JERSEY CITY AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division
Prepared for Internal Departmental Review and Strategic Planning

1. Executive Summary

Assessment At-a-Glance
Surveys Collected: **~800**
Wards Represented: **A–F**
Partner Organizations: **3**
Primary Senior Centers: **2**
Key Domains Evaluated: **8**
Strategic Recommendations: **8**

The Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment represents a comprehensive preliminary evaluation of the needs, priorities, and lived experiences of older adult residents across Jersey City. Developed through the Department of Health & Human Services, Senior Affairs Division, this initiative reflects the City's commitment to strengthening age-friendly planning through resident-driven data collection, cross-sector collaboration, and strategic community engagement.

This assessment is informed by **resident responses**, distributed and collected through the collaborative efforts of the **Senior Affairs Division's Joseph Connors Senior Center and Maureen Collier Senior Center**, in partnership with **Jersey City AARP, Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care, and the Urban League**. Survey responses were collected across Jersey City's ward structure to ensure broad geographic representation and provide insight into neighborhood-level conditions affecting older adults.

The survey examined resident experiences across the recognized Age-Friendly Community domains, including:

- Housing affordability and accessibility
- Transportation and mobility
- Outdoor spaces and public infrastructure
- Communication and information access
- Social participation and inclusion
- Civic engagement and volunteer opportunities
- Health services and community support
- Safety and neighborhood livability

Key Findings

The assessment identified several consistent themes across wards and ZIP code areas:

Housing pressures remain the most significant concern, with many residents reporting affordability challenges, limited accessible housing options, and concerns regarding aging safely in place.

Transportation accessibility continues to present barriers, particularly related to transit reliability, pedestrian safety, mobility support, and access to age-sensitive transportation services.

Communication access gaps persist, particularly among residents with limited digital literacy or reduced access to technology-based municipal information systems.

Social connectedness remains a protective factor, with respondents indicating strong interest in continued participation in senior center programming, wellness activities, educational opportunities, and social engagement initiatives.

Health and supportive service navigation requires strengthening, particularly around service awareness, referral pathways, and access to coordinated support resources.

Existing Municipal Strengths

The assessment also highlights Jersey City's strong foundation of existing senior-focused programming already being successfully implemented through the Senior Affairs Division, including:

- Weekly recreational and wellness programming
- Digital literacy and technology education
- Benefits navigation and municipal assistance services
- Transportation support initiatives
- Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program outreach
- Community-based engagement and social participation activities

These existing initiatives demonstrate meaningful municipal capacity and provide a strong operational platform for future Age-Friendly expansion.

Strategic Implications

The findings support the development of a formal citywide Age-Friendly planning framework focused on:

- Expanding housing and aging-in-place strategies
- Strengthening transportation accessibility
- Improving multilingual communication systems
- Scaling digital inclusion efforts
- Enhancing cross-agency coordination
- Leveraging successful Senior Affairs programming as implementation infrastructure

Conclusion

This assessment provides Jersey City with a practical planning framework for strengthening age-responsive services and advancing future Age-Friendly strategic development.

2. Project Background

The Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment was developed by the **Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division** as part of the City's ongoing commitment to improving quality of life for older adult residents through strategic planning, data-informed decision-making, and community-centered service delivery.

Jersey City is home to a growing and increasingly diverse older adult population with evolving needs related to housing, transportation, healthcare access, social participation, digital connectivity, and community support services. As demographic shifts continue to increase demand for age-responsive municipal planning, it is essential that local government proactively assess the conditions affecting residents as they age and identify opportunities for sustainable, equitable, and coordinated improvements.

The Senior Affairs Division serves as a primary liaison between Jersey City's senior population and municipal resources, providing direct support services including housing assistance, reduced fare NJ Transit application processing, Senior Care Photo ID assistance, shopping transportation services, benefits navigation, wellness programming, and recreational opportunities through the **Joseph Connors Senior Center** and **Maureen Collier Senior Center**.

In addition to direct municipal service delivery, the Division has established strong collaborative relationships with community-based organizations including **Jersey City AARP, Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care, and the Urban League**, which have strengthened outreach efforts and expanded engagement with older residents across diverse neighborhoods.

Recognizing both the successes of existing programming and the need for long-term strategic planning, this assessment was initiated to gather resident-driven input regarding the lived experiences of older adults throughout Jersey City. Through the resident response dataset collected across Jersey City's ward structure, the project provides a broad preliminary assessment of age-related challenges, opportunities, and neighborhood-level priorities across the City's ward structure.

This initiative also reflects broader alignment with nationally recognized **Age-Friendly Community planning principles**, which emphasize the importance of creating environments that support older adults in remaining healthy, active, socially connected, and independent within their communities.

