Agenda Item #:_____

Staff Report
City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Ward and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Richard Thompson, Interim City Manager

FROM: Richard Gill, Parks and Recreation Director
                Eve Kelso, Recreation Services Manager
                Jan Buike, Older Adults Program Supervisor

DATE: August 3, 2010

SUBJECT: Consideration of Alternatives Related to Expanding Transportation Services for Older Adults and Review of Information from Program Focus Group Meetings

---

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff and the Senior Advisory Committee recommend that the City Council discuss the results of the Older Adults Focus Group meetings and appropriate $8,050 from the Council Contingency fund for expanded transportation services for older adults.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:
To add one night of Dial-A-Ride service until 9 p.m., utilizing one vehicle, the annual cost would be $10,000. The Senior Advisory Committee is recommending a pilot project for six months for one added night of service, twice a month, which would cost $2,500. Staff is recommending a budget of $5,000 for one full year, anticipating that the program will be successful.

Additionally, the projected cost for the limited provision of taxi service to medical facilities out of the area (but within a 20 mile service area) including the VA Hospitals in Long Beach and Westwood, and Kaiser in Harbor City would be $6,500 ($6,500 would provide approximately 65 round trips per year to these medical facilities).

The total cost for these projects is $11,500. Staff would purchase Proposition A funds at 70 cents on the dollar for a total cost to the City of Manhattan Beach of $8,050 from the Council Contingency fund. After this allocation, the balance of the Council Contingency fund would be $91,950.

BACKGROUND:
Staff was directed by City Council at the November 3, 2009 City Council meeting to follow up with the recommendation from the 2009 Older Adults Survey, which included holding focus group meetings. The purpose of the meetings was to gain further information in regards to Dial-A-Ride and the Older Adults Program including identifying transportation needs beyond what the City is

currently offering with Dial-A-Ride and gathering feedback on activities for older adults.

DISCUSSION:

In an effort to avoid being perceived as biased in the overall direction of the focus group meetings, including question development, it was decided to work with an outside consultant. Partners In Care, who developed and analyzed the initial survey, was selected. Partners In Care first provided information about the survey to approximately 100 older adults at a town hall meeting on March 25, then facilitated break-out sessions to obtain community feedback. The topics of the break-out sessions were identified as a result of the original survey questions last year and included: Recreational and Social Activities, Volunteer Activities, Health and Wellness Programs and Transportation. The topic of Outreach was also discussed at each break-out session. The Town Hall meeting was advertised on the City Website, the Daily Breeze, Beach Reporter, Easy Reader and Manhattan Sun. Flyers were also mailed out to over 500 residents, and placed in the community centers, library, senior housing areas, and on Dial-A-Ride buses.

Next, three focus group meetings were held over the following week, targeting people who do not regularly participate in City of Manhattan Beach Older Adult programs. The make up of each focus group differed. The first group was made up of ten individuals who are regular Dial-A-Ride users, but do not participate in City of Manhattan Beach Older Adult Programs. The second group included eight individuals who are infrequent or limited users of Manhattan Beach programs and the third group was made up of 13 individuals who are members of service organizations in Manhattan Beach.

The findings presented from the focus groups identified areas where staff might engage in efforts to strengthen existing recreation and social programs and/or add desired programming where it does not currently exist. The breakout and focus group discussions also generated a number of ideas about the most effective ways to communicate with older adult residents of Manhattan Beach about available programs and events, as well as how to present information about these programs in a way that is both appealing and accessible.

1. **Activities:**
   In the area of activities, a strong priority that was emphasized throughout the report was to increase the use of volunteers to coordinate and lead programs, improve safety and service and enhance the quality of life for the seniors who are volunteering. Some potential new activities include darts, sing-alongs, hiking, line dancing, bicycling, meditation, art history lectures and shuffleboard.

2. **Transportation**
   In the area of transportation, the following priorities were emphasized:
   a. Add evening service (fifty percent of the group surveyed in the break-out sessions indicated that they do not drive at night). We currently have Wednesday evening service to specific restaurants, where staff have coordinated discounts for seniors. The Senior Advisory Committee specifically recommends that a six month pilot project be implemented to include two Thursday evenings a month with general Dial-A-Ride service until 9 pm for a six month trial to begin in September. The cost would be approximately $2,500. Staff recommends that a full year be funded at a cost of $5,000. As reported in Fiscal Impact, the City will be purchasing Proposition A funds at 70

cents on the dollar for this program, making the total $3,500 for this project. If the program does not go past six months, staff will not use the additional funds.

b. Add service to medical facilities outside of Manhattan Beach within 20 miles, including Kaiser, Harbor City, UCLA Medical Center and the VA Hospital in Westwood. Staff contacted a cab company and estimated $80-$120 for one round trip to the various medical facilities listed. $6,500 would provide approximately 65 round trips per year to these medical facilities. Again, as reported in Fiscal Impact, the City will be purchasing Proposition A funds at 70 cents on the dollar for this program, making the total $4,550 for this project.

c. Create a volunteer driver program

3. Separate Senior Advisory Committee Recommendation to City Council:
Another item that the Senior Advisory Committee is recommending, and is requesting City Council approval to move forward with, is the permanent installation of a Petanque court and horseshoe pit near the Joslyn Center. The Rotary Club has verbally agreed to fund and construct the project. The location of the new areas has been discussed at the Senior Advisory Committee Meeting. Since the first choice for the location is between the Scout House and Joslyn Center, this would affect a number of user groups, including the Scouts and City youth programs. Staff is looking for City Council approval to contact these organizations to discuss the possible impacts of Petanque and Horseshoes on their programs. The Senior Advisory Committee's second choice of location is Veteran's Parkway.

After all of the details have been worked out with the appropriate user groups including the Scouts, staff will present the project to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their recommendation.

CONCLUSION:
The Senior Advisory Committee recommends one night of additional Dial-A-Ride service twice a month, for six months at a total cost of $2,500. Staff is recommending a budget of $5,000 for one full year, anticipating that the program will be successful.

The focus groups and staff recommend adding 65 round trip cab vouchers to medical facilities within 20 miles which include Kaiser in Harbor City, and the VA Hospitals in Westwood and Long Beach at a cost of $6,500.

The total cost for these two transportation projects is $11,500. Staff would purchase Proposition A funds at 70 cents on the dollar for a total cost to the City of Manhattan Beach of $8,050 from the Council Contingency fund. Staff is recommending that City Council appropriate $8,050 from the Council Contingency fund for expanded transportation services for older adults and authorize the City Manager to exchange these funds for Proposition A funds.

The Senior Advisory Committee requests permission to move forward with a plan to develop a permanent Petanque court and horseshoe pit at one of two locations depending on the impact to other programs. Staff and the Senior Advisory Committee will present the final plans for the project to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their recommendation once all of the details are worked out.

