



**Ridgefield 2023 Senior Survey  
Overview and Results  
For Ridgefield Library Presentation  
3-12-24**

# Survey Overview

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An online (digital) and paper version of The Ridgefield Senior Survey (RSS'23) was offered to the 8,000+ senior residents aged 55+ from September 1 through December 1, 2023.

To protect the confidentiality of the survey participants, names and addresses were not included but we did ask for their birth month and year so we could segment the survey responses by age breaks.

To further protect confidentiality, we asked town organizations with large senior memberships to deploy the survey link to their members via e-mail. These organizations included the Ridgefield Library, Founders Hall, RVNA, Meals on Wheels, Rides for Ridgefield, condo and apartment complexes, churches and others.

The survey link was also posted on the Town website and paper surveys were offered via our partner locations and Town Hall. We are very grateful for their support of this survey.

# Survey Metrics

Total 55+ residents	8,000		
Total e-mail surveys opened	6,639	83%	(6,639 / 8,000)
Total e-mail surveys submitted	1,991	25%	(1,991 / 8,000)
Total paper surveys submitted	165	2%	(165 / 8,000)
Total surveys submitted	2,156	27%	(2,156 / 8000)

- 2,156 surveys is the base number used for this report
- The % shown in each table is of the respondents to that question
- The # of responses and non-responses are shown for each question
- This report is for presentation purposes and does not contain all the survey questions. A final version of the full report will be posted to the Town website shortly.
- The margin of error is +/- 2% at a 95% confidence level.

# The Senior Class

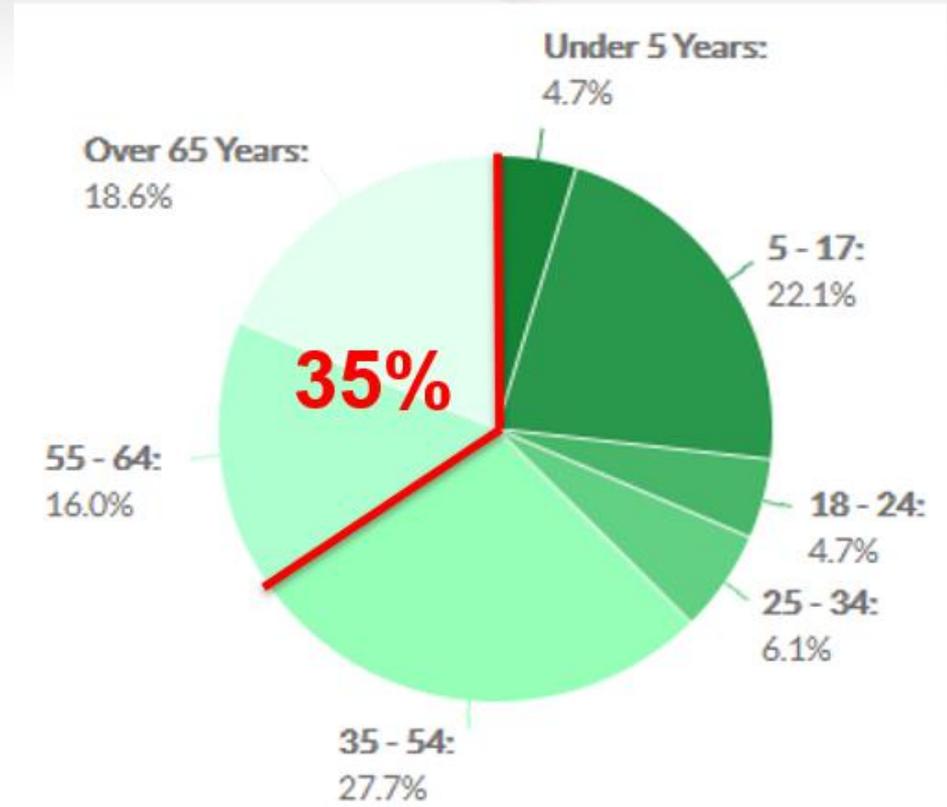
Ridgefield population as of 2021 - **25,148\***

Males - **12,325**; Females - **12,823**

## Seniors:

55 to 59 years	2,212
60 to 64 years	1,819
65 to 74 years	2,161
75 to 84 years	1,443
85 years and over	1,067

