



Summary Report:

Over Age 55 Community Conversation: *Social, Cultural, and Physical Activities*

Held on October 26, 2023

Reported submitted to:

**Recreation and Community Services
City of Yorkton**

Submission Date: November 13, 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

“Community is much more than belonging to something; its about doing something together that makes belonging matter.”

- Brian Solis

The City of Yorkton has an age 50+ demographic that is 5,888 voices strong and represents 35.2% of the population.¹ When a group of citizens approached the City of Yorkton, Recreation & Community Services department to discuss activities, the City responded by planning and hosting a community conversation for active Yorkton residents over age 55 about social, cultural, and physical activities. 1.4% of this demographic was in attendance to provide input focused on 5 themes: *comprehensive, connection, collaboration, contribution, and communication.*

Input on the themes, is summarized as follows:

Comprehensiveness: *missing, needed and any barriers*

The Inventory of Activities, while comprehensive, did contain some incorrect information. Additionally, there was substantial information provided on activities that are available but missing from the inventory. Participants offered suggestions on additional activities they would be interested in. Many barriers were identified that prevented or reduced participation in activities. While not the only improvement suggested, generally improving communications would greatly enhance people’s access to activities.

Connection: *how would you like to connect to the City and community*

Participants want to connect and stay connected to the City and community. There is a need for a varied and multi-faceted approach that should enable communication to be two-way, allowing for input and feedback by members of the community.

Collaboration: *who needs to work together and how*

There was alignment by many of the participants in terms of who and what groups needed to work together. Suggestions ranged from the individual level to organized groups and service clubs, various levels of government and government organizations, private business as well as suggestions for a new representative Seniors’ Advisory/Liaison group/committee. In addition, commentary was provided on ways that collaboration could/should continue, be improved and/or initiated.

Contribution: *what can you do to maintain and enhance activities*

Comments made by participants would suggest that people are eager to contribute and play a role in supporting activities. While most of the suggestions are not new and already occurring, there was an indication that contributions could be enhanced and better focused.

Communication: *how do people stay informed*

Participants provided suggestions on ways to stay informed about activities in Yorkton. The input given demonstrated support for current communication methods and offered recommendations for

¹ The City of Yorkton’s population data was utilized and can be found at

<https://www.yorkton.ca/en/build-invest-and-grow/demographics-and-statistics.aspx#li-modal>

additional, new methods. It was clear that there is no agreement on a “one-size-fits-all” solution or approach and that it must be varied to include traditional methods and those more modern, embracing technology.

To keep the session on track and the discussion moving, a “parking lot” was utilized. The commitment to participants was that all ideas and suggestions were welcome and there were no wrong answers. The input was important and valuable even if needing to be set aside as an idea or topic for a later time. While not directly related to the 5 questions, the themes were not unrelated to services in the City and what may be within their purview of important matters for individuals and what contributes to a vibrant, healthy community. Topics included sustainability, schools/youth, taxes, health care, learning assistance/education, diversity, and bus service.

While not designed into the agenda as a separate question or specific topic for discussion, kudos and accolades to the City were noted by several participants. Positive feedback and acknowledgement were also noted through discussion of the five (5) specific questions.

Numerous apprehensions and concerns were voiced during the formal discussion period that on one hand have the potential to be wise counsel, delicate perception and/or keen insights. On the other hand, it should not be assumed to have agreement from all participants or that it would be supported by the majority. Of note, was concern for lack of diversity at the session, acknowledgment that this conversation was a positive start with a request for timely follow-up and feedback, and there would be strength in having a foundation based on prevention and well-being that is proactive. Finally, there was recognition that Yorkton offers a lot of activities and facilities, and there is an opportunity to utilize these more fully.

The Conversation event provides robust, and a sizable amount of, input for consideration. The input includes additional information that can be used to correct and enhance the Inventory of Activities, provides positive acknowledgement and constructive feedback for improvements, as well as offers ideas and suggestions that could be considered, researched, and further explored.

REPORT CONTEXT AND CONTENT:

This report is provided as a result of the October 26th over age 55 community conversation that focused on gathering input and insights into social, cultural, and physical activities and are defined as follows:

Physical Activities: Promotes physical well-being while helping to delay the negative impacts of inactivity and aging.

