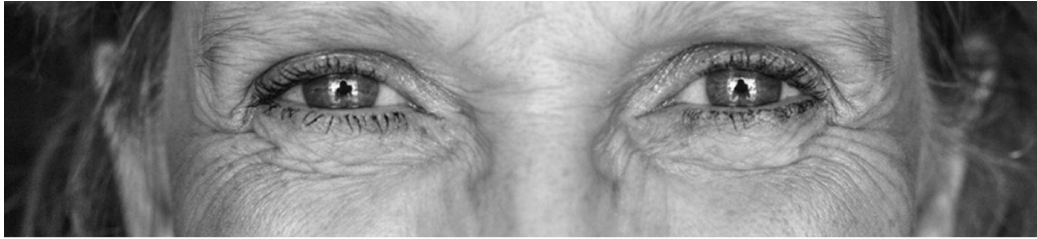


LGBTQ2S+ Seniors' Housing Survey: Full Report



Edmonton Pride Seniors Group

Creating Inclusive Spaces for LGBTQ Elders

www.epsg.ca

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1. Background

“LGBTQ2S+” is the acronym we have chosen to represent the diversity and uniqueness of all the non-heteronormative and gender non-conforming people who worked on and were consulted during this project, and all who will eventually benefit.

i. Exploring Housing Options for LGBTQ2S+ Seniors

In winter and spring of 2018, the Housing Development Committee reviewed various housing approaches and options and received input from potential residents via workshops, focus groups and a survey of a small group of interested participants.

Through these engagement opportunities, participants developed guiding principles and two housing options for the most appropriate form of accommodation. The most important guiding principle was having an inclusive facility for LGBTQ2S+ seniors and their friends/supporters. The preferred housing option identified was rental apartment housing of self-contained suites with one bedroom plus den or two-bedroom units, certain amenities or community facilities, underground parking and access to supports and homecare as required over time. The Oliver neighbourhood was the most preferred location.

The information gathered in 2018 was used to develop a feasibility study for a facility in Oliver in 2019. The feasibility was done in partnership with SAGE, who helped us