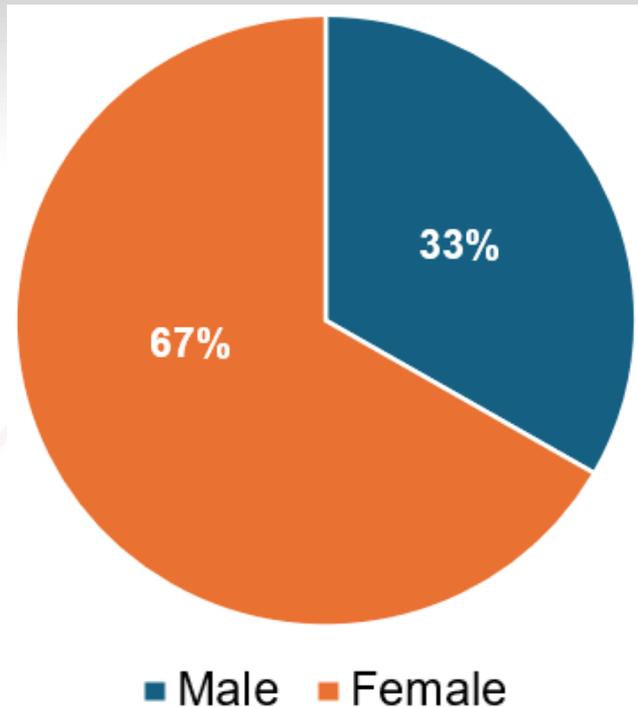
**Total - 8,702**



\* 2020 US Census data, updated to 2021

# Gender & Age of respondents

## Gender



(1,179 Respondents; 977 Non-respondents)

## Age breaks

Age 90+	3.1%
Age 85-90	4.9%
Age 80-84	13.4%
Age 75-79	18.3%
Age 70-74	17.6%
Age 65-69	19.3%
Age 60-64	12.7%
Age 55-59	9.3%
Born in 68 & 69	1.5%
	100.0%

Summary of age group percentages:

- Age 80-84, 75-79, and 70-74: 18%
- Age 75-79, 70-74, and 65-69: 36%
- Age 65-69, 60-64, and 55-59: 32%

# ***Executive Summary*** (2,156 survey base)

## **Section 1 - Tell us about you** (1,191 respondents; 965 non-respondents)

- 56% have lived in Ridgefield for 26+ years and 24% for 40+ years
- 64% live with a spouse/partner; 25% live alone
- 70% live in a single-family home and 86% own their home

## **Section 2 - Your life in Ridgefield** (1,124 respondents; 1,031 non-respondents)

- 75% feel that living independently in their own home is extremely important
- An average of almost 91% have no limitations keeping them from staying in their homes.
- 92% have a contact person in the event they are in trouble.
- 90% play pickleball at least 1x/month and 85% drive themselves to activities.
- 59% want to stay in Ridgefield as they age.

# Executive Summary (con't)

## Section 3 - Your health (1,172 respondents; 983 non-respondents)

- 70% rate their health as excellent or very good.
- 82% engage in exercise everyday or several times per week.
- 76% of respondents do not provide caregiver support
- 82% say disabilities do not hamper their activities.
- 99% of respondents are able to keep medical appointments and take daily medications.

## Section 4 – Ridgefield resources (1,033 respondents; 1,122 non-respondents)

- 97% agree that the town parks are well maintained and safe.
- 75% rate Ridgefield as excellent or a very good place to live.
- On average, 94% of respondents feel the Library is a positive resource in town.
- 56% of respondents are Founders Hall members and participate in their programs.
- On average, 87% of respondents use some type of personal technology.

# Household limitations

Do any of the following factors limit your ability to remain in your home, either for yourself or others who live with you?

	Not At All	Somewhat	Very Much	Responses	No Response
Wheelchair-limited	94%	5%	1%	1122	1,034
Other mobility limitations	83%	15%	2%	968	1,188
Sight disability	91%	8%	2%	953	1,203
Hearing disability	85%	14%	1%	956	1,200
Mental Health	95%	4%	1%	942	1,214
Dementia	95%	4%	1%	935	1,221

# How frequently do you interact with your friends, family or neighbors *in-person*?

	Family	Friends	Neighbors	Responses	No Response
More than once a day	57%	31%	13%	877	1,279
About once a day	34%	40%	26%	517	1,639
Several times a week	28%	45%	27%	923	1,233
About once a week	30%	33%	37%	571	1,585
1 to 2 times a month	26%	28%	46%	396	1,760
Less than monthly	33%	16%	51%	257	1,899
Never	17%	9%	74%	53	2,103

# How frequently do you interact with your friends, family or neighbors *by telephone, email or social media (such as Facebook)?*

	Family	Friends	Neighbors	Responses	No Response
More than once a day	39%	35%	25%	1072	1,084
About once a day	42%	36%	22%	552	1,604
Several times a week	39%	39%	21%	724	1,432
About once a week	48%	31%	21%	348	1,808
1 to 2 times a month	36%	39%	25%	204	1,952
Less than monthly	19%	35%	46%	113	2,043
Never	5%	7%	88%	185	1,971