Social Activities: Promotes mental well-being and social inclusion while helping to alleviate the negative impacts of social isolation.

Cultural Activities: Activities that embody or convey cultural expression. They may be physical and/or social activities as well.

The report contains information from two (2) sources:

- Documentation completed by the Table Hosts during the discussions.
- The voluntary Participant Survey.

The report is a summary of the input provided on 5 planned and pre-determined questions. The input has been presented in tables and aligned into broad themes.

In addition, a survey was made available to participants with a request for voluntary participation. The survey sought to capture demographic data about the participants and provide an opportunity for participants to offer any further input. The survey has only been referenced within the PARTICIPANTS section of the report to offer insight into the demographic that was represented in the session. The survey results have not been deeply analyzed however a brief review does not indicate input that is contrary to the input collected within the session. The Recreation & Community Services department is in possession of the survey data.

All information gathered from the session was considered valuable and has been included in the report. There was a considerable amount of input that was similar in nature, with the same context or a slight variation. In these situations, the information has been documented once, with context provided if there was variation or a different intent identified. It should be noted that this input was not weighted in any way to identify if it was a suggestion by one table or many, thus suggesting that more emphasis be placed on it. While tables were asked to identify their top 3 priorities, this was done primarily to enable a quick summary for “report out” purposes for the end of the session. It should be noted that establishing 3 priorities was done inconsistently. For this reason, priorities have not been identified within this report and if being used to inform actions, they should be used with prudence.

The documentation from the Table Hosts contains the detail of the input provided and captured during the conversation with participants. This is provided to the Recreation & Community Services department as supporting, detailed documentation that provides the foundation for this written summary.

A cautionary note is offered in that there was no indication in the responses if any of the suggestions would be well-supported or if it was a suggestion and/or idea by one or a few. The suggestions should be viewed as general suggestions with the need for more exploration prior to it being assumed that everyone is onboard and in favor of providing transportation, to cite an example.

PARTICIPANTS:

The three (3) hour event was planned for, and advertised as, a conversation with active residents of Yorkton over the age of 55. It was organized to accommodate a maximum of 100, with advance registration required.

Registration data included names and telephone numbers and/or email addresses. Registration was maintained and managed by the Recreation & Community Services department, City of Yorkton.

The session garnered 91 registered participants, with 82 in attendance. Participants were asked to occupy tables of maximum 10 with a table host that acted as a steward of the process, discussion convener, and note taker.

The voluntary Participant Survey was completed by 62 people. The following demographic data was generated:

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Female	70.9%	44
Male	29.03%	18
TOTAL		62

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS

AGE Group	Percent	# of people
55-60	10.00%	6
61-65	11.67%	7
66-70	30.00%	18
71-75	21.67%	13
76-80	13.33%	8
81-85	8.33%	5
85+	5.00%	3
TOTAL		60

HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVEL OF PARTICIPANTS

Income Level	Percent	# of people
\$0 - \$40,000	22.73%	10
\$40,000 - \$80,000	45.45%	20
\$80,000- \$125,000	25.00%	11
\$125,000 - \$200,000	6.82%	3
Over \$200,000	0%	0
TOTAL		44

Data Limitations:

It should be noted that not all survey participants chose to identify their age category or their household income level. Analysis was not done on the demographic data to establish representation and/or comparability to the City of Yorkton's broader demographics. As an example, we do not know if a 45.45% of participants with \$40,000 - \$80,000 household income is a comparable representation of the City of Yorkton's broader populations' household income level.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL & PRESENTATION:

Training and information were prepared and provided to the Table Hosts in advance of the session. This included Principles of Facilitation, the discussion questions with suggested conversation starters or prompts, a copy of the Inventory of Activities and recording sheets.

When participants arrived, their advance registration was verified, and they were given a paper copy of an Inventory of Activities. In addition to welcoming participants, a brief verbal background, accompanied by a visual PowerPoint, was provided.

Participants were provided with a brief overview of Yorkton's demographics, an explanation of the Inventory of Activities, including a description of how social, physical, and cultural activities were defined.

The discussion questions were introduced including the conversation process for the afternoon.