The findings generated through this assessment establish a foundational evidence base for:

- Internal departmental planning and program development
- Cross-agency municipal coordination
- Strategic policy recommendations
- Future Age-Friendly designation efforts
- Competitive grant and funding applications
- Long-term community development planning

Most importantly, this project builds upon Jersey City's existing strengths by formally documenting resident perspectives and translating those insights into actionable planning priorities for the continued advancement of an inclusive and age-responsive city.

3. Existing Municipal Programs and Established Senior Affairs Successes

3.1 Senior Center-Based Wellness and Recreation Programming

- Group fitness and movement-based exercise classes
- Chair exercise and low-impact mobility programming
- Dance and recreational movement activities
- Meditation and relaxation sessions
- Health education and wellness workshops
- Arts, crafts, and creative enrichment activities
- Cognitive stimulation activities, including games and strategy-based recreation
- Seasonal social events and celebratory programming
- Educational presentations and informational sessions
- Community outings and organized recreational trips
- Swimming and Walking Program
- Senior Farmers Market Participation Program

3.2 Proposed Digital Literacy Initiative

Senior Tech Literacy Program (Planned Program Development)

In response to recurring survey findings related to digital literacy barriers, the Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division is preparing to launch the **Senior Tech Literacy Classes Program** as a targeted digital inclusion initiative for older adult residents.

This planned program will provide structured technology instruction designed to strengthen digital confidence, improve access to online services, and support independent navigation of technology-based systems increasingly required for daily living.

Proposed instructional areas include:

- Smartphone and tablet basics
- Email and video communication
- Internet safety and scam prevention
- Accessing online municipal services
- Transportation application navigation
- Digital healthcare communication

This planned initiative strengthens Jersey City's digital inclusion capacity and supports future age-responsive service accessibility.

3.3 Transportation and Mobility Support Services

Reduced Fare Transportation Assistance
The Division assists residents with enrollment in the **NJ Transit Reduced Fare Program**, helping eligible older adults access discounted public transportation services.

Purple Via On-Demand Rideshare Access
Senior Affairs provides information and guidance regarding **Purple Via's discounted senior transportation program**, which offers reduced-cost local rides throughout Jersey City and serves as an important flexible mobility option for non-driving residents.

Transportation App Navigation Support
Residents receive informal assistance navigating transportation platforms such as **Uber, Lyft, and Purple Via**, helping bridge technology-related mobility barriers.

Grocery Shuttle Transportation
City-operated buses provide scheduled weekly and bi-weekly transportation from more than 50 senior housing locations to grocery destinations such as ShopRite, directly addressing food access concerns.

Meal Delivery and Food Access Support
For residents facing mobility limitations, coordinated food delivery services help ensure continued nutritional access.

Free Monthly Movie Transportation Program
Transportation is provided for monthly senior movie outings at AMC Newport Centre 11, supporting recreation and social participation.

Group Excursions and Recreational Transportation
Division-operated transportation supports organized outings to restaurants, cultural events, educational destinations, and recreational activities.

These services were consistently recognized as valuable municipal supports and reflect several positive outcomes already achieved by the Senior Affairs Division.

3.4 Benefits Navigation and Municipal Assistance

The Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division serves as a critical access point connecting older adult residents to essential municipal, county, and state support services.

Through direct in-person assistance, staff help residents navigate administrative processes, access available public benefits, and connect with appropriate support resources that promote independence and quality of life.

Core Services

- NJ Transit Reduced Fare application assistance
- Senior Care Photo ID processing
- Housing and municipal referral coordination
- Benefits enrollment guidance
- Administrative application support
- Service referral navigation

These services reduce administrative barriers, improve resident access to essential resources, and strengthen equitable service delivery across Jersey City's older adult population.

Strategic Relevance
This established support framework provides critical municipal infrastructure for resident-centered service coordination and strengthens Jersey City's capacity for future Age-Friendly implementation.

3.5 Nutrition and Food Access Programming

The Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division maintains a strong nutrition support infrastructure designed to promote food security, healthy aging, and social connection among older adult residents.

A central component of this support is the provision of **daily congregate meal services** at both the **Joseph Connors Senior Center** and the **Maureen Collier Senior Center**.

These nutritionally guided meals support:

- balanced daily nutrition
- healthy aging
- wellness monitoring
- routine social engagement

Beyond nutritional benefit, congregate dining creates structured opportunities for social interaction, helping reduce isolation and strengthen community connection among participating residents.

Additional nutrition-related services include:

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) Outreach

The Division supports resident awareness and participation in seasonal produce benefit programs that increase access to fresh food and strengthen nutrition education.

Grocery Shuttle Transportation Support

City-operated transportation services improve resident access to grocery retail locations and help address mobility-related food access barriers.

Food Access Support for Mobility-Limited Residents

The Division assists mobility-limited residents through referral coordination and meal-access support services.

Together, these programs represent an established municipal strength and provide an important operational foundation for Jersey City's broader Age-Friendly efforts to promote health, nutrition security, and social well-being among older adult residents.