# *In a typical month, how many times do you*

	0-1	2-3	4+	Responses	No Response
Go to the doctor	84%	13%	3%	1,177	979
Go to the pharmacy	63%	31%	6%	1,157	999
Do food shopping or errands	5%	19%	76%	1,171	985
Attend religious services	74%	9%	17%	1,144	1,012
Go out for recreation, entertainment, education	17%	29%	54%	1,169	987
Specifically play pickelball	90%	4%	6%	1,109	1,047
Do volunteer work outside the home	62%	20%	18%	1,138	1,018
Get out of the house for reasons not stated above	13%	26%	61%	1,134	1,022

# How do you typically get to your activities

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always	Responses	No Response
Drive myself	4%	0%	2%	9%	85%	1,166	990
Ride with family member	21%	18%	30%	24%	7%	1,093	1,063
Ride with a friend or neighbor	39%	35%	21%	3%	1%	1,082	1,074
Ride with home health aide/companion	97%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1,072	1,084
Walk	27%	16%	30%	19%	9%	1,096	1,060

Use SweetHART	97%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1,129	1,027
Use Rides for Ridgefield	97%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1,125	1,031
Use Town bus	99%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1,128	1,028
Use a taxi/Uber/Lyft	87%	9%	3%	0%	0%	1,127	1,029
Use Hart/Norwalk bus	98%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1,121	1,035
Use MetroNorth	54%	24%	20%	2%	1%	1,128	1,028

# Personal Safety

If you were in trouble, do you have friends or family who can help you at any time of the day or night?

Yes	No	Responses	No Response
92%	8%	1179	977

The Ridgefield Fire Department “File for Life” card enables you to list your health and contact details for first responders who come to your home. Would you be interested in receiving the “File for Life” card?

Total	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
<b>509 requests to enroll</b>				
1154	55%	45%	1,154	1,002

The Ridgefield Office of Emergency Management provides a service called “Ridgefield Alerts” which is an online source of emergency and community information. Would you be interested in registering for “Ridgefield Alerts”?

Total	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
<b>497 requests to enroll</b>				
1076	60%	40%	1,076	1,080

# Mealtime

In a typical month, how many times do you obtain your meals based on the list below?

	0-1	2-4	5-7	7+	Responses	No Response
Shop online or in-person and cook for myself	9%	5%	10%	76%	1,167	989
Provided by family or friends	81%	9%	2%	8%	1,089	1,067
Provided by the facility I live in	99%	0%	0%	1%	1,059	1,097
Meals on Wheels/Food Pantry	97%	1%	1%	1%	1,070	1,086
Restaurant/take-out/delivery	28%	47%	16%	8%	1,124	1,032
Meal delivery service (e.g. UberEats, Door Dash etc.)	96%	3%	0%	1%	1,073	1,083
Other	96%	2%	1%	2%	820	1,336

# *I am able to get an adequate quantity of food/meals*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Responses	No Response
<b>60 - 69 yrs</b>	316	39	9	3	3	370	2
	85%	11%	2%	1%	1%		
<b>70 - 79 yrs</b>	379	42	10	1	1	433	4
	88%	10%	2%	0%	0%		
<b>80 - 89 yrs</b>	164	42	6	1	1	214	2
	77%	20%	3%	0%			