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

In advance of the session and in consultation with the Manager of Community, Culture and Heritage with the Recreation & Community Services department, City of Yorkton, there were five (5) questions that were developed that informed the purpose of the conversation. These questions were focused on broad components as follows:

1. **Comprehensiveness:** missing, needed and any barriers.
2. **Connection:** how would you like to connect to the City and community.
3. **Collaboration:** who needs to work together and how.
4. **Contribution:** what can you do to maintain and enhance activities.
5. **Communication:** how do people stay informed.

It was identified to participants that the questions would help to inform and provide input on understanding how to meet basic needs, what and how was needed to continue to learn, grow and make decisions, remain mobile, build, and maintain a social network and relationships as well as contributing in meaningful and fulfilling ways to the community.

COMPREHENSIVENESS:

Discussion Question:

What physical, social and/or cultural activities are currently missing from the list AND/OR if you like to access an activity but are not – what is preventing you from accessing the activity?

Note: The question was not clear in terms of asking about missing activities. What is unclear in many of the responses is whether the activity is available but not documented on the “Active Activities in Yorkton” document that was provided, or if the activity is currently unavailable in Yorkton. It is possible that a noted “missing” activity is available and simply needs to be added to the inventory list.

Summary of emerging themes:

Missing Activities:

Input provided regarding missing activities was aligned in themes as follows:

- Seniors and youth
- Facilities
- Activity Available but missing from inventory.
- Missing but not identified if available.
- Other Activities not specific to physical, social and/or cultural.
- Correction of Information offered.

Barriers preventing access to activity:

Participants identified barriers and/or challenges that prevent access to activities. The input was common in nature and themed as follows:

- Cost
- No appropriate location or venue and/or too many venues
- Transportation
- Parking
- Lack of knowledge of who to connect with
- Current available activities may be of interest and appropriate to many ages but there is a need for tailoring to Seniors.
- Communication
- Loss of a partner – now alone with no one to attend with
- Mobility
- Coordination of scheduling of activities
- A sense of belonging
- Hours of activities

- Complexity of registration
- Connectivity
- Need more informational sessions and “learn to” events.
- City is not receptive to change.

The full and complete input on **missing activities** is documented in the following table.

Responses:

Theme:	Missing:	Context or Comment:
Seniors and Youth	Seniors teaching younger people	i.e., teaching youth to cook “traditional” dishes. Currently there is no place to accommodate this. Other example – teaching cursive writing.
	Seniors preserving history for youth	
Facilities	Common facilities that include seniors’ needs	City planning for new facilities in the future needs to ensure input from all demographics.
	Better use of existing facilities	
	Drop-in Centre or Seniors’ Space	Needs to ensure it is accessible/on one floor. Have someone present to coordinate & distribute information. Needs to be self-sustaining. If you have a place, activities can be planned such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor curling • Carpet bowling • Line dancing • Computer/educational classes for seniors • Cooking classes Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a workshop and pottery area. • Billiards • Darts • kitchen
A coffee place	A place that is for come and go coffee – no pre-planning or arranging required.	

	Bike Trails/Lanes	Need to have winter trails. Crossing railway tracks is a concern, lanes start and stop; not continuous. Different bikes may need different trails: e-bikes, road bikes, recumbent bikes, mountain bikes, fat (tire) bikes.
	Multi-Use trails/Pathways	These need to be connected and signage needed. Maps of trails needs to be readily available. Older areas of the city have rough paths and sidewalks. Not wheelchair accessible. Need for more benches, garbage cans and bathrooms on the paths.
	Deer Park	Could be used for tobogganing, snow shoeing.
	Club House	Noted but unsure of the context.
	Croki curl	Need a “learn to” and meet up opportunity. Can’t play alone as that is not enjoyable.
	Dog Park	
Activity Available but missing from inventory	Community Choir	Monday @ 7:00 p.m. Regional High School Choir Room (D3) Contacts include, Adelle Sawatzky (teacher at Regional), Dean & Gayla Peterson, Tim Linsley.
	“Learn to... “ programming	Acknowledged availability of some but needs to be more.
	Yorkton & District Horticultural Society	Yorktonhort.ca
	Red Hat Society	No information offered and it was questioned.
	Cricket	There are small groups playing in the City.
	Bowling	
	Martial Arts	Need to add Kees to the list
	Regular Bridge (card game)	
	Painted Hand Casino	
	Yorkton Antique Auto Assoc.	
	Bird Watching	
	Genealogy	
	Yorkton Canoe/Kayak	
	Adult House League Hockey	2 games/week
	TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly)	
	Heritage Group	Archive access, supervised.
	“Forever in Motion” program	