3.6 Strategic Community Partnerships

A significant operational strength supporting Jersey City's Age-Friendly efforts is the Division's established network of collaborative partnerships with trusted community-based organizations.

These partnerships expand resident outreach capacity, strengthen service accessibility, improve community engagement, and support broader equitable participation in senior-serving initiatives.

Jersey City AARP

The Division's collaboration with **Jersey City AARP** strengthens resident advocacy, educational outreach, and age-friendly awareness initiatives.

This partnership supports:

- resident engagement
- aging advocacy visibility
- educational programming
- outreach expansion

Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care

The partnership with **Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care** strengthens outreach to older adults requiring enhanced supportive care coordination.

This collaboration supports:

- access to vulnerable senior populations
- health-related engagement
- supportive care awareness
- coordinated outreach efforts

Urban League

The partnership with the **Urban League** supports equitable community engagement and strengthens outreach to historically underserved neighborhoods.

This collaboration contributes to:

- inclusive participation
- culturally responsive outreach
- expanded neighborhood representation
- broader resident accessibility

These organizations played a direct role in the successful distribution and collection of completed resident survey responses, helping ensure broader geographic representation across Jersey City's ward structure.

These established partnerships provide Jersey City with a strong collaborative infrastructure for future Age-Friendly implementation, cross-sector service coordination, and expanded resident-centered planning initiatives.

4. Survey Methodology

4.1 Survey Design and Distribution

The assessment utilized a structured paper-based survey instrument developed to evaluate resident experiences across recognized Age-Friendly Community domains.

Distribution was coordinated through the Joseph Connors Senior Center and Maureen Collier Senior Center, with support from Jersey City AARP, Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care, and the Urban League.

4.2 Sample Size and Geographic Representation

The resident response dataset reflects approximately 800 completed survey submissions collected across Jersey City's six wards and multiple ZIP code areas to support neighborhood-level analysis.

4.3 Data Analysis Approach

Responses were categorized using quantitative trend analysis and qualitative thematic review to identify recurring resident priorities, service gaps, and operational strengths.

Analysis included:

- demographic review
- ward-level distribution analysis
- thematic coding
- resident comment categorization

4.4 Methodological Considerations

As a preliminary municipal planning assessment, findings represent resident-reported experiences and should be interpreted as directional planning indicators intended to guide future Age-Friendly strategic development.

5. Key Findings

Analysis of the resident response dataset identified consistent themes related to housing stability, mobility access, communication barriers, digital inclusion, benefits navigation, and social participation across Jersey City's older adult population.

The findings reflect both measurable strengths within current Senior Affairs programming and strategic opportunities for future Age-Friendly municipal planning.

Percentages represent planning-oriented estimates derived from reviewed survey response patterns and are intended to guide internal strategic assessment rather than serve as statistically weighted measurements.

Key Resident Priorities
Housing Stability — **63%**
Transportation Access — **68%**
Digital Support Needed — **55%**

Benefits Navigation Assistance — **58%**
Wellness Participation — **78%**
Interest in Civic Engagement — **44%**

5.1 Housing and Aging in Place

Housing stability emerged as one of the most significant themes identified through the Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment.

Survey responses indicate that older adult residents maintain a strong desire to remain within their existing homes and neighborhoods while expressing growing concern regarding affordability, accessibility, safety, and long-term housing stability.

Estimated Findings

- **80%** expressed a desire to age in place within Jersey City
- **63%** reported concern regarding rising housing costs
- **54%** identified accessibility modification needs within their homes
- **48%** expressed concerns related to neighborhood safety and environmental conditions
- **41%** reported uncertainty regarding future housing stability

Key Observations

Survey findings suggest that residents value remaining connected to their established communities, social networks, healthcare providers, and familiar neighborhood environments.

However, responses identified several recurring concerns affecting long-term housing confidence, including:

- increasing rental and maintenance costs
- limited awareness of housing assistance resources
- physical accessibility limitations within existing residences
- concerns regarding home maintenance and safety modifications
- uncertainty regarding future affordability

Strategic Interpretation

These findings reinforce the importance of strengthening aging-in-place planning through enhanced housing resource navigation, accessibility support awareness, and cross-agency coordination focused on long-term housing stability for Jersey City's older adult population.

5.2 Transportation and Mobility

Transportation accessibility emerged as one of the most significant factors affecting independence, healthcare access, social participation, and daily mobility among older adult residents throughout Jersey City.

Survey findings indicate that while residents recognize the value of existing transportation supports currently provided through the Senior Affairs Division, recurring barriers remain related to affordability, transit reliability, technology-based transportation systems, pedestrian accessibility, and access to flexible mobility options.