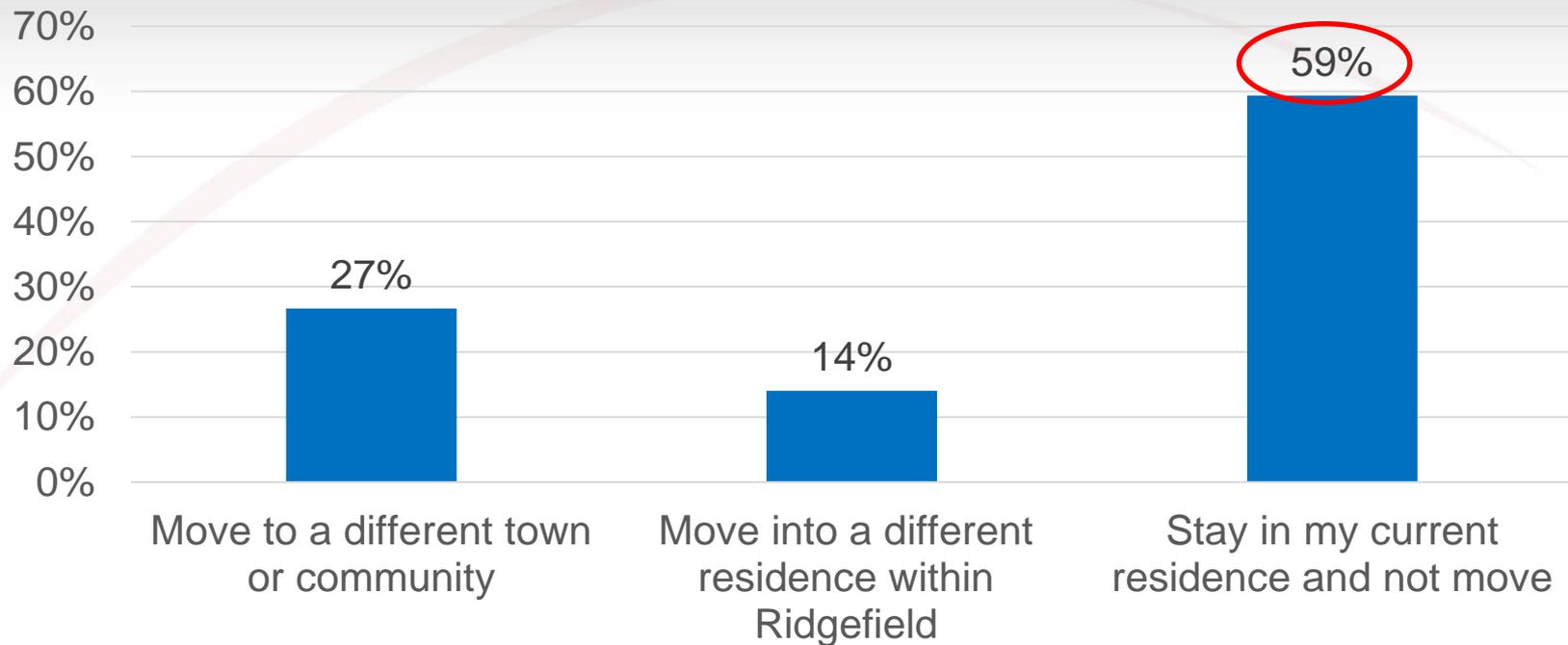
# *Are you able to afford these monthly expenses?*

	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
Food	98%	2%	1178	978
Utilities	96%	4%	1169	987
Medications	97%	3%	1166	990
Medical support	97%	3%	1162	994
Clothing	96%	4%	1166	990
Mortgage/rent	96%	4%	1133	1023
Home maintenance	91%	9%	1144	1012

The 60, 70 and 80 age breaks do not generally change these totals.

# Your future

Thinking about your future years, what are you likely to do?



(1,163 Respondents; 993 Non-respondents)

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023



# Why you would leave Ridgefield? (Sample of responses)

## Taxes

My husband and I are hopeful to continue to stay in our current home but due to the property tax burden and Connecticut taxes we are wondering if this will be possible.

Taxes too high. Would like to stay here, but once I stop working I can't afford it.

Taxes and other expenses are getting too high. The senior discount on town tax has not been adjusted for years. I pay the same sewer tax as if I had a huge house with a large family. The Town throws fluff at Seniors but the taxes are stifling.

Connecticut taxes, property taxes, cost of utilities, and the weather.

Winter weather, high taxes

Lower cost. lower taxes

Taxes, utilities and maintenance costs are too high.

my home is not accessible for aging in place. Taxes are too high, our home is larger than we need

CT taxes and cost of living too high and winter weather is becoming too hard to deal with.

# *In general, how do you rate your health?*

	60 - 69 yrs	70 - 79 yrs	80 - 89 yrs
Excellent	35%	25%	15%
Very Good	43%	43%	39%
Good	17%	23%	37%
Fair	5%	7%	8%
Poor	1%	2%	0%
Responses	367	435	215

# How often do you engage in some form of physical exercise?

	60 - 69 yrs	70 - 79 yrs	80 - 89 yrs
Every day	40%	33%	27%
Several times a week	45%	41%	43%
About once a week	9%	8%	13%
About once every other week	1%	13%	4%
About once a month	1%	0%	0%
Seldom	4%	5%	12%
Responses	366	490	215

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

# How much would you benefit from in-home care for yourself such as:

	Very Much	Somewhat	Not At All	Responses	No Response
Companionship	4%	10%	85%	1,116	1,040
Cooking	4%	11%	85%	1,096	1,060
Bathing/Dressing	2%	3%	95%	1,090	1,066
Nursing	1%	4%	95%	1,088	1,068
Housekeeping	8%	22%	69%	1,106	1,050
Overnight 24 hour care	1%	2%	97%	1,082	1,074