Attachment:

A. Partners In Care Foundation report titled: City of Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Qualitative Study of Older Adult Preferences, April 2010.

City of Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation

Qualitative Study of Older Adult Preferences

April 2010

Prepared by

Partners in Care Foundation

Institute for Change

Partners in Care
F O U N D A T I O N
changing the shape of health care

Executive Summary

Project Overview

In order to better understand the needs and preferences of older adults in Manhattan Beach, the City Parks and Recreation Department (MB) commissioned Partners in Care Foundation (Partners) to follow up on the results of an Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (Needs Assessment) conducted by Partners in 2009. On March 25, 2010, the results of the 2009 survey were presented to close to 100 older adult community residents in a town hall style meeting. Immediately following the town hall meeting four breakout discussion groups were convened with 57 participants to further explore and expand on the Needs Assessment findings. Within two weeks of the town hall meeting, three focus groups representing a total of 31 Manhattan Beach residents aged 55 and older who are not regular users of older adult programs were conducted to gain a more representative perspective of community needs and preferences. This report presents the findings of these discussions.

Findings

The main objective of convening these breakout and focus group discussions was to gather information that could be used by MB staff to respond to the social and recreational needs and preferences of older adult Manhattan Beach residents. This effort was designed to glean the perspective of both those already participating, and those not currently or regularly participating, in MB older adult programming. Discussions were facilitated with questions that focused on 4 major topical areas: 1) recreational and social activities, 2) volunteer activities, 3) transportation, and 4) communication and outreach. These topics provide the framework under which the findings are presented.

1. Recreational and Social Activities

Breakout and focus group participants identified a broad range of recreational and social activities that older adult residents are interested and/or engaged in. They further revealed that the extent of resident knowledge or perception about the types of activities available through MB Older Adult Programs is varied and often quite limited. Discussions also brought attention to the diversity of the older adult population with respect to their range of interests, generational differences, and issues of access related to individual health and functional status, transportation needs, and perceived social barriers.

2. Volunteer Activities

Many study participants reported they were involved in formal and/or informal volunteer activities. Others indicated they were not currently involved but would like to be if they could find the right volunteer opportunity. Group discussions revealed that reasons for *not* participating in volunteer work included lack of time, health problems, and personal preference to avoid obligations in retirement. Numerous suggestions were made about how to organize and offer more desirable and accessible volunteer opportunities.

3. Transportation

While most participants indicated they use their own cars for transportation, many suggested that there are gaps in available public transportation, especially during the evening hours. Participant comments suggest a dearth of transportation options between 5:00 – 8:00 pm. In addition, some concerns were expressed about Dial-A-Ride services being less available during the driver's lunch hour and on weekends. However, much of the discussion revealed a high level of satisfaction with the Dial-A-Ride program overall.

4. Communication and Outreach

Much attention was brought to the need for information about available programs and activities. Many participants indicated that while a lot of information is available, they sometimes have difficulty accessing the most relevant information. Participants provided numerous suggestions about ways to organize and package information about older adult programs. In addition, emphasis was placed on the need to be sensitive to age identity issues, i.e., some people are more likely participate in programming when it is categorized and labeled as pertaining to "older adults," but others are actually *less* likely to participate.

Recommendations

The findings presented here identify areas where staff might engage in efforts to strengthen existing recreational and social programs and/or add desired programming where it does not currently exist. The discussions also generated a number of ideas about more effective ways to communicate with older adult residents of MB about available programs and events.

Based on a synthesis of the breakout and focus group discussions, we present a set of observations and recommendations listed in broad priority order. These priorities are based on our interpretation of the study data and what we believe it suggests about effective ways to respond to the primary needs and preferences of older adult Manhattan Beach residents.

1. **Older adults in MB represent a very diverse audience for recreational and social programs. As such, in developing informational and marketing materials about programs, it is important to recognize and account for these differences.**

    Ideally, you will find ways to strike a balance between the needs/interests/preferences of:
    *   existing participants and those older adults you hope to attract to programs;
    *   both older-old and younger-old adults;
    *   those who are still employed as well as the retired;
    *   healthier, highly functional older adults and those who are functionally impaired;
    *   long-time MB residents and newcomers, i.e., those not already connected with the community

2. **The content of your programming may be less of an issue than how that content is being packaged and communicated to your prospective audiences. The diverse audience of older adults in MB may require a multi-pronged marketing strategy, particularly with regard to how programs are named.**

   The explicit labeling of programs by age group membership is an issue. Some residents are interested in distinct older adult programming, while others want "active" or "mature" adult programming that is more subtly packaged, discretely defined and blended in with general parks and recreation programs.

   Some options to consider:
   - Organize programming by functional ability level (i.e., as measured by mobility, health status, activity level/intensity, etc.) instead of by chronological age.
   - Widen the chronological age parameters you use in defining your older adult programs, e.g., 40 plus or 50 plus.
   - Eliminate "older adult" labeling in program titles of printed materials and use "55+" in program/event descriptions.
   - Only designate programs as "older adult" or "55+" if this is relevant to the audience (e.g. yes for physical activity programs but not for a musical event)

3. **A personal touch goes a long way: A personal and individualized approach may be the most effective way to reach your desired audience.**

   - A general orientation to programs and services may be helpful to encourage people to come through the door – to take the first step.
   - By providing a general orientation, MB might also be able to increase the participation levels of those already attending at least one Parks and Recreation activity. This is a built-in audience to whom you can introduce the full range of programs available.
   - Those not currently participating in any Parks and Recreation activities will likely require an even more targeted approach, e.g., a personal invitation, a phone call, transportation, and/or some other incentive.
   - Consider enlisting the aid of "regulars" to deepen their engagement and to reach out to others in the community.

4. **There are untapped opportunities to promote your older adult programs while also advancing intergenerational volunteerism. Consider creating a multipurpose volunteer program focused on marketing your older adult programs and engaging youth.**

   - Consider enlisting older adults and youth to create a volunteer program to introduce the MB older adult program to a new audience using the direct personal outreach identified by focus group participants.
   - Using an intergenerational approach, older adult volunteers could be charged with making phone calls and other personal contacts to prospective program participants.
   - Youth volunteers could assist with these efforts while also providing desired computer tutoring to older adult volunteers.

Table of Contents

Introduction

In order to better understand the needs and preferences of older adults in Manhattan Beach, the City Parks and Recreation Department (MB) commissioned Partners in Care Foundation (Partners) to follow up on the results of an Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (Needs Assessment) conducted by Partners in 2009. On March 25, 2010, the results of the 2009 survey were presented to members of the community in a town hall style meeting. Four breakout discussion groups were convened immediately following the town hall meeting to further explore and expand on the needs assessment findings. In addition, within two weeks of the town hall meeting, three focus groups were conducted with members of the community who did not attend the town hall meeting and who are not regularly involved in Parks and Recreation older adult programs. This report presents the findings of these discussions.