Estimated Findings

- **68%** reported transportation-related concerns affecting daily activities
- **57%** identified mobility limitations as barriers to participation in programs and services
- **46%** reported difficulty navigating app-based transportation platforms

- **52%** expressed interest in expanded transportation support services
- **39%** reported concerns regarding pedestrian safety and sidewalk accessibility
- **43%** identified transportation costs as a recurring challenge

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"Transportation is one of the biggest challenges for seniors who no longer drive."*
> *"Many transportation services now require apps that are difficult for older adults to use."*
> *"Affordable transportation should be easier to access."*
> *"The grocery shuttle is very helpful and should continue expanding."*
> *"More guidance is needed for ride services such as Purple Via, Uber, and Lyft."*

Key Observations

Survey responses identified several recurring transportation-related concerns, including:

- difficulty navigating smartphone-based transportation applications
- limited awareness of available reduced-fare programs
- concerns regarding public transit reliability
- challenges accessing medical appointments and essential services
- affordability concerns related to ride-based transportation options
- pedestrian infrastructure barriers affecting safe mobility

At the same time, residents expressed strong appreciation for existing transportation supports currently provided through Senior Affairs, including:

- grocery shuttle transportation services
- NJ Transit Reduced Fare Program assistance
- Purple Via transportation guidance
- monthly movie transportation
- organized recreational excursions
- mobility-related referral assistance

Strategic Interpretation

The findings indicate that transportation remains a critical determinant of independence and quality of life for Jersey City's older adult residents.

While existing municipal transportation supports provide meaningful value, survey responses suggest opportunities to strengthen mobility access through expanded transportation education, improved technology navigation support, increased awareness of available discounts, and continued enhancement of age-responsive transportation coordination.

5.3 Communication and Information Access

Communication and information access emerged as a significant factor influencing resident awareness, service participation, and successful engagement with available municipal programs and resources.

Survey responses indicate that many older adult residents continue to experience difficulty accessing timely, clear, and user-friendly information regarding available services, program schedules, benefits, and community opportunities.

Findings also demonstrate a strong preference for traditional communication formats, particularly printed materials and direct person-to-person communication.

Estimated Findings

- **67%** expressed preference for printed communication materials
- **61%** reported needing clearer information regarding available services
- **53%** indicated difficulty locating program-related information
- **49%** reported challenges understanding registration processes
- **45%** expressed interest in expanded multilingual communication access
- **38%** reported missing opportunities due to limited information awareness

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"Printed information is easier to understand and keep for reference."*
> *"Sometimes information about programs does not reach everyone."*
> *"Clearer instructions would make registration easier."*
> *"Phone communication remains important for many seniors."*
> *"More information should be distributed directly through trusted community locations."*

Key Observations

Survey responses identified several recurring communication-related challenges, including:

- limited awareness of available municipal programs
- difficulty navigating program registration processes
- inconsistent access to timely updates
- preference for non-digital communication methods
- need for simplified service explanations
- language accessibility concerns for multilingual residents

Residents consistently indicated that direct communication methods remain essential, including:

- printed calendars and flyers
- telephone-based outreach
- in-person announcements at senior centers
- community bulletin postings
- multilingual informational materials

The assessment also confirms that the Joseph Connors Senior Center and Maureen Collier Senior Center continue to serve as trusted information access points for many older adult residents.

Strategic Interpretation

These findings reinforce the importance of strengthening communication systems through clear, accessible, multilingual, and multi-format outreach strategies.

Improving information delivery will support greater resident participation, increased awareness of available services, and more equitable access to Senior Affairs programming throughout Jersey City.

5.4 Technology and Digital Inclusion

Technology access and digital literacy emerged as a significant area of concern affecting older adult residents' ability to independently access services, transportation systems, healthcare communication platforms, and municipal information resources.

Survey findings indicate that while many residents recognize the importance of technology in accessing modern services, a substantial portion of older adults continue to experience difficulty navigating digital systems required for daily activities.

These challenges affect access to transportation applications, online forms, benefits enrollment systems, appointment scheduling, and digital communication platforms.

Estimated Findings

- **55%** reported needing assistance with digital technology use
- **62%** expressed interest in structured digital literacy classes
- **43%** reported discomfort using smartphone-based systems independently
- **48%** identified difficulty accessing online municipal information
- **39%** reported challenges navigating transportation-related applications
- **34%** indicated limited confidence using email or internet-based communication tools

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"Technology changes too fast for many seniors."*
> *"I need help learning how to use my phone better."*
> *"Too many services now require online access."*
> *"It is difficult to keep up with digital systems."*
> *"Regular technology classes would help many older adults feel more independent."*

Key Observations

Survey responses identified recurring technology-related barriers, including:

- limited confidence using smartphones and tablets
- difficulty navigating transportation applications such as Purple Via, Uber, and Lyft
- challenges accessing online benefits systems
- difficulty completing digital forms and registrations
- concerns regarding internet safety and scams
- reduced confidence using email and virtual communication tools

At the same time, survey responses demonstrated strong interest in learning opportunities that would increase digital independence.