		Very Much	Somewhat	Not At All	Responses
<b>60- 69 yrs</b>	Housekeeping	4%	15%	81%	351
<b>70 - 79 yrs</b>	Housekeeping	8%	23%	69%	402
<b>80- 89 yrs</b>	Housekeeping	13%	36%	51%	198

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023



# *Please describe the type of support/program that would make a difference in your quality of life? (Sample of responses)*

Shopping, cooking, clean up daily is a tiresome chore and harder to do as you get older.
A companion for a couple of hours 1 or 2 times a week.
Companionship for my husband
I cannot drive due to a stroke a few years ago I am very nervous about future health problems with either me or my husband
I need drivers when I occasionally have a medical appointment when the doctors say I cannot drive myself
I could probably use a house cleaning service twice a month for a couple of hours.
Housekeeping, cooking & food shopping support to carry the groceries into the house due to many stairs.
Tech support would also be an enormous help. My computer is not working and I need help buying one
Silver Sneakers in local gym, not Wilton
Daily household help since i am unable to do some things.
It would be nice to have more transportation choices so I don't have to do all the driving.
Stimulating day care for spouse with dementia. I need a respite from the challenges of everyday care for him.
Housekeeping services at a reasonable price
Better transportation for wheelchair.
Someone to drive me to the store, library or church
A service like Visiting Angels so that I can get some time off.

# Do any of these apply to you?

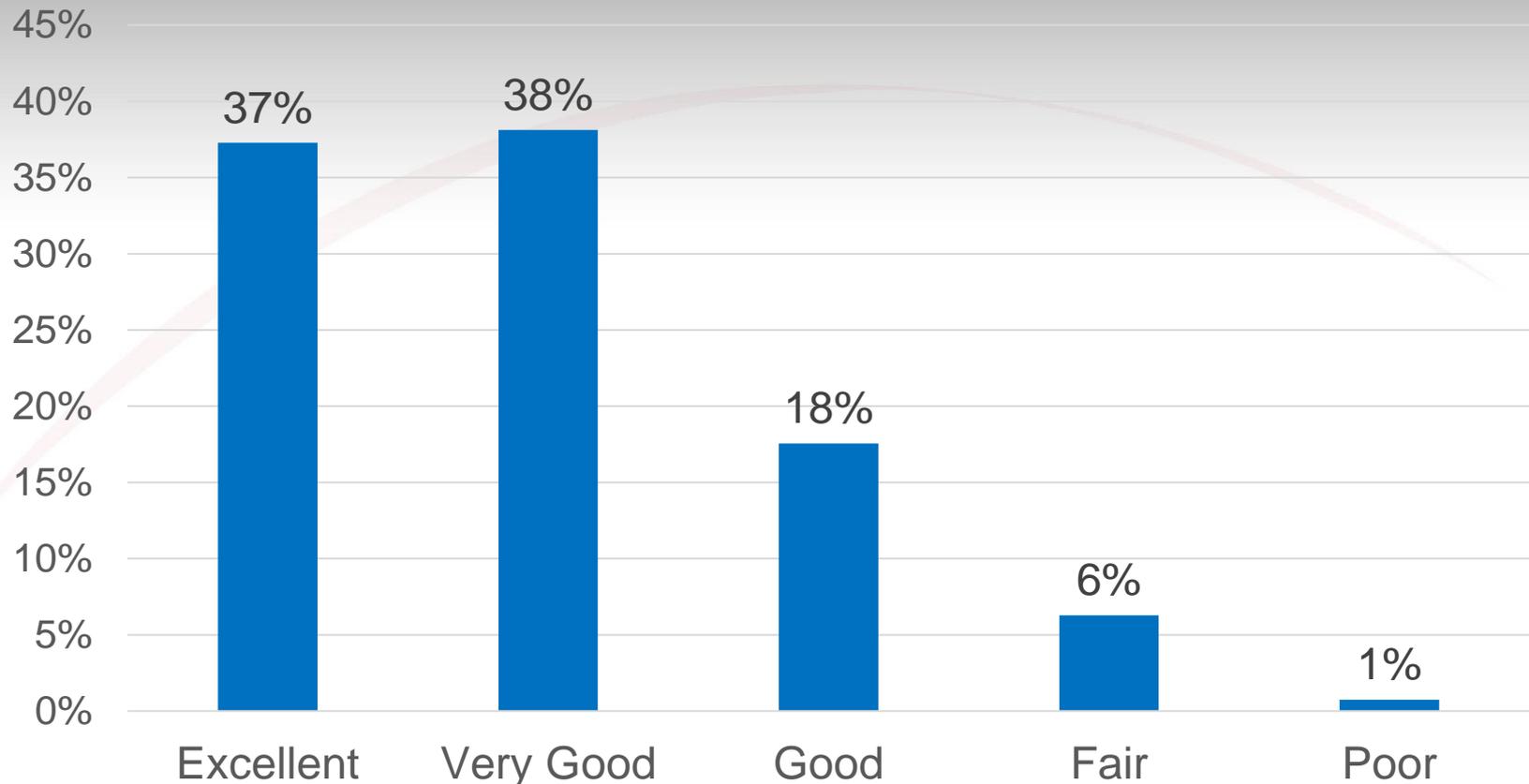
	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
Do you take more than five prescription medications per day	21%	79%	1,167	989
Do you have a history of falls	9%	91%	1,165	991
Do you use a cane	8%	92%	1,161	995
Do you use a walker	3%	97%	1,164	992
Do you use a wheelchair	1%	99%	1,160	996
Is the need for these devices temporary	8%	92%	847	1,309
Do you have a Personal Emergency Response device such as Lifeline pendant	5%	95%	1,132	1,024