Missing but not identified if available	Mall walking group	Promotes social & physical well-being and could branch into other activities.
	Dancing instruction	Specifically noted social dancing such as line dancing and two-stepping. Difficult if you have no partner.
	Entertainment – Music jams	Bring your own instrument.
	Book Club	
	Snow Shoeing	
	Walking Groups	Groups walks/hikes would be enjoyable.
	Kennel Club	
	Dog classes	
	Pet Associations	Good socializing groups.
	Tai Chi	
	Corn Hole	Bean bag toss game
	Horse Shoes – Horse Shoe pits	
	Lawn Bowling	
	Carpet Bowling	
	Botchy Ball	
	Crochet (may have been meaning croquet)	
	Urban Poling Club	
	Outdoor walking track	There are no long loops.
	Hiking	
	Snowmobiling	
	Pump Track (BMX)	
	Racquet ball	
	Volleyball	
	Cultural Tours to surrounding areas and towns	Could be done as day trips.
	Flour Mill tours for public	
	Floor Shuffle Board	
	Bicycle/Motorbike group meetings	
	Outdoor Cycling Club	
	Stationary Bike/Treadmill Club	
	Chess	
	Macrame	
	Paper toile	
	Painting classes	
Ping Pong		
Broomball		
Slow Pitch		
55+ Swim time at aquatic centre		
Lacrosse		
Floor Curling (not on an ice surface)		

Other Activities not specific to physical, social and/or cultural	Seniors' Coordinator	This would be a "common door" for all groups and the public to intersect.
	Regular newsletter	Needs to include events, dates, and details.
	Volunteerism	Suggested: Volunteer drivers; matching with people who need rides.
	Coordinated community volunteer schedule or calendar	
	Senior "Welcome Wagon"	Comment added "how do you find out who is in the community". No clarity if this is in the context of learning who is new to Yorkton or for newcomers to learn about the community. May be related to both.
	Technical and Technology classes.	Need one-on-one instruction at times.
Correction of Information offered	Quilting	Also available at Western Development Museum.

The full and complete input on **barriers and/or challenges** is documented in the following table.

Responses:

Numerous barriers and/or challenges were noted by participants. It was rare that a barrier was identified specifically to an activity and instead was offered as generic barriers that are often encountered. If a barrier and/or challenge was specifically associated to an activity, that has been noted.

Barriers and/or Challenge:	Comment or Context (if any provided):
<p>Cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prohibitive if making a long-term commitment. Needs to be consideration for a person/couples' income level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted on many activities that taking one class or attending a few times, might be affordable but if making a long-term commitment it was too expensive. Examples noted were tech classes, yoga, aquasizes. People have differing abilities to pay. City of Yorkton does not offer seniors a discount
No appropriate location or venue and/or too many venues	Events referenced include cooking classes, horseshoe pits.

	<p>No access or limited access to a location or venue. (building locked)</p> <p>Some venues have accessibility challenges into the building and in the building (i.e., New Horizons).</p> <p>May be a cost to a location or venue which adds to the cost of the event which may be transferred to the participant.</p> <p>Activities are spread all around the city. There is no central location.</p>
Transportation	Limitation of the current transit system such as drop off points, timing of pickup and drop off.
Parking	Insufficient parking to ensure reasonable distance and accessibility.
Lack of knowledge of who to connect with.	People don't know who to contact for information, especially difficult for newcomers to the community.
Current available activities may be of interest and appropriate to many ages but there is a need for tailoring to Seniors.	May need different instruction, assistance, slower pace.
Communication	<p>No advance awareness of activity and hearing about it after-the-fact.</p> <p>Lack of advertising.</p> <p>Too much focus on one method of communication (i.e., digital, social media).</p> <p>No central hub or location to promote upcoming events.</p> <p>Have "open house".</p>
Loss of a partner.	Have no one to attend with and/or this may now create other challenges i.e., transportation, affordability.
Mobility.	Capacity to attend, participate.
Coordination of scheduling of activities.	There is none currently.
A sense of belonging.	Not all activities have a welcoming environment so that there is comfortableness in attending.
Hours of activities.	<p>This is ongoing trying to match people's availability, including their desired frequency.</p> <p>Many comments on the need for evening events, daytime events as well as too often and not often enough.</p>
Complexity of registration.	Who and where to register.
Connectivity.	How do like minded individuals/groups meet (i.e., dancing, crokicurl.)