Residents expressed interest in support related to:

- smartphone navigation
- email communication
- online appointment access
- municipal website navigation
- transportation application use
- digital safety education

These findings strongly support the planned implementation of the Senior Tech Literacy Program as an important future Age-Friendly strategy.

Strategic Interpretation

The findings confirm that digital inclusion is increasingly essential to maintaining independence, service access, and full participation in community life.

Expanding structured digital literacy support presents a significant opportunity to reduce service access barriers, strengthen resident confidence, and improve equitable participation across Jersey City’s older adult population.

5.5 Health, Wellness, Nutrition, and Social Participation

Health, wellness, nutrition, and social participation emerged as some of the strongest positive findings identified through the Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment.

Survey responses indicate that older adult residents highly value opportunities for structured wellness activities, nutritional support, recreational programming, and regular social engagement through the Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division.

Findings suggest that these programs play a critical role in promoting physical health, emotional well-being, social connectedness, and sustained community participation among older adult residents.

Estimated Findings

- **78%** reported regular participation in wellness or recreational activities
- **72%** expressed interest in expanded health and wellness programming
- **74%** identified social participation as essential to quality of life
- **69%** reported that center-based activities improve emotional well-being
- **65%** identified daily meal services as an important support resource
- **58%** expressed interest in additional health education opportunities

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"The activities help keep us active and connected."*
> *"The meal program creates routine and social connection."*
> *"The exercise classes improve both physical and emotional health."*
> *"The senior centers provide important opportunities to stay engaged."*
> *"These programs help reduce isolation and keep seniors involved in the community."*

Key Observations

Survey responses consistently identified the positive impact of Senior Affairs programming in supporting:

- regular physical activity
- structured wellness participation
- daily social interaction
- reduced isolation
- improved emotional well-being
- nutritional stability
- community belonging

Residents expressed strong appreciation for existing services, including:

- exercise and mobility classes
- wellness workshops
- recreational enrichment activities
- congregate meal services
- social events and celebrations
- educational programming
- organized group outings
- community engagement opportunities

Daily congregate meal services at the **Joseph Connors Senior Center** and **Maureen Collier Senior Center** were repeatedly identified as particularly valuable, not only for nutritional support but also for promoting consistent socialization and emotional connection.

Survey responses suggest that many residents view these programs as essential supports for maintaining independence, routine, and quality of life.

Strategic Interpretation

These findings confirm that Jersey City's existing wellness, nutrition, and social engagement infrastructure represents a major municipal strength and provides a strong operational foundation for continued Age-Friendly expansion.

The high level of resident participation and positive feedback demonstrates that existing Senior Affairs programming is already delivering measurable benefits that support healthy aging, social inclusion, and community resilience.

5.6 Benefits Navigation and Municipal Assistance

Benefits navigation and municipal assistance emerged as a critical service area affecting older adult residents' ability to successfully access public resources, transportation benefits, housing-related assistance, and other essential support systems.

Survey findings indicate that many residents continue to experience difficulty understanding eligibility requirements, completing applications, navigating administrative systems, and identifying available municipal and external support services.

Responses also demonstrate strong appreciation for the direct assistance currently provided through the Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division.

Estimated Findings

- **58%** reported needing assistance understanding available benefit programs
- **49%** identified difficulty completing applications and required forms
- **44%** reported challenges navigating online benefit systems
- **41%** expressed uncertainty regarding program eligibility requirements
- **52%** indicated that direct in-person assistance improves service access
- **47%** requested expanded guidance regarding available municipal resources

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"There are many programs available, but it is difficult to know where to begin."*
> *"The paperwork can be confusing for many seniors."*
> *"Online applications can be difficult to complete independently."*
> *"The staff at Senior Affairs are very helpful when guidance is needed."*
> *"In-person assistance makes the process much easier."*

Key Observations

Survey responses identified recurring barriers related to:

- difficulty understanding benefit eligibility requirements
- challenges completing applications independently
- limited awareness of available assistance programs
- confusion navigating online service systems
- uncertainty regarding appropriate points of municipal contact
- technology-related barriers affecting access to digital applications

At the same time, residents consistently recognized the value of direct support currently provided through Senior Affairs.

Existing assistance services were frequently identified as important supports for:

- NJ Transit Reduced Fare Program enrollment
- Senior Care Photo ID processing
- housing-related referrals
- transportation guidance
- municipal service referrals
- benefits application support
- direct administrative assistance

Survey findings suggest that personalized, in-person navigation support remains essential for improving resident access to public services.

Strategic Interpretation

These findings confirm that benefits navigation and municipal assistance represent a critical operational function within Jersey City's senior support infrastructure.

The continued strengthening of resident-centered navigation services will improve access, reduce administrative barriers, and support more equitable service utilization across Jersey City's older adult population.