Lifeline pendant	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
60 -69 yrs	1%	99%	357	15
70 - 79 yrs	3%	97%	413	24
80 - 89 yrs	13%	87%	202	14

# Do you agree or disagree with these statements about Ridgefield's public spaces

	Agree	Disagree	Responses	No Response
Sidewalks are in good condition and safe for pedestrians	79%	21%	1,137	1,019
Sidewalks are accessible for wheelchairs or other assistive mobility devices	71%	29%	976	1,180
Traffic signs are easy to read	93%	7%	1,136	1,020
Parks are well-maintained and safe	97%	3%	1,132	1,024
Public areas have enough benches for resting	78%	22%	1,108	1,048
There are conveniently located public and handicapped parking lots and spaces	81%	19%	1,070	1,086
Restrooms are accessible to people with physical disabilities	64%	36%	945	1,211

# How would you rate Ridgfield as a place to live as you age?



(1,065 Respondents; 1,091 Non-respondents)

## Ridgfield Senior Survey 2023

# Organizations with senior programs

In the last 30 days, have you used the following Ridgefield resources for continuing education, self-improvement classes, workshops, arts/culture or town information?

	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
Parks & Rec Center	35%	65%	1,041	1,115
Founders Hall	42%	58%	1,064	1,092
Library	65%	35%	1,063	1,093
RVNAhealth	14%	86%	1,023	1,133
Faith-Based organizations	29%	71%	1,035	1,121
Social services	5%	95%	1,023	1,133
Commission on Aging	3%	97%	1,017	1,139
Commission for Accessibility	1%	99%	1,015	1,141
Arts Council	5%	95%	1,013	1,143
Continuing Education	9%	91%	1,010	1,146