Need more informational sessions and “learn to” events.	People may be interested in new activities but there needs to be more frequent information about them and “learn to” sessions.
Risk to personal safety.	i.e., crossing railway tracks, off-leash dogs on walking trails, Museum events are appreciated however there is no shade outside and lack of seating.
City is not receptive to change.	References made to the indoor walking track. Also, to general pricing and rates for activities and use of facilities.

CONNECTION:***Discussion Question:***

How would you like to interact with the City of Yorkton and the community to maintain and enhance activities now and in the future?

Summary of emerging themes:

The following themes were identified within the responses:

- Two-way Communication
- Website improvement
- Hub Centre/Seniors' Coordinator
- Print Media
- Posters
- Local TV & Radio
- Social Media
- Awareness
- Face-to-face communication
- City planning and development.
- Contact Information
- City Council meetings
- Cost

The themes and their context are addressed within the chart below.

Theme:	How to interact:	Comment/Context:
Two-way Communication	The City needs to commit to two-way communication.	
	Want follow-up with updates and/or progress.	
	Would like metrics/statistics as well as expectation of customer service.	
Website	Not user friendly and too complex. Needs to be improved.	
	Include a chat feature and/or a "share your voice" section.	Online activities/information can be hard to access.
	Include direct links to community partners' websites on the City page.	
	Calendar needs to be front and centre on the website and could	

	also use a 55+ icon on events in the community calendar.	
	Include a 55+ icon on the website	
	Have a tab on City's website for Seniors. Also do that for other demographic groups.	
	Should be better awareness of Recreation's Newsletter	There is a sense that people don't know about it.
Hub Centre/Seniors' Coordinator	Have a community centre building with a coordinator	Search for grant opportunities to fund a Seniors' Coordinator.
	This would allow for building a trusting relationship. Need someone who listens and follows up.	
	There is a need for one calendar.	Too many empty calendars i.e., City's and Tourism's.
	Consider the Hub or Centre being a membership organization, managed by a Board and then there is connection by the Board to the City.	
Print Media	Use local print media i.e., Yorkton This Week, Marketplace	
	Have a community information page in the newspaper that is ongoing and not just for special announcements.	
	Have an "Item of the Week" as a seniors' item feature in the City's weekly news.	
	Use print materials and provide to newcomers to the City.	
	Use "The Coffee Bean" seniors' section.	
	Consider mail-outs	
	Have a Seniors Bulletin	
	A comprehensive Leisure Guide	
Posters	Use bulletin boards at library, Fur, Fin & Feathers, the Board across from Sweet Wanders. Use other locations that are frequented by seniors.	
	Need to improve access to, and visibility, of posters. Bulletin board at Gallagher Centre?	

Local TV & Radio	Make “on air” announcements.	
Social media	Facebook; needs to be advertised.	Concern raised that you can’t share Facebook pages.
Awareness	Consider sharing the inventory of activities in the newspaper.	
	Provide the inventory list with the tax notices.	
Face-to-face Communication	Need to provide background information before events such as the 55+ Conversation.	
	Have more frequent forums.	
	Have a 55+ Conversation once a year for planning and feedback to the City’s staff.	
	City representative should meet with Senior community members.	
	Consider a registration event for Senior’s like City-wide registration.	
Planning & developing	Ensure input directly from the demographic groups.	Noted this especially important in facility planning and building as well as when program planning.
	Create a Seniors’ Committee that can act as an advisory and/or liaison group to the City.	With regular meetings, there can be discussion of issues and it can help to drive initiatives.
Contact information	Need up-to-date phone lists for the City and groups.	
City Council Meetings	Have a scheduled section of council meeting so they hear the voice of 35% of their population.	
Costs	Some of the financial aspects of planning make it difficult; could there be the potential for a subsidy for Seniors’ activities.	Financial support would enhance the opportunity.

COLLABORATION:

Discussion Question:

While the City plays a role in recreation and leisure services and providing a range of activities/facilities, what other groups need to work together and how should they work together?