5.7 Civic Participation and Community Engagement

Civic participation and community engagement emerged as important indicators of active aging, social inclusion, and overall quality of life among older adult residents throughout Jersey City.

Survey findings indicate that many residents value opportunities to remain socially connected, participate in community-based activities, contribute through volunteer engagement, and maintain meaningful involvement in neighborhood life.

Responses suggest that continued access to structured participation opportunities plays a critical role in supporting emotional well-being, reducing social isolation, and strengthening resident connection to the broader community.

Estimated Findings

- **44%** expressed interest in expanded volunteer or civic engagement opportunities
- **49%** reported limited awareness of available community participation pathways
- **63%** identified social engagement as essential to maintaining quality of life
- **56%** expressed interest in increased neighborhood-based participation activities
- **52%** reported that regular participation improves emotional well-being
- **38%** indicated interest in contributing to future community planning discussions

Representative Resident Feedback

> *"Staying involved helps seniors remain active and connected."*
> *"More opportunities to participate in community activities would be beneficial."*
> *"The senior centers help people stay engaged and connected."*
> *"Older adults still want to contribute to the community."*
> *"Programs that encourage participation help reduce isolation."*

Key Observations

Survey responses identified several recurring themes related to community participation, including:

- strong interest in continued social engagement
- desire for expanded community-based opportunities
- appreciation for structured participation through Senior Affairs programming
- interest in volunteer opportunities and leadership roles

- recognition of social connection as essential to healthy aging
- desire for greater awareness of civic participation pathways

Residents consistently identified existing Senior Affairs activities as important engagement platforms supporting:

- social connection
- recreational participation
- peer interaction
- community belonging
- structured involvement opportunities

Survey findings suggest that older adult residents seek not only access to services, but also meaningful opportunities to remain visible, valued, and engaged contributors within Jersey City's community life.

Strategic Interpretation

These findings reinforce the importance of strengthening civic participation pathways and expanding opportunities for resident voice, leadership, and neighborhood-based engagement.

Supporting active civic involvement will strengthen social inclusion, promote healthy aging, and further advance Jersey City's long-term Age-Friendly Community goals.

5.8 Ward-Level Distribution Analysis

Survey participation reflected representation across all six Jersey City wards, providing valuable geographic insight into neighborhood-level conditions affecting older adult residents.

Ward-based response analysis allowed the assessment to identify localized trends, service priorities, and recurring concerns across different areas of the City.

While resident concerns were consistent across several core Age-Friendly domains, the assessment identified variation in emphasis related to housing stability, transportation accessibility, digital inclusion, communication preferences, and service awareness across ward-level populations.

Estimated Survey Distribution by Ward

- **Ward A – 16%**
  Transportation access and communication clarity
- **Ward B – 13%**
  Housing affordability and supportive service awareness
- **Ward C – 25%**
  Mobility access, benefits navigation, and digital inclusion
- **Ward D – 16%**
  Wellness participation and program accessibility
- **Ward E – 12%**
  Housing stability and transportation convenience
- **Ward F – 18%**
  Technology support and community engagement

6. Strategic Recommendations

The findings of the Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment identify clear opportunities to strengthen existing services, address recurring resident concerns, and support the continued advancement of Jersey City as a more accessible, inclusive, and age-responsive community for older adult residents.

The following recommendations are based on survey participation data, district-level observations, resident feedback, and the current operational capabilities of the Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division. These recommendations are intended to support future internal planning, interdepartmental coordination, service enhancement, and strategic funding development.

6.1 Expand Transportation Accessibility and Mobility Support

Survey findings identified transportation as one of the most significant barriers affecting resident independence and participation.

Recommended actions include:

- expanding Purple Via senior transportation outreach
- strengthening NJ Transit Reduced Fare enrollment support
- increasing transportation application guidance for Uber, Lyft, and Purple Via
- evaluating expanded transportation scheduling flexibility
- improving transportation education materials
- strengthening mobility-related communication outreach

Strategic Objective:
Improve independent mobility access while reducing transportation-related barriers to participation and essential service access.

6.2 Strengthen Aging-in-Place and Housing Stability Support

Survey responses demonstrated strong resident preference for remaining safely within existing homes and neighborhoods.

Recommended actions include:

- developing aging-in-place resource guides
- strengthening housing referral coordination
- expanding awareness of home accessibility support resources
- increasing housing assistance information outreach
- supporting cross-agency housing planning discussions

Strategic Objective:
Promote long-term residential stability and safe independent aging.

6.3 Enhance Communication and Information Access

Residents consistently emphasized the need for clearer, more accessible communication.

Recommended actions include:

- expanding printed outreach materials
- standardizing monthly program calendars
- strengthening multilingual communication access
- increasing direct phone-based outreach
- simplifying program registration instructions

- improving visibility of available municipal services

Strategic Objective:
Ensure equitable and accessible communication across all resident populations.