Town Hall Meeting

Close to 100 MB older adult residents attended the town hall meeting on March 25, 2010. The purpose of conducting the survey was discussed and a brief summary of the results of the needs assessment survey was presented. Following the presentation, there was a question and answer session and attendees were informed about the purpose and process for the breakout groups to follow.

Generally, the needs assessment survey presentation was well received. The audience appeared mixed in their levels of existing knowledge about the survey. While many indicated they were aware of the survey, few, if any, seemed to be very familiar with the findings. Furthermore, several indicated (by a show of hands) that they had not previously heard about the survey. Most of the questions/comments made by attendees were concerned with the process and methodology of the survey rather than with the content of the findings. For example, one attendee asked why the sample was so small, another wanted to know whether existing community statistics were used as a point of comparison, while another wanted to know how the survey questions were chosen. One attendee was especially concerned about a focus on transportation needs and expressed the opinion that the survey did not include enough, or perhaps the right, transportation questions.

Breakout Groups

Following the town hall meeting, staff from Partners moderated four (4) breakout groups that were organized by major topic areas drawn from the needs assessment survey: 1) recreational and social activities; 2) volunteer activities; 3) health and wellness programs; and 4) transportation. Meeting attendees were invited to join the breakout group of their choice. In addition to discussing these specific topics, all groups were asked about their perspectives on: 5) MB communication and outreach efforts; and 6) youth volunteer activities. In the course of each breakout group discussion, a list of the major observations and priorities related to the main topic area was generated and displayed on a poster board.

Breakout Group Participants

Four breakout discussion groups, representing a total of 57 Manhattan Beach residents, were facilitated by Partners staff. At the beginning of each breakout group, participants were asked to voluntarily complete a brief demographic survey. The results of this survey provide a profile of those represented in these breakout groups.

Demographics: Participants in the town hall breakout groups averaged 76 years of age (range 63 to 92). The average length of residency in Manhattan Beach was 32 years (range 1-62 years). Of the 57 individuals who completed a survey, 42 were female. Twenty-nine participants identified themselves as married, while the remainder reported that they were widowed (14), divorced (8), never married (5) or other (1). Almost half of participants (27) reported living with a spouse while 21 reported living alone. While nearly all (55) breakout group participants reported being retired or not employed, there was notable variation in annual income level, with 22 individuals reporting an income of over $50,000, 13 reporting an income between $25,000 and $50,000 and 9 reporting an income of less than $25,000 annually. The highest level of education obtained by 23 participants was some amount of post-graduate education. Fifteen individuals reported being college graduates while another 13 had completed at least some college.

A final question on the survey was whether or not attendees had completed the Older Adults Needs Assessment distributed in Manhattan Beach in 2009. Of the 57 individuals who completed the survey, 32 reported completing the original needs assessment survey.

Breakout Group Discussions

This section provides a list of the observations, needs, and priorities identified by each of the four breakout groups. Please note that the identified needs reflect the expressed opinions of breakout group participants; the factual basis of these opinions has not been investigated and is beyond the scope of this report. These topical lists are followed by a summary of discussion points made across the four breakout groups related to: 5) communication and outreach; and 6) youth volunteer activities.

1. Recreational and Social Activities

- Perceived need: a shortage of space for recreational activities.
  - A survey should be conducted to identify available sites around MB
  - Some locations are available for rent off site
  - Schools should be considered as a source of additional locations
  - Community needs dedicated senior center.

- Discussion of the opportunity for individuals to organize activities based on their interests.
  - Generally perceived that this approach is used and works
  - Activities that are offered may start with a few participants and grow if there is interest
  - One-time activities (e.g., day trips) can also be organized if there is interest

- Perceived need for people other than the advisory group to meet with staff on a regular basis to talk about ongoing/new ideas for activities.

- Generational differences in interest.
  - Older adults should not be thought of as one age group
  - At least two segments: younger (50s-60s?) and older
  - Associated with differences in interests, for example:
    - Physical activities (younger: bocce ball, ping pong, shuffleboard etc.) (older: seated activities, exercise classes)
    - Trips (younger: independent travel) (older: day trips, overnight trips)

- Figure out which activities are popular (e.g., mystery trip; Friday night films) and support/offer more of those kinds of activities.

- Figure out ways to sustain groups that are formed. Many participants join and fall away rather than sticking with an activity. Often much of the work is left to a few organizers, who tire over time.

- Participants said some activities seemed too costly. There was a suggestion to do a cost/activity comparison with other districts.

Specific activities mentioned during the group:

Ping-pong	Dancing/Line Dancing	Sing-along
Horseshoes	Bicycling	Meditation/Relaxation/st
Shuffleboard	Community Garden	ress reduction
Darts	"Fairly" Local Day Trips	Art History Lectures
Softball	Overnight Trips	
Hiking	Santa Monica Laemmle	

- One participant provided an idea/list for activities to be facilitated by volunteers, who would donate 1 to 1 ½ hours each month. Participants would need introduction to subject/guidance, but activity would be self-directed by the participants. Ideas: Sing-along, origami, famous artist of the month, opera Sunday, calligraphy, family history/genealogy/life-line, women's discussion group, Mozart's music, famous play of the month, study of wines, digital photography, science fiction group, chorale group, ham radio, Bunco players, jewelry making, computers, astronomy, book discussion group, herb growing.

2. Volunteer Activities

- Suggestions for increasing number of older adult volunteers:
  - Make clear who the volunteer coordinator is and make their contact information available.
    - *Suggestion*: have an individual specifically in charge of coordinating volunteers
  - Create a directory of opportunities; include detailed information about the job, time requirement and the skills required.
  - Create short-term or task-specific opportunities.

- Create a list of "on call" individuals who can be called upon to work on specific kinds of tasks.
- For younger seniors (55-65 years) create opportunities where they can help the older seniors, this will create a way for them to become involved in the Older Adults program.

- Suggestions for outreach to volunteers:
  - On the website, have a section for volunteers with "job listings" and all other important information; make this page interactive for users.
  - Place list of volunteer opportunities in monthly mailing.
  - Make the link to the volunteer coordinator easy and obvious.
  - Create a database of interested individuals, their skills and interests.
  - Have a booth at the Hometown Fair.

- Perceived barriers to volunteering:
  - People interested in volunteering may not actually be able to volunteer (lack ability)
  - Location
  - No computer, not aware or not able to get information
  - Label of "senior" turns off the younger crowd. Try new advertising to reach this age group such as an advertisement to "Baby Boomers" rather than older adults or seniors.
  - Activities are not interesting or enticing—this may be due to a lack of information about available opportunities.