Summary of emerging themes:

There was alignment by many of the participants in terms of who and what groups needed to work together. In addition, commentary followed on suggested ways that collaboration could be improved and/or initiated. Suggestions ranged from the individual level to organized groups and service clubs, various levels of government and government organizations, private business as well as suggestions for a new group/committee. Noted groups were aligned into broad categories as follows:

- Municipal Organizations
- Institutions
- Other Recreational programs
- Other Associations
- Service Clubs
- Private Business
- Community-based Organizations/Programs
- Succession Planning
- Seniors Advisory Committee
- Volunteerism
- Grants and Funders
- Seniors Centre/Hub with a Coordinator
- Intergenerational

Details on the context and specifics of who was included in the categories, as well as comments on how to work together are in the table below.

Theme related to what groups:	Who needs to work together:	How to work together:
Municipal Organizations	Communities close to Yorkton (i.e., Springside)	Share programming. Libraries could connect regionally.
	R.M. s	Share contact lists
	Chamber of Commerce	Include a senior's representative.
	Health Authority	City and Health should work closer due to mutual interest in a healthy community.
	Yorkton Tribal Council	

	<p>City of Yorkton and citizens</p>	<p>Receive and hear input and feedback. The City should look to other communities to see what they are doing, review their models and identify if replication is possible (i.e., Moose Jaw, Melville).</p> <p>Continue to move initiatives forward (use third party if that assists).</p> <p>Could support cost-effective advertising. Some options are prohibitive due to cost.</p> <p>Be a conduit or liaison between events and organizations and business sector to ensure the city is prepared.</p> <p>Provide cost effective space for mentorship/workshops.</p>
	<p>Western Development Museum</p>	<p>Could work closer with other programs and services.</p>
	<p>Library</p>	<p>Works with many programs and activities supporting them.</p> <p>More partnering with private businesses to offer free or sponsored classes.</p>
	<p>Arts Council</p>	<p>More interaction and collaboration with others (i.e., Library)</p>
<p>Institutions</p>	<p>Schools</p>	<p>Include Seniors in their activities, access seniors as volunteers, mentorship both ways.</p> <p>Make use of gym space.</p>
	<p>Health/Hospital</p>	<p>Need to coordinate and collaborate on health, healthy lifestyle and prevention services, access to services.</p>
	<p>College</p>	<p>Partner on learning and growth programs, classes.</p>

	Churches, including the Ministerial Association	Work collaboratively together. Promote programming. Make their facilities available for programming.
Other Recreational programs	Yorkton District Nursing Home	Open programs to others and the broader community
	Private and Personal care homes	
	Independent Living apartments	
Other Associations	Retired Teachers Association	Could provide feedback on what is needed for Seniors' programs
Service Clubs	Lions	Potential to subsidize programming and provide sponsorship to help with affordability for participants. Could volunteer to provide transportation for those in need.
	Kinsmen	
	Kinettes	
	Knights of Columbus	
Private Business	Banks	Offer free classes (i.e., financial literacy), provide sponsorship for programs/classes. Advertise activities and events.
	General private businesses (i.e., McDonalds, Grocery stores, Tim Hortons, Grumpy's).	
Community-based Organizations/Programs	SIGN (Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbors)	
	New Horizons	Building challenges limit accessibility.
	East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre	Provide information and connection to activities and programs for new residents of the community.
Succession Planning	Groups, those in Executive positions of the Programs and associations Boards.	Need to work together to plan for succession of executive and volunteers. Potential to share Executives. Lack of capacity in many groups (i.e., the Legion)
Seniors Advisory Committee	A seniors' steering committee could be developed	Could act as a liaison and advisory to other groups and organizations.

		<p>A liaison to the City on priorities and receives information on progress.</p> <p>The committee could disseminate information and receive information as a central advisory hub.</p> <p>Could apply for grants and be the oversight organization.</p>
Volunteerism	Sports groups and City	Could promote volunteer recruitment and opportunities for meaningful volunteerism.
Grants and Funders	Organizations applying for grants and receiving grants	Grant requirements often need partnerships and collaborative approaches. Initiate and sustain these.
Seniors Centre/Hub with a Coordinator		<p>Could be the liaison and conduit to link others together.</p> <p>Could offer volunteer opportunity for many including youth.</p> <p>Could also be a place for equipment storage. Some activities could be enhanced with equipment.</p>
Intergenerational	Seniors and young people	<p>Mentorship of each other.</p> <p>Build stronger, trusting relationships between the generations.</p> <p>Help to build acceptance and understanding.</p>

CONTRIBUTION:***Discussion Question:***

What are you willing to do to enhance the activities available in Yorkton?

