care of the housing.

How satisfied were you with today's discussions?

April 16 answers

Very satisfied 10

Satisfied 8

No opinion 1

Unsatisfied 0

Very unsatisfied 1

April 26

Very satisfied: 34

Satisfied 19

April 16 answers

- I have a hearing problem-could not understand first woman speaker. It would be helpful if discussion tables could be far apart or in different room or outside to reduce overall noise level
- Thanks for the snack!
- Very clever to have other tables drill down group's ideas
- Table group discussions seemed more productive than time in first hour.
- Organized, good questions. How many in the audience actually use the center?

April 26 answers

- Excellent program covered a lot of great ideas
- Many good ideas were brought out
- Revealing
- Well organized
- Extremely well done organized
- Time well spent
- Loved the pads very efficient use of time
- Good process and facilitators
- I love the research mythology used
- Facilitators were very good its good to see college students focused
- I very much enjoyed the discussion I think hearing from the public is crucial to meeting the needs of our community
- Needed more time to brain storm
- Need more discussion time
- Did not realize that the 50+ adult population was to increase as much as stated
- Very informative CSU is such an excellent resource for fort Collins entities glad to see them helping with surveys statistics its all a start
- Too noisy to brainstorm very effectively but still a great process
- Valuable but we haven't discussed relational costs
- Hard to hear from the back

Was the facilitator helpful?

April 16 answers

Very much so 18
Somewhat 2
Not sure 1
No 0

April 26 answers

Very much so 38
Somewhat 6

April 16 comments

- Very nice
- Very considerate/attentive
- Both quite good
- Good records, suggestions on wording of questions and recommendation

April 26 comments

- Both excellent
- Myles and carol
- Loved the breakfast
- Enjoyed barbs speech and statistics
- Good job constrained by time
- Good range of ages present
- 2nd one SAM was great ready to go
- Well trained students good facilitators
- Follow up use of seniors to continue dreaming up community support for expansion
- Had hard time explain process but tried their best
- Maybe add a recorder so facilitator can concentrate more on discussion

Please provide any additional comments, ideas, suggestions, or questions you have about the issue or the process:

April 16 comments

- The process of function needs to be specific—flipping to different pages is consuming time; format of this session was more confusing in the sense of presentation. Grey areas; some of the ideas that were great would entail [something] and regulations which [something]; facilitator was great
- Good work; thanks for asking! A difficult task
- FR forum?
- Provide assistance with tax preparation
- Thank you for the opportunity to participate
- Public kitchen, craft room with oven in it (craft/kitchenette with refrigerator and oven); Timberline and Horsetooth Senior Living Center
- When focusing on fitness—a yoga room or place dedicated to a shoes off area would be used at a high rate for exercise.
- Prior to decisions on senior center please do a focus group with socially isolated. They are not the group who will come or can get to these kinds of events/outreaches.

- Meal nutritional values could be improved. Vegetables and fruits would be appreciated.
- Please keep it a *senior* center!
- Do the facilitators gain more of an understanding of what seniors are all about?!
- Workout, fit, media center, overall info for seniors for all locations
- The front desk needs to improve a lot. Registration needs to be easier. Computer systems needs to be friendlier (staff frequently seems baffled). Could we swipe our own super pass cards? Rethink entire flow of information.
- “Question option” missing on assessing functions is “I don’t know but the SC should”
- Great start to look at the needs of the baby boomers

April 26 comments

- Parking with a large garage and or educate people better on using the wonderful bus service
- Excellent please do this again and again
- Need more info on what SC functions are % distribution of history in front of this document
- Budget info to SC functions add to your idea list strengthen coordination with CSU students faculty staff you need the resources to about the expansion
- Improve parking but going up or under don’t use too much open land
- We need more display cases with light more area to hang art need more ads for people to know there hobbies and interests can be on display people seem to enjoy looking and talking about the displays I know I do
- Parking garage
- I found the activity of evaluating the other tables suggestions very confusing it was difficult to evaluate their ideas my group more or less wanted to change their ideas
- ((The boomer were the largest and most rebellious group in the US history they left their infants with others medicated their elementary kids (divorce of the charts) because mom didn’t have time for them they are the most self serving (me me) and unhealthy (ate their own processed frozen foods with pesticides etc cancer on the up and up caregivers won’t want to help them for long changing staff/ volunteers GOOD LUCK GREYS)
- These 3 sessions have been very well run and informative the speakers have been great focused and very sufficient short and to the point
- I currently swim at the mulberry pool They the swimmers and MS participants do not come to the SC pool because 1 it is too small 2 it is too warm
- Think about how the SC membership can help improve living situations for the younger population
- Important to move forward ASAP time is of the essence for all important programs
- Parking solid
- This was so positive and educational engaging the community is a great was to approach this
- I wish that the expansion plans for this senior center will contain enough new class room which will provide adequate size/ flexibility for running new intellectually challenging courses
- Thank you for a most interesting program and delicious breakfast I am very interested in providing extra classrooms for front rage forum classes
- Process interesting efficient and productive well done
- Publicize this process so the community will know and begin to support the expansion
- More time space faculties for seniors are desperately needed in FC but beware of building a gigantic megacenter (cities don’t just build larger and larger schools they build schools where the students are) Why not consider “satellite centers” in an expanding FC liberally inhabited by new seniors eg 140% increase by 2020

- Need more classrooms and bigger classrooms for front range forum with hearing assistance equipment for those who are hard of hearing
- 1 important to use interns wherever feasible value for them and us
- 2 important to reach out in community as to programs
- Many of the aging population can't just volunteer, we need to continue working but still want to volunteer part time so we need to support each other in part time employment possibilities senior center could help a lot if there in space
- Not enough time allowed for brainstorming