3. Health and Wellness Programs

- Nutrition
  - Beach Cities Health District Tuesday meals
    - The meals are often not nutritious and were better before Adventure Plex took over
    - Attendance dropped because of food quality
    - Redondo Beach has a meal program that costs $2.50 and the menu is known in advance
  - Develop or expand Meals on Wheels program

- Health lectures
  - Very well received
  - Expand and continue health lectures
  - Need to be better advertised
    - Easier to find on the MB website
    - Advertise in Beach Reporter or MB News
    - When advertising, have consistent placement and labeling
    - Notify via a mailing list
    - BCHD can also provide information
    - Have a receptionist at Joslyn to call and receive calls from seniors
  - Ideas for future lectures
    - Information on new Healthcare Law
    - Computer workshop about City website

- Exercise Programs
  - Would like classes at a free or reduced price

- Priorities
  - #1 Expand and continue health lectures
  - #2 Better food for Tuesday lunches and more nutritious
  - #3 Improve distribution of information on upcoming events
  - #4 Exercise opportunities at a reasonable cost

4. Transportation

- Transportation Services
  - Dial-A-Ride
    - Participants stated that there is sometimes a delay in the service of Dial-A-Ride causing people to be late to their appointments.
    - Dial-A-Ride is busy on Saturday and Sunday when only one van is available.
    - Participants expressed frustration with not having transportation available during the lunch hours of drivers.
    - Use existing Dial-A-Ride data to track: times of high use, who is using, and where they are going. This will allow a more comprehensive view of how more people are using transportation.
    - Expand the schedules so that transportation is available during more hours.
  - Community members would like to have more transportation options between the times of 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. as well as after 8:00 P.M.
  - They would also like to have the transportation services go longer distances and outside the City limits.
  - Participants stated more outreach should be done and more information should be available to notify residents of their transportation options.

- Transportation Concerns
  - It was brought up that poles are placed in odd places on the sidewalk and that the City is not taking into account pedestrians or wheelchair-bound community members.
  - Half of the group stated that because they cannot drive at night they do not have the means to travel.

- Resident Involvement
  - The members wanted to know how much was being spent on the transportation that they currently have and if they are getting the most "bang for the buck". They also wanted to know how the senior-service staff gathers information regarding transportation.
  - Create a Citizen Commission to look at the current use or transportation resources, cost, and Dial-a-Ride contracts, to make sure that money is being spent on the right resources. This commission would have a public hearing to keep everyone informed of what was going on.

- Priorities
  - #1 Create a Citizen's Commission
  - #2 Make sure Dial-A-Ride is available during the lunch hours
  - #3 More information and outreach about transportation services
  - #4 Accountability and transparency of transportation programs
  - #5 Expand hours that transportation is available

5. Communication and Outreach

- Suggestions for communication
  - Use a digital board in front of OASIS
  - Expand the older adult mailing list
  - Place information on Dial-A-Ride vans
  - Have a greeter on Dial-A-Ride with information on upcoming events
  - Place calendar and flyers at various locations within the community
  - Identify how individuals prefer to receive their information: email or USPS
  - Listings in *Manhappenings* and local papers can help make people aware of programs.
  - Volunteer-manned hotline for inquires

- Suggestions for outreach
  - Volunteer team of case workers to contact residents and act as ambassadors for MB
  - Word of mouth and personal invitations are most effective; go door-to-door if needed
  - Utilize the Neighborhood Watch to get information out to more people
  - Use Census data to better identify where older people live
  - Have individuals with information outside local businesses, e.g. drug store or supermarket

- Suggestions for programs
  - Have programs that people get excited about – "hot button" topics that bring people in
  - Expand the variety of programs and the time of day they are offered

6. Best Use of Youth Volunteers

- Coordination
  - Coordinate volunteer needs at school and senior center
  - Build mutually beneficial relationships between seniors and youth
  - Use the talents of youth to benefit seniors—through classes and performances

- Programs and activities
  - Play board games
  - Create holiday themed activities for youth and seniors to participate in together

- Services
  - Have youth make reminder calls to seniors regarding activities or new programs
  - Ask youth to help with gardening, specifically vegetable gardening
  - Offer classes taught by youth, specially computer classes
  - Have youth provide light assistance around the home

Focus Groups

To gain a more representative perspective of community needs and preferences, Manhattan Beach residents aged 55 and older who are not regular users of older adult programs were recruited by MB staff to participate in focus groups. The final protocol used for the focus groups was created by Partners and approved by MB. The discussion domains and focus group questions were designed to build on the breakout discussions and included the topics of 1) recreational and social activities, 2) volunteer activities, 3) transportation, and 4) communication and outreach. These topics provide the framework under which the findings and discussion are presented.

Focus Group Participants

Three focus groups were conducted on April 1, 2010 and April 5, 2010 involving a total of 31 Manhattan Beach residents with these characteristics:
- 10 individuals who are regular Dial-A-Ride users, who do not participate in City of Manhattan Beach Older Adult Programs.
- 8 individuals who are infrequent or limited users of MB programs,
- 13 individuals who are members of service organizations in Manhattan Beach

At the beginning of each focus group, participants were asked to voluntarily complete a brief demographic survey. The results of this survey provide a profile of those represented in these focus groups.

Demographics: Attendees ranged in age from 59 to 87 years, with an average age of 70. Of the 31 individuals who participated in the focus groups, 21 were female. Nineteen identified themselves as married and living with a spouse while the remainder reported they were divorced (7) or widowed (5). Ten participants indicated that they live alone. The average length of residency in Manhattan Beach was 35 years (range 2-62 years of residence) The majority (21) of focus group participants reported they were not working or were retired, while seven reported working part time and two reported working full time. Overall, participants represented a highly educated group with nearly all (29) having attended some college and many (7) having completed at least some post-graduate education. Income levels were varied, with 5 individuals reporting an annual income under $25,000, 8 reporting an income between $25,000 and $50,000, and 16 reporting an income of $50,000 or more.

A final question on the survey was whether or not attendees had completed the Older Adults Needs Assessment distributed in Manhattan Beach in 2009. Of the 31 focus group participants, 26 indicated that they did not complete the survey.

Focus Group Discussion

This section provides a summary of the recurring themes that emerged across the three focus groups under each main topic area. Many of these themes are illustrated by direct quotes taken from the participants. *Please note that these quotes reflect the expressed opinions of focus group*

participants; the factual basis of these opinions has not been investigated and is beyond the scope of this report.

1. Recreational and Social Activities

1a. What kinds of recreational or social activities are you currently involved in?

A wide variety of interests and abilities were represented in the focus groups. Most of the recreational activities that participants reported occur outside of the MB Parks and Recreation department. The exception was one group of individuals who regularly participate in an exercise class offered by the City and who were specifically recruited to participate in this study.

The primary types of activities that participants reported being involved in were physical, social and recreational.