Summary of emerging themes:

Participants were thoughtful in their responses, including generous commentary on what they would be willing to do. Themes included:

- Volunteering
- Membership fees
- Support to others
- Participate
- Communication
- Activity focused – specifics related directly to activities.

Caution should be used if acting on these. There was no indication in the responses if any of the suggestions would be a well-supported willingness or if it was a suggestion and/or idea by one or a few. The suggestions should be viewed as general suggestions with the need for more exploration prior to it being assumed that everyone is onboard and in favor of providing transportation, to use an example.

The following table provides detail and context to the input provided.

Theme:	Willing to do:	Comment or Context:
Volunteering	Transportation	A volunteer registry would be helpful – should identify skills and expertise. Host a volunteer night that is inclusive of all demographics. Needs to be volunteer promotion (could be done by a coordinator position within a community hub).
	Donate “time”	People will volunteer; they need to feel respected, worthy and listened to. People will often volunteer if specifically asked and they understand the work and time commitment.
	Sit on a Seniors’ Committee	
Membership fees		There was limited context provided other than a mention.
Support others	Help with accessibility	

	Provide encouragement	
	“Shoulder tapping”	Asking for specific expertise and/or align the request to a specific project.
	Mentorship	
	Willing to teach others	
	Promote “invite a friend” opportunities	Often the need to make others feel welcome and overcome their hesitations.
	Groups should consider a “social” aspect to their activity. (i.e., Supper get-together)	
Participate	Sign up and participate	If no interest activity can’t continue.
	Recruit others to attend	
	Attend forums for discussion	
	Be a community champion/advocate	
Communication	Share information	
	Speak to the “why”	Why do people join – improve, connect, fun.
	Could announce within organizations or groups that you belong to	Need to support each other and cross-promote activities. Break down the silos.
	Word-of-Mouth	We need to take pride in what we have and talk it up.
	Use social media	
	Post in businesses	
	Make phone calls	
	Engage across generations	Need education and knowledge on how to effectively do this.
Activity focused	Teach cooking	
	Lead exercise classes	
	Provide tech support	
	Clean up after events	

COMMUNICATION:

Discussion Question:

What is the best way to be informed about activities available in Yorkton?

Summary of emerging themes:

- Multi-faceted approach
- Seniors' Coordinator
- City's website
- City-wide registration for Seniors

The multi-faceted approach was an interesting category with many suggestions that ranged from do more to do less. What was evidently clear is that a multi-faceted approach is supported as there is not one method that is considered as a "one-size-fits-all" solution.

The table below provides context and comments on the themes, including the suggestions that were wrapped into each of the themes.

Theme:	Ways to be informed:	Comment/Context:
Multi-faceted approach	Use bulletin boards	Need information in places that seniors frequent (i.e., churches, pharmacies, banks)
	Online information	i.e., monthly calendar
	Social media	
	Radio	
	TV	
	Newspapers	Include a "seniors' section"
	By sharing through other organizations	i.e., churches, use Chamber of Commerce, Yorkton Tourism Information Centre
	Create an email/text blast group	
	Have a Recreation & Community Services Newsletter	
	Use brochures	
	Use advertising on bus/van	
	Consider robo-calls	
	Use restaurant table signs highlighting events and registration	
	Have a 55+ section in the Yorkton Leisure Guide	
	Create a "City of Yorkton" App	

Seniors' Coordinator	Could be a central hub for providing information to, and for distribution	
	Create a Seniors' 50+ Club Directory	
	Have a Call Centre	
City's website	Needs work	Noted that it is complex and difficult to find information.
City-Wide Registration for Seniors	Similar event to what is held for families and youth activities.	Should have free transportation, consider asking businesses to sponsor snacks for a "social area."

PARKING LOT:

To keep the session on track and the discussion moving, a session parking lot was utilized. The intent of this was to ensure that all input and topics were captured even if not pertaining directly to the discussion. It was identified to participants of the potential for there to be time limitations of the session and thus not have the opportunity to discuss all topics and/or issues. Time limitations should not undervalue or dismiss a subject matter. To not lose valuable comment, a “parking lot” was utilized.