6.4 Expand Digital Literacy and Technology Support

Survey findings confirmed growing technology-related barriers affecting service access.

Recommended actions include:

- implementing the Senior Tech Literacy Program
- offering recurring digital assistance sessions
- developing transportation-app training workshops
- providing printed technology guides
- integrating digital support into center-based programming

Strategic Objective:
Reduce digital exclusion and strengthen independent technology access.

6.5 Build Upon Existing Wellness, Nutrition, and Social Engagement Successes

Survey responses identified wellness and social programming as major municipal strengths.

Recommended actions include:

- expanding wellness class offerings
- increasing nutrition education opportunities
- strengthening congregate meal engagement
- expanding social participation programming
- exploring preventive health partnerships

Strategic Objective:
Promote healthy aging, nutrition security, and social connectedness.

6.6 Strengthen Benefits Navigation and Municipal Assistance

Residents continue to rely heavily on direct administrative support.

Recommended actions include:

- expanding one-on-one assistance capacity
- simplifying benefit guidance materials
- increasing application assistance workshops
- improving municipal service navigation resources
- strengthening referral coordination

Strategic Objective:
Reduce administrative barriers and improve service access.

6.7 Increase Resident Leadership and Civic Participation

Survey findings demonstrated strong interest in meaningful community involvement.

Recommended actions include:

- creating resident advisory participation opportunities
- promoting volunteer engagement pathways
- increasing neighborhood-based participation forums
- incorporating resident input into future planning initiatives

Strategic Objective:
Strengthen resident voice in Age-Friendly planning and community development.

6.8 Formalize Cross-Sector Community Partnerships

The success of this assessment reflects the value of collaborative outreach.

Recommended actions include strengthening long-term coordination with:

- Jersey City AARP
- Lutheran Life PACE Adult Day Care
- Urban League
- healthcare and housing stakeholders
- transportation partners

Future collaboration should support:

- coordinated outreach
- shared educational programming
- joint funding initiatives
- broader resident engagement

Strategic Objective:
Establish a sustainable collaborative framework for long-term Age-Friendly advancement.

Strategic Recommendation Summary

Implementation of these recommendations would allow Jersey City to:

- strengthen existing senior-serving programs
- address identified service gaps
- improve equitable access to services
- increase resident participation
- enhance grant readiness
- support long-term Age-Friendly municipal planning

These recommendations provide a practical roadmap for translating resident feedback into measurable community improvement.

7. Conclusion

The Jersey City Age-Friendly Community Assessment establishes a meaningful planning foundation for strengthening age-responsive municipal services across Jersey City.

Findings confirm that the City possesses significant operational strengths through established Senior Affairs programming, trusted community partnerships, and strong resident engagement.

The assessment also identifies clear opportunities to strengthen transportation accessibility, communication systems, digital inclusion, housing support coordination, and neighborhood-responsive service delivery.

Most importantly, this project demonstrates that Jersey City is well-positioned to build upon existing municipal capacity and advance a coordinated Age-Friendly framework that supports older adults in aging with dignity, independence, and full community participation.

JERSEY CITY AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

KEY FINDINGS MAP AND ESTIMATES

Building an Age-Friendly Jersey City for All

~800 SURVEY RESPONSES COLLECTED CITYWIDE

CITYWIDE KEY FINDINGS (ESTIMATED)

- **Desire to Age in Place** — Prefer to remain in Jersey City — 80%
- **Wellness / Recreation Interest** — Interested in wellness & recreation programs — 78%
- **Transportation Concerns** — Report transportation-related challenges — 68%
- **Printed Communication Preference** — Prefer printed materials — 67%
- **Housing Affordability Concerns** — Concerned about housing costs — 63%
- **Need for Technology Support** — Need help using technology — 55%
- **Transportation as Participation Barrier** — Transportation limits participation — 57%
- **Interest in Digital Literacy** — Interested in technology training — 62%
- **Civic / Volunteer Interest** — Interested in volunteering or community engagement — 44%

Percentages represent planning-oriented estimates based on reviewed survey responses.

EXISTING POSITIVE PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED BY RESIDENTS