- **Physical activities**
  - <u>Independent</u>: *I bicycle on the strand or on city streets*
  - <u>Group</u>: Several individuals from one focus group attended the Total Conditioning class offered by MB
  - <u>Membership</u>: *I go to adapted P.E. at Harbor College... you have to become a student but the gym is open and they help you with the equipment.*
- **Social activities**
  - <u>Formal groups</u>: *Newcomers of Beach Cities... we do social things and... once a month we have coffee and chit-chat, there's a welcoming person and the groups give updates and announcements.*
  - <u>Informal groups</u>: *Once a week I get together with a ladies group... we socialize and share.*
- **Recreational activities**
  - <u>Games</u>: *I play duplicate Bridge.*
  - <u>Trips</u>: *I do trips with a retiree group. They have one day, three day and even longer trips. I've gone to the Reagan Library and the Palm Springs follies.*

1b. What kinds of recreational or social activities are you interested in, but not currently involved in?

Individuals participating in the discussion groups expressed interest in a broad range of recreational and social activities. Although differences in interest, experience, and ability were evident, two recurring themes across all three groups were interests in (1) educational activities and (2) physical exercise. In addition, many noted the need for programming that accommodates diversity.

- **Educational opportunities**
  - <u>Computer classes</u>: *Mira Costa High School students have to do community service. The Older Adult staff could contact the schools and facilitate a program. We could have a computer tutor program using these students.*

o Informational workshops: *Speakers about good subjects, I'd love to go to that. I like genealogy, most everybody's got family, whether they like it or not.*
- **Physical exercise**
  o Walking group: *A walking group would be great, I love to walk.*
  o Exercise classes that accommodate a variety of levels: *As long as I don't feel like I'm slowing down a class, I'll go ahead and sign up for it, we can all be going at our own pace.*
  o Dance classes: *I used to come to a dance class here about 10 years ago; I'd like to do that again.*

- **Diverse programs**
  o Accommodating and being responsive: *There's a huge range of interest and ability level in the age group and they shouldn't be swayed by the group of minorities who want to speak for all seniors.*
  I appreciate knowing who it's geared for, if it's for 20 year olds I don't want to do it. If the name doesn't indicate it's for older adults that's OK but I'd prefer to know who the target audience is.

Suggestions about specific recreational activities that participants would be interested in included shuffleboard, bridge lessons, Mahjong, play reading and a sewing circle.

1c. What are the barriers to participating in the activities you may be interested in?

Across all of the discussions, one common theme emerged that represents a barrier to participating in activities: fragmented information. Although most people had received or seen many of the advertisements that MB distributes, many expressed only a passing knowledge of the programs available. Other barriers discussed were an aversion to activities labeled "older adult" or "senior" and personal barriers such as time and physical ability.

- **Fragmented information**
  o Lack of knowledge about programs: *There are great resources but the outreach needs work.* A long time resident of Manhattan Beach explained his situation, *It seems like we get the flyers and we kind of know stuff but we don't really know what's out there and it's never really been explained.*
  o Label of programs as older adult: *There's a marketing problem with the wording and pictures. They need to appeal to seniors and pre-seniors.* Another participant suggested: *Have it labeled something more generic not an age specific name for the program but it could have a subtitle indicating that it's for someone who is 55 and over.*
- **Time**
  o Evening hours needed: *Plan events when working people can attend. There's a lot of friends who I like being with but if someone is planning the event during the workday, I'm out.*
  o Desire for flexibility: *There are a lot of opportunities to join groups... but I want to come anytime and leave anytime I like to have that freedom without people getting mad at me.*

o Other responsibilities: *I have small grandchildren so as long as they are small I can't sign up for anything because I'm already on call.*
- **Access**
   o Personal health: *I have limitations due to health issues. I have vision issues and that's eliminated a lot of things I can do and not do.*
   o Social isolation: *I don't know anybody, I'm kind of a shy person on the one side... if I don't know people, you know, you kind of feel weird about going to a dinner where you don't know anybody... not knowing anybody kind of stops you.*

2. Volunteer Activities

2a. What kinds of volunteer activities are you currently involved in?

Most focus group participants came with an active volunteer and service background. This varied from extensive roles in formal organizations to the less recognized care of family and friends.

- **Informal volunteering**: *I take my dog on an informal basis to a 90 old woman in a retirement home and it makes them so happy and it's nice for me... I feel like I'm contributing but of course it's on an informal basis.*

- **Formal volunteering**: *I belong to a religious group called Ladies of Charity and we sew for the inner-city poor...for the [maternity wards in] hospitals there's girls that go in that don't even have a blanket.*

Many other individuals told of their past or present experience volunteering with, for example, the Manhattan Beach botanical gardens, Beach Cities Health District, churches they belong to, and with family and friends.

Also mentioned was the importance of volunteering in order to maintain one's well-being. One participant explained this by saying: *Being a volunteer is having a job, you have responsibilities you find that you have self-worth... and you feel like a normal person*, another participant simply said: *It gives you a purpose.*

2b. What kinds of volunteer activities are you interested in but not currently involved in?

Participants often reported being involved in volunteer activities related to their personal interests and abilities. A couple of individuals expressed further interest in volunteering in other ways. The interests expressed were:

- **Teaching**: *I would like to teach adults how to read as part of a literacy program in Torrance.* Another participant who is actively involved in cycling also expressed an interest in volunteering his talents, saying he would like to begin to *teach safe cycling.*
- **Providing assistance**: A professional chef stated *I would love to do diet counseling.* Another individual expressed the desire to help isolated older adults in the community, *I could check in on older adults in their homes as a friendly visitor.*

2c. What are the barriers to participating in volunteer activities?

The barriers to fully participating in volunteer opportunities were quite similar to the barriers affecting participation in recreational and social activities. In addition, some participants reflected on their preference in their retirement years to avoid taking on additional responsibilities or obligations.

- **Lack of information**
    - o Opportunities unknown: *I've been thinking about it but I don't know what's available in the area.* Another participant said *you really have to search if you are looking for a volunteer [position].*
- **Time**
    - o Other obligations: *I still work part time…so that takes up most of my time.*
- **Access**
    - o Physical ability: *I used to be good with my hands but old age has gotten to me. It's a worthy endeavor but I'm not able to anymore.*
    - o Transportation: *The thing is that they often require a car.*
- **Preference**
    - o Freedom and flexibility: *I'm not quite ready to make the commitment. Time is an issue and making a commitment … All of our lives I suppose have been really structured and what I like about retirement is I don't have a schedule, you know, I just want to be free, I'm not tied to the clock…I want to come anytime and leave anytime I like to have that freedom without people getting mad at me.'*

3. Transportation

3a. What means of transportation do you usually use?

The focus group participants represented a diverse use of transportation. One group was made up specifically of Dial-A-Ride users, with most reporting that this was their primary means of transportation. A second group was made of very active older adults who reported using their personal car for most transportation needs and spoke of alternatives mainly through secondhand knowledge.