The commitment to participants was that all ideas and suggestions were welcome and there were no wrong answers. The input was important and valuable even if needing to be set aside as an idea for a later time.

The following items were identified:

Theme:	Concern:	Comment or Context:
Sustainability	When things are started it is often uncertain if there is the ability to maintain and sustain.	Noted that volunteers get exhausted, same people do the work, the executive bodies of committees are overtaxed.
	The Bentley, Yorkton Crossing and Aspen Bluffs indicate their openness to members of the community participating in their activities; will this be sustained?	Is this a management or corporate direction? Will this continue to occur if there is a change in management. There was also a concern that residents of these establishments may not be able to access activities in the broader community.
Schools/Youth	How do we cross the generations and involve the youth and schools?	How do we get seniors in schools?
Taxes	What services are we paying for?	
Health care	There is a need for doctors and a hospital.	
Learning assistance/education	People need help with complicated telephone connections, banking, other government agencies, avoiding scams.	
Diversity is lacking	Need to ensure representation of diverse groups.	
Bus Service	Considerable concerns raised	This has also been noted as a barrier and concern in other questions.

KUDOS AND ACCOLADES:

The conversation with active Yorkton residents over age 55 did not have a formal question regarding positive initiatives or accolades to acknowledge what was appreciated and/or going well. In addition, there was not a formalized time included on the agenda for any conversation of this nature.

Having noted the above, through the discussion of the other questions, special note was made of a few initiatives that participants wanted to acknowledge.

These were as follows:

- During the winters of COVID, it was noted that the walkways within the parks were shoveled and cleared to allow for more outdoor activity. While this started during COVID, it has continued, and residents are enjoying the opportunity to walk safely during the winter months.
- Culture Week(s) in the Park was cited as a positive and enjoyable initiative.
- Free use of facilities during the month of January was appreciated.

Noting these initiatives in this section should not be misconstrued and that these are the only positive resources and actions that the City of Yorkton has underway. Positive feedback and acknowledgement were also noted through discussion of the five (5) specific questions and can be found in those sections of the report.

APPREHENSION & CONCERNS:

Open conversation and discussion can oftentimes impart information that is not aligned to or part of the sought-after input. Dismissing this as irrelevant and non-contributory could mean that we may miss wise counsel, delicate perception and/or keen insights. Numerous apprehensions and concerns were voiced during the formal discussion periods. Commitment was made to participants at the start of the session that all ideas and suggestions were welcome, there were no wrong answers, and every voice was important. These are provided as part of the record of input and feedback.

The following were noted either within table discussions and/or as a personal comment/question/concern to the co-facilitators during the session.

- There was acknowledgment in the notes that this conversation was a positive start, however having it during the day was a barrier for those that may still be employed.
- Participants want timely follow-up and want to know what plans and/or actions come because of the discussion. It was specifically referenced that a lull of a year is not considered “timely”.
- There is a need for timely feedback and follow-up.
- It was noted and flagged that there was an underrepresentation of those that may be underserved i.e., homeless, those with dementia, those isolated and confined within their homes.
- There was a comment that small towns are better at managing and addressing multigenerational needs than Yorkton is.
- There is a need for more promotion for tourism on what Yorkton has to offer. There is a perception that there is nothing here for anyone. In addition, it was suggested that the city should be more involved and/or lead the promotion of events.
- While this discussion and the work of the city is important, there is a need to engage in an “aging in place” strategy and a need for a broader commitment to health and well-being that would have a foundation based on prevention and proactive services.
- It was acknowledged that Yorkton offers a lot of activities and facilities, and the opportunity is to utilize these more fully. It was stated that “we don’t need to build new stuff.”

This input should not be assumed to have agreement from all participants or that it would be supported by the majority.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The Conversation event provides considerable and robust input for consideration. The input offers additional information that can be used to correct and enhance the Inventory of Activities, provides positive acknowledgement and constructive feedback for improvements, as well as offers ideas and suggestions that could be considered, researched, and further explored.

Of note, and previously reported, is that many participants indicated that the Conversation was a good initiative and starting point and were looking forward to further follow up, including action and feedback.



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