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

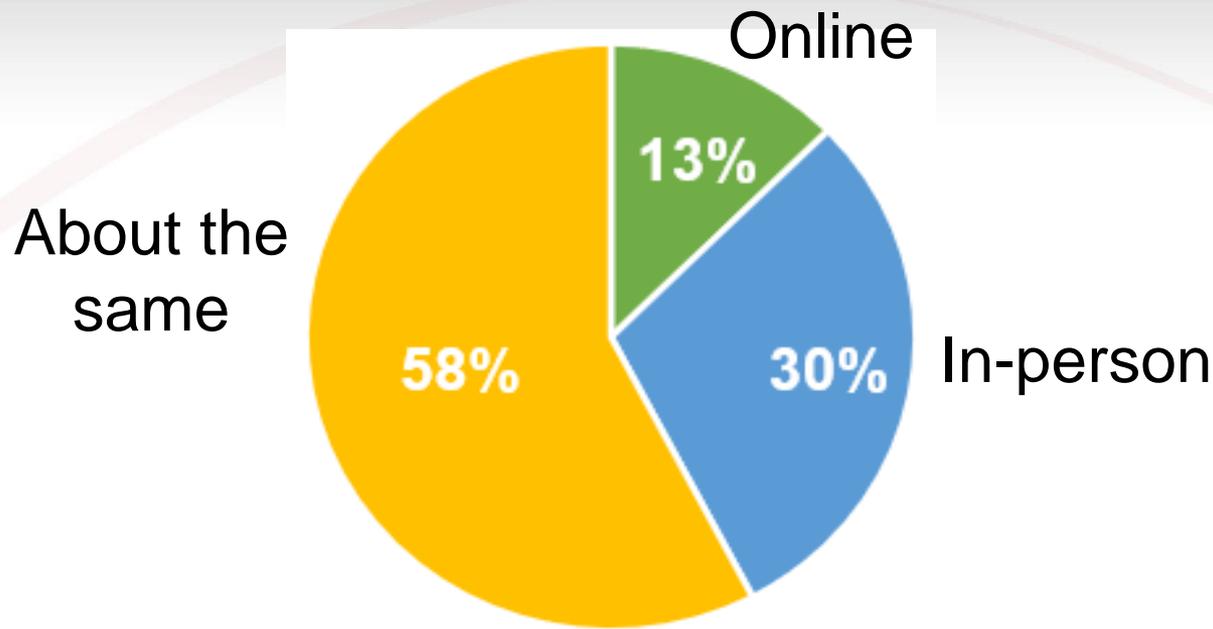
# Ridgefield Library

Thinking about the Ridgefield Library, do you agree or disagree with the following?

	Agree	Disagree	Responses	No Response
Information is easy to access	97%	3%	1,013	1,143
Support services are clear	91%	9%	970	1,186
Educational and cultural activities are available for older adults	95%	5%	971	1,185
Activities and events are held at convenient times for older adults	91%	9%	954	1,202
Computers and the internet are easy to access	96%	4%	917	1,239
Technology support and training are available	93%	7%	906	1,250

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

# Is it more convenient for you to participate in library events

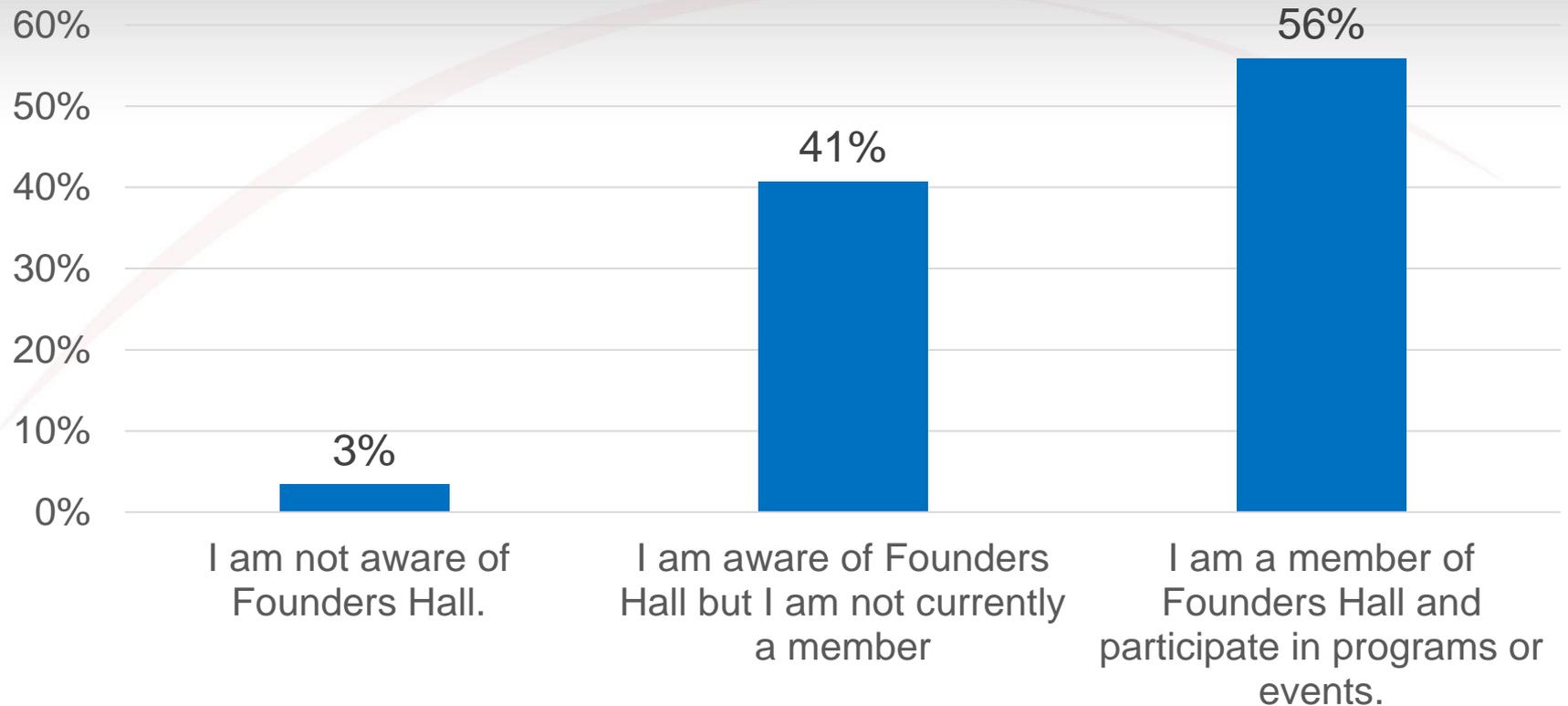


(1,007 Respondents; 1,149 Non-respondents)