For the group who regularly used Dial-A-Ride for their transportation needs, the importance and quality of the service was made clear. A woman, relatively new to MB reported. *I don't drive; I can't drive… so this is a lifeline to me and without Dial-A-Ride I couldn't do pretty much anything.*

In addition, the employees of Dial-A-Ride were reported to go above and beyond the expected role by helping riders in various ways. One rider summarized his experience by saying *Dial-A-Ride has the most courteous people that I've ever dealt with. They're really wonderful and, like you said, they're forgiving; if something changes, you can change your arrangements and they're very caring.*

Some participants noted that ACCESS transit is much more limited than Dial-A-Ride – both in terms of eligibility criteria and with respect to the flexibility of scheduling and potential destination points.

Other discussion participants use their personal cars for their transportation needs. Using their personal car satisfied most participants, as one participant stated *I like to drive myself. Getting on a bus with a big group of people doesn't appeal to me.* One participant suggested that *…Carpools… that would be a good thing to get together.*

Despite the overall contentment, there were some individuals who expressed the desire to use transportation services more regularly. One participant explained her predicament by saying *I would prefer to never drive and to keep my car in the garage but the bus would need to be more efficient and safe.*

3b. How could the available transportation services be improved?

For the group of individuals who regularly use Dial-A-Ride, the primary request was for an extension of services either beyond MB or with respect to possible destinations.

- **Expansion**
  - Types of destinations: *I have a friend who just recently had her license taken away and she uses Dial-A-Ride to go to doctor appointments but she can't go to the gym or to anywhere else like that.*
  - Reach: *I would like to go outside the city limits.*
- **Information**
  - Route information: *There's the Beach Cities Transit but I've never seen the route. If the route and times were in a flyer, that would be good.*
  - Location of resources: One Dial-A-Ride user expressed interest in using Metropolitan Transportation Authority but said *I hate to say this but I can never find the right number.*
  - Centralized information: *I wish there was a flyer that includes transportation available for different types of activities or a phone number with more information so they can contact.*

For those using their own car, the only improvement suggested was a change to the regulation of parking in the lot next to the Joslyn Community Center. A participant in the exercise classes offered by MB suggested: *This parking lot is reserved for seniors and there is also a two hour parking limit and residents use that till 10 a.m. and seniors complain because they cannot find parking for the 9 a.m. exercise. I suggest that the 2 hour parking limit start at 8 a.m..*

Another participant raised a question about who should be eligible for these slots; that is, whether it should it be based on age or level of disability. *This parking lot is reserved for seniors now but there needs to be a better definition of who qualifies for these spots. Because I would feel guilty if I went and got one and I got one of those spots at nine in the morning when people who do need to park a little closer and don't get the spot.*

4. Communication and Outreach

4a. How do you usually get information about recreational or social activities?

The discussions about communication and outreach also presented a wide variety of perspectives and ideas. The central ways that focus group participants reported getting information about MB Parks and Recreations activities was through mailings from MB, the *Manhappenings* brochure, and flyers that are available at the Joslyn Center. Others spoke of simply "knowing" what was going on.

- **Mailings**
  - *I get the calendar every month...those calendars tell me a lot.*
  - *The mailer's the perfect way to get information if you have no email.*
- **Flyers**
  - *Once a month I come and pick up brochures on the tables here.*
- ***Manhappenings***
  - *Manhappenings goes out to all the households and it is easy to find.*
  - Most participants reported getting *Manhappenings* but a much smaller percentage reported looking at it.
- **"Common" knowledge**
  - Many participants are long-time MB residents and have known about the recreation center for years; for some, learning about older adult programs is an extension of this knowledge. Many cannot specifically identify where they get their information, i.e., they just hear about it, word of mouth. Some indicated that their knowledge is related to living nearby or coming in for one program and learning about others.

4b. What are the barriers to receiving information about Parks and Recreation Older Adult Programs?

- **Too much information**
  - *If it comes in a flyer that has activities for everybody I'll probably get confused and throw it out.*
  - *I would like a weekly mailer because I do forget what's going on.*
- **Information that is hard to access**
  - *I rarely read the daily papers, I can't read them because the print is poor.*
  - *Dailies are hard to read*
  - *I can't reach down to get the papers.*
- **Missing target audience**
  - *I don't look at the booklet [Manhappenings] very seriously right now because so many of it is geared towards non-seniors. I would look at it more seriously if it was just for seniors.*

4c. How could the communication of the Parks and Recreation department be made better?

Suggestions for how to improve communication coming from MB were plentiful. Participants came up with a variety of suggestions and comments that can inform the future practices of MB and their outreach to seniors.

- **Information organization**
    - Consolidated information: This came up repeatedly, and the suggestions and comments included: *it would be better if everything should be in one package... I think it needs to be more consolidated... You get a lot of information and a lot of flyers out there. There's a lot of information but it's not coordinated.*
    - Targeting information for seniors: *The information needs to be for a more focused audience... I would more likely look at it if it was organized specifically for seniors...A newsletter for the senior group would be good.*
- **Information packaging**
    - Rebranding the Older Adult programs: *I see the word 'seniors' but I don't feel like I fit that description... I'd be more drawn to something that was more generic without the age specific name for the program but with the subtitle indicating it's for someone who is 55 and over.*
    - Broadening appeal: *There's a marketing problem with wording and pictures. They need to appeal to seniors and pre-seniors.*
    - Making information attractive: *More information in Manhappenings with actual information that you can use like a sample recipe or some project that you can do at home [so that people want to open it up and see what's inside]*
- **Information delivery**
    - Orientation: *If there was an orientation for services, you could invite people who fall into a certain category and tell them about the activities that are available.*
    - Personal invitation: *I was invited (to this focus group) I got a phone call cause I mean they sent me a letter which I didn't read...but when I got the phone call... I had an invitation that personal connection brought me here.*
    - Phone calls: *There could also be an information line where you dial in to get information...* the opposite was also suggested: *Have a volunteer on the phone to call people.*
    - Leverage connections with existing organizations: *Expand Neighborhood Watch and use them to reach out to homebound and get news out...Some clubs like the Rotary Club are open to presentations or announcements from other service organizations about what they are doing... Get database from these clubs and do an email blast.*
    - Strategic placement of information: *If [information] was on Dial-A-Ride I would look at it. There used to be information on the bus, they used to have flyers... Distribute flyers at hometown fair...*

Integration of Needs Assessment and Qualitative Study findings

The original Older Adults Needs Assessment Survey (Needs Assessment) and follow up town hall breakout and focus groups (Qualitative Study) were both concerned with identifying the needs and preferences of older adults for programs and services provided through the Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Department. This section integrates and summarizes the findings generated using these different research methods. The discussion is organized by the specific topical areas investigated: recreational and social activities; volunteer activities; transportation needs; and communication and outreach.