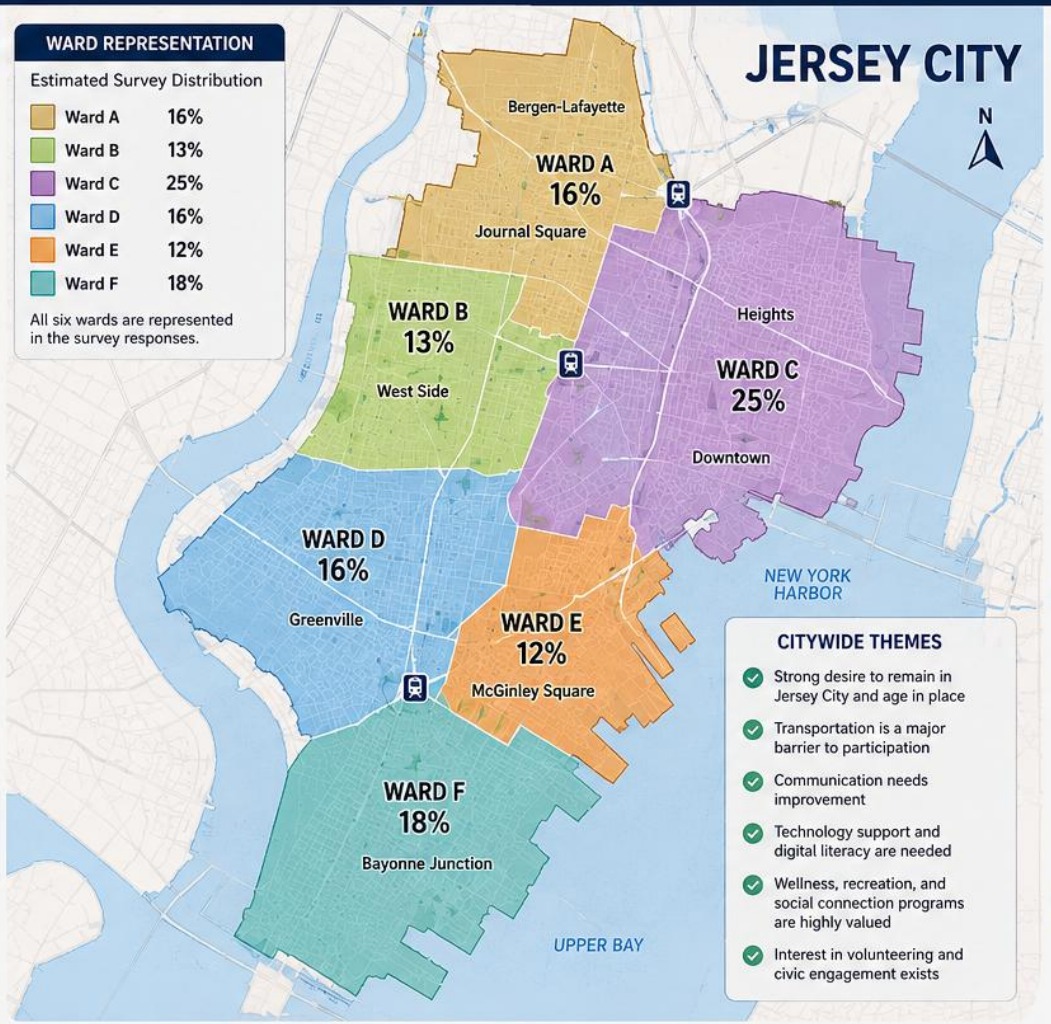
- Grocery Shuttle Transportation
- Purple VIA Discounted Rides
- NJ Transit Reduced Fare Program
- Daily Congregate Meals at Senior Centers
- Wellness & Exercise Classes
- Senior Excursions & Group Trips
- Technology Training & Assistance
- Recreational & Social Programming

WARD REPRESENTATION

Estimated Survey Distribution

Ward A	16%
Ward B	13%
Ward C	25%
Ward D	16%
Ward E	12%
Ward F	18%

All six wards are represented in the survey responses.



CITYWIDE THEMES

- Strong desire to remain in Jersey City and age in place
- Transportation is a major barrier to participation
- Communication needs improvement
- Technology support and digital literacy are needed
- Wellness, recreation, and social connection programs are highly valued
- Interest in volunteering and civic engagement exists

WHAT RESIDENTS ARE SAYING (COMMON COMMENTS)

> *"Transportation is one of the biggest challenges for seniors."*

> *"Many seniors want to remain in their homes."*

> *"Printed information is easier to read and understand."*

> *"Technology changes too fast – we need more help."*

> *"The senior center and meals help bring people together."*

TRANSPORTATION OVERVIEW

Primary Transportation Methods Used

Public Transportation (NJ Transit, Hudson-Bergen Light Rail)	42%
Senior Bus / City Shuttle	18%
Walking	16%
Family / Friends	14%
Uber / Lyft / Via	8%
Other	2%

Top Transportation Concerns

- Reliability & scheduling (53%)
- Cost of ride-share services (48%)
- App / technology difficulties (46%)
- Limited routes & service hours (41%)

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

Preferred Ways to Receive Information

Printed Newsletters / Flyers	67%
Phone Calls	18%
Email	8%
In-Person / Community Events	5%
Social Media	2%

MAP LEGEND

- NJ Transit / Light Rail Stations
- Major Parks & Open Spaces
- Major Hospitals
- Water
- Major Roads

NOTE: Percentages are preliminary planning-oriented estimates based on reviewed survey responses and should not be interpreted as statistically weighted results.

Source: Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services – Senior Affairs Division **Date:** May 2025