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

# Founders Hall membership

Please select the option that best describes your current relationship with Founders Hall



(1,059 Respondents; 1,097 Non-respondents)

**Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023**

# Founders Hall priorities

Please rank the following items in terms of how much they would influence your decision to join (or not join) Founders Hall  
(List your choices by importance to you)

Rank	Available parking	Convenient hours of operation	Convenient transportation to/From Founders Hall	Facilitates social connections with other local seniors	Is a good resource for information about programs/events in town	Offers programs that fit my abilities	Offers programs that fit my interests
1	20%	17%	13%	14%	21%	19%	22%
2	22%	19%	14%	15%	22%	20%	24%
3	22%	19%	14%	16%	23%	21%	25%
4	23%	20%	15%	16%	24%	21%	25%
5	24%	20%	15%	16%	24%	22%	26%
6	23%	20%	15%	16%	24%	21%	25%
7	22%	19%	14%	15%	23%	21%	25%

(Avg. Respondents 240; Avg. Non-respondents 1915)

**Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023**

# Tell us how you use personal technology

	60 - 69 yrs		70 - 79 yrs		80 - 89 yrs	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you renew medical prescriptions or talk to your doctor online?	77%	23%	68%	32%	62%	38%
Do you order food and services online?	95%	5%	50%	50%	38%	62%

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

# Volunteer opportunities

Do you agree/disagree on the following Ridgefield volunteer initiatives the Town of Ridgefield and other organizations in town provide?

	Agree	Disagree	Responses	No Response
A full range of volunteer activities to choose from	84%	16%	874	1,282
Easy to find information on available local volunteer activities	65%	35%	867	1,289
Training opportunities to help people perform better in their volunteer roles	63%	37%	739	1,417
Opportunities for older adults to participate on community councils or committees	72%	28%	771	1,385
Transportation to and from volunteer activities for those who need it	62%	38%	707	1,449

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023

# Town support programs

Are you aware of these support programs offered by the Town of Ridgefield?

	Yes	No	Responses	No Response
Connecticut Renter Rebate program	30%	70%	969	1,187
Medicare CHOICES prescription Part D support	74%	26%	969	1,187
Financial assurance programs	53%	47%	962	1,194
Property Tax deferral for seniors	70%	30%	982	1,174
Food pantry	40%	60%	964	1,192
Gold Card senior discount program	36%	64%	960	1,196
Senior Voice program	11%	89%	985	1,171
Veterans Tax Reduction	13%	87%	957	1,199
Energy assistance program	67%	33%	991	1,165
Senior property tax reduction	34%	66%	975	1,181
Senior Directory	34%	66%	943	1,213

Ridgefield Senior Survey 2023



# Town priorities (Sample of responses)

What is the ONE most important thing the Town of Ridgefield can do for you to improve your daily life?

## Traffic

Get rid of traffic jams on Danbury Road through better timing of lights and put a light at the entrance to the Rec Center and Founder's Hall. It is very dangerous for old people and people with children to try to make a left turn onto Danbury Road.

Enforce traffic laws especially at crosswalks. I walk every day and I expect to die from being hit by a car while I'm in a crosswalk. Where are the Police ??

## Taxes

Reduce taxes. Very little is offered besides schools and roads. The senior deduction is paltry. keep our real estate taxes down. We have long ago repaid our use of schools for our children.

## Transportation

Additional Door to door transportation beyond Ridgefield

Provide low cost door to door public transportation--something like Metro Mobility which is available in some cities--and does not need to be scheduled days in advance

## Sidewalks

Repair the sidewalks on Main Street, especially in front of Ballard Park. Many people I know have fallen on Main Street due to the broken concrete sidewalks, including myself.

Extend, improve and maintain the sidewalks in Ridgefield. Every year, Ridgefield should endeavor to add 1 mile of sidewalks to the network and upgrade 2 miles of existing sidewalks.

# *Town priorities* (Sample of responses)

What is the ONE most important thing the Town of Ridgefield can do for you to improve your daily life?

*Just keep what you do  
for seniors - Thank you for all you  
do -*

(Just keep what you do for seniors. Thank you for all you do)