1. Recreational and Social Activities

The Needs Assessment and the Qualitative Study both identified a broad range of recreational and social activities that older adult residents are interested and/or engaged in. The Qualitative Study further revealed that resident knowledge or perception of the types of activities available through MB Older Adult Programs is varied and often quite limited. The Qualitative Study also brought attention to the diversity of the older adult population with respect to their range of interests, generational differences, and issues of access related to individual health and functional status, transportation needs, and perceived social barriers.

2. Volunteer Activities

Many participants in the Needs Assessment reported they were involved in informal and/or formal volunteer activities. Others indicated they were not currently involved but would like to be if they could find the right volunteer opportunity. The Qualitative Study revealed additional reasons for not participating in volunteer work, including lack of time, health problems, and personal preference to avoid obligations in their retirement. Numerous suggestions emerged from the Qualitative Study regarding how to organize and offer more desirable and accessible volunteer opportunities.

3. Transportation

Findings from the Needs Assessment indicate that while most respondents use their own cars for transportation, there are perceived gaps in available public transportation, especially during the evening hours. This finding is supported by the Qualitative Study which also documents reports of a dearth of transportation options between 5:00 – 8:00 pm. In addition, the Qualitative Study highlights some perceived concerns about Dial-A-Ride services being less available during the driver's lunch hour and on weekends. However, the focus group data suggests a high level of satisfaction with the Dial-A-Ride program overall.

4. Communication and Outreach

One of the most frequently cited barriers to community involvement reported in the Needs Assessment was the need for adequate information about available programs and activities. What the Qualitative Study revealed is that while a lot of information is available, older adult residents sometimes have difficulty accessing the most relevant information. Participants provided

numerous suggestions of ways to organize and package information about Older Adult Programs. In addition, much emphasis was placed on the need to be sensitive to age identity issues, i.e., older adults vary in their identification with and attraction to programming that is categorized and labeled by age group membership.

5. Demographics

Participant characteristics across the three studies were fairly consistent, given the varying target groups they represented.

Table 1: Comparison of participant characteristics

	Needs Assessment	Focus Groups	Breakouts
Age - Avg.	74	70	76
Age - Range	48-96	59 to 87	63 to 92
Living Alone	45%	32%	37%
% Married	44%	61%	51%
Education - Some post-grad	40%	23%	47%
Education - Bachelor's	27%	32%	26%
Education - Some college	24%	39%	23%
Income >$50,000	39%	52%	39%
Income <$25,000	25%	16%	16%
MB Residency in years - Avg.	35	35	32
MB Residency - Range	1 to 70	2 to 62	1 to 62
Gender - Female	69%	68%	74%
Number of participants	286	31	57

Note - not every participant answered all demographic questions in the original needs assessment. Focus groups were targeted to a fairly active group (including service club members) and those not using MB Older Adult Programs and Services. Recruitment for the original needs assessment reached a disproportionate number of senior housing residents.

Observations and recommendations

The main objective of facilitating these breakout and focus group discussions was to gather information that could be used by MB staff to respond to the social and recreational needs and preferences of older adult Manhattan Beach residents. This effort was designed to glean the perspective of both those already participating, and those not currently or regularly participating, in MB older adult programming. In general, we found that the interests and concerns of those represented in the breakout and focus groups were quite similar to each other. Furthermore, the Qualitative Study results largely support and extend the Needs Assessment findings by offering additional information and a more nuanced interpretation.

The findings presented here identify areas where staff might engage in efforts to strengthen existing recreational and social programs and/or add desired programming where it does not currently exist. The breakout and focus group discussions also generated a number of ideas about the most effective ways to communicate with older adult residents of MB about available programs and events as well as how to present information about these programs in a way that is both appealing and accessible.

Based on synthesis and interpretation of the breakout and focus group discussions, we next present a set of overarching observations and recommendations listed in priority order. These priorities are based on our interpretation of the study data and what we believe it suggests about effective ways to respond to the primary needs and preferences of older adult Manhattan Beach residents. Staff may wish to consider involving the Senior Advisory Committee in the process of implementing recommendations as appropriate, given that they provide a natural bridge between MB staff and older adult Manhattan Beach residents.

1. **Older adults in MB represent a very diverse audience for recreational and social programs. As such, in developing informational and marketing materials about programs, it is important to recognize and account for these differences.**

   Ideally, you will find a way to strike a balance between the needs/interests/preferences of:

   - existing participants and those older adults you hope to attract to programs;
   - both older-old and younger-old adults;
   - those who are still employed as well as the retired;
   - healthier, highly functional older adults and those who are functionally impaired;
   - long-time MB residents and newcomers, i.e., those not already connected with the community

   Another general consideration is how to reach those at a *life transition point* (e.g., recently retired, moved, or widowed). For example, the recently retired may have had a social circle at work but not a social circle in their community of residence. Extra effort may be needed to identify and engage these individuals.

2. **The content of your programming may be less of an issue than how that content is being packaged and communicated to your prospective audiences. The diverse audience of older adults in MB may require a multi-pronged marketing strategy, particularly with regard to how programs are named.**

   In general, participants acknowledged that MB offers a wealth of activities, programs, and events for the community. The problem areas identified were more related to how information is being presented and communicated than with existing programming content/offerings. Many had knowledge of existing Parks and Recreation programs, but few participants had a lot of knowledge about what programs are specifically targeted to older adults.

At the same time, the explicit labeling of programs by age group membership is an issue. Some residents are interested in distinct older adult programming, while others want "active" or "mature" adult programming that is more subtly packaged, discretely defined and blended in with general parks and recreation programs.

Some options to consider:
- Organize programming by functional ability level (i.e., as measured by mobility, health status, activity level/intensity, etc.) instead of by chronological age.
- Widen the chronological age parameters you use in defining your older adult programs, e.g., 40 plus or 50 plus.
- Eliminate "older adult" labeling in program titles of printed materials and use "55+" in program/event descriptions.
- Only designate programs as "older adult" or "55+" if this is relevant to the audience (e.g. yes for physical activity programs but not for a musical event)

3. **A personal touch goes a long way: A personal and individualized approach may be the most effective way to reach your desired audience.**

Many participants voiced greatest responsiveness to a phone call or other personal invitation, often ignoring mailings and general written materials. A general orientation to programs and services may be helpful to encourage people to come through the door - - to take the first step. Those not currently participating in any Parks and Recreation activities will likely require an even more targeted approach, e.g., a personal invitation, a phone call, transportation, and/or some other incentive.

You may want to consider an introduction or orientation on an individual program level as well. Some people with an interest in a dine-around program may never be interested in joining an exercise class. An orientation specific to the dine-around or an introduction to exercise classes offered at the Joslyn Center may help provide entrée.

By providing an overall orientation session, MB might be able to increase the participation levels of those already attending at least one Parks and Recreation activity. This is a built-in audience to whom you can introduce the full range of programs available.

Enlist the aid of "regulars" to deepen their engagement and reach out to others in the community. These loyal participants often provide the bridge to those not participating through word of mouth. One option is to provide them with an incentive to spread the word/bring others in and introduce them to the older adult programs.

4. **There are opportunities to promote your older adult programs while also advancing intergenerational volunteerism. Consider creating a multipurpose volunteer program focused on the marketing of your older adult programs and engaging youth.**

Consider enlisting older adults and youth to create a volunteer program to introduce the MB older adult program to a new audience using the direct personal outreach identified by focus group participants. Using an intergenerational approach, older adult volunteers could be

charged with making phone calls and other personal contacts to prospective program participants. Youth volunteers could assist with these efforts while also providing desired computer tutoring to older adult volunteers.

These initial outreach efforts should directly address the many barriers identified; for example, by asking if the person would need assistance with transportation or has any physical limitations. This outreach could be coordinated with Beach Cities Health District programming to provide a response to residents' recreational and social needs as well as their personal health management or need for assistance.

Appendix A: Demographic Survey for Break Out and Focus Groups

**Older Adults Town Hall Meeting
And Focus Groups
2010**

Partners in Care
F O U N D A T I O N
changing the shape of health care

Please take a moment to fill out this short demographic survey so that we can better understand the people who are participating today.

1. My zip code is: _____

2. I was born in the year: 19 ____

3. I have lived in this community for _____ years.

4. My gender is: $\square_1$ Female $\square_2$ Male

5. My current marital status is:
   $\square_1$ Married $\square_2$ Separated $\square_3$ Never married
   $\square_4$ Widowed $\square_5$ Divorced $\square_6$ Other (Please specify)
   _____

6. My current living arrangement is:
   $\square_1$ Live with spouse $\square_2$ Live with companion
   $\square_3$ Live alone $\square_4$ Live with family
   $\square_5$ Other, please specify: _____

7. My current employment status is:
   $\square_1$ Work full time $\square_2$ Work part time $\square_3$ Not employed/Retired

8. The highest grade I completed in school is:
   $\square_1$ 8th grade or less $\square_2$ Some high school $\square_3$ High school graduate
   $\square_4$ Some college $\square_5$ College graduate $\square_6$ Post-gradate

9. My income level is:
   $\square_1$ Under $25,000/ yr. $\square_2$ Between $25,000 $\square_3$ Over $50,000/yr
                                    and $50,000/ year

10. Did you turn in an Older Adults Needs Assessment last year? $\square_1$ Yes $\square_0$ No

Thank you for your help!

Appendix B: Town Hall Breakout Session Guideline

Topic # 1: Recreational Activities
- May I see by a show of hands, how many of you currently participate in MB recreational activities? What kinds of activities do you participate in?
- What makes you want to participate in an activity or event? What keeps you from participating in an activity or event?
- Among the list of activities recommended in the report, what activities do you think should receive the most attention? Why?
- What are your preferences for the location of recreational activities/events? Why do you prefer these locations?
- Have you - or has someone you know – ever experienced any barriers to participating in activities/events held at the recreation center?
- Are there locations, other than the Joslyn Center, that might make it easier for you - or others you know - to participate in these activities?

Topic # 2: Information about Health and Wellness
- What kinds of health and wellness topics are you most interested in?
- Do you currently attend any informational seminars that are offered through the Center?
- What kinds of health and wellness topics do you think are of most interest to older adults in MB?
- Are there any health and wellness information needs that you think are not currently being met? If so, what are they?
- Are there other types of information needs that you think would be of interest to older adults in MB?
- What do you think is the most effective way to communicate health and wellness information to older adults in MB?

Topic # 3: Transportation Needs
- Do you think your transportation needs will change in the next 5-10 years? If so, how? Any ideas about how you will meet new transportation needs?
- Do you – or does someone that you know - have unmet needs for transportation within the community of MB? What about transportation needs to points outside the community of MB?
- Are there any changes that you feel need to be made to improve the transportation system within/beyond MB?
- What would you identify as priorities for your transportation needs in MB?

Topic # 4: Volunteer Activities
- Are you currently participating in – or interested in participating in - any volunteer activities?
- Does the <u>type</u> of the volunteer activity you get involved with matter to you? If so:
- What types of volunteer activities do you prefer?

- What kinds of agencies/programs would you be most interested in volunteering with?
- Does the <u>location</u> of the volunteer activity you get involved with matter to you? If so, what locations do you prefer?
- Do you know of any agencies/programs that are looking for volunteers?
- Do you know any older adults who are interested in doing volunteer work?
- Are there volunteer programs/activities that you might be interested in organizing?

All Break Out Groups
Outreach and Communication
- How did you first learn about the programs and events available at the Center?
- Have you ever experienced barriers to getting information about available programs and events?
- Do you know someone who has <u>not</u> been involved with the Center's programs and who might enjoy participating in available programs/events? Do you have any ideas about why they are not participating?
- What do you think is the most effective way to communicate information about older adult programs and events?

Youth Volunteers
- The MB parks and recreation staff has been working with local schools and other organizations who have youth who are interested in doing some volunteer work. Do you have any ideas about what kinds of activities you might like to engage in with youth volunteers?

General Questions
- What do you think about the findings that Kathryn presented about [topic X]?
- Were you surprised by these findings? Why, or why not?
- What interests you most about this particular topic/finding?
- What do you think is most important about this topic/finding?
- Can you tell me a bit about your experience with [topic X]?
- What do you think is likely to be challenging about meeting this need/responding to this issue?
- Do you have suggestions about how this identified need could be (better) addressed?
- Was anything missing from the needs assessment results?
- What should MB Parks and Rec focus on next?

Appendix C: Focus Groups Discussion Guideline

Opening
- May I see by a show of hands, how many of you have <u>ever</u> participated in MB recreational activities or programs for older adults?
- How many of you have <u>never</u> participated in MB recreational activities or programs....?
- Are any of you <u>currently</u> participating in MB recreational activities or programs?

Recreational and social activity
- What kinds of recreational or social activities do you generally like to participate in?
- What makes you want to participate in recreational or social activities? What keeps you from participating in these kinds of activities?

Volunteerism
- Are you currently participating in – or interested in participating in - any volunteer activities?
- If so, what types of volunteer activities do (would) you prefer?
- What makes you want to participate in volunteer activities? What keeps you from participating in these kinds of activities?

Barriers and outreach
- Are you familiar with any of the older adult programs and events currently offered by the MB Department of Parks and Recreation?
- If so, how did you first learn that these types of programs and events were available?
- Have you ever experienced barriers to <u>getting information</u> about older adult programs and events? If so, please tell me more.
- What do you think are the most effective ways to communicate information about programs and events to older adults in MB?

Transportation
- What are your thoughts about transportation services for older adults?

Closing
- What do you think are the most important things to consider when planning recreational and social programs for older adults who reside in Manhattan Beach?
- Is there anything else that you would like to add to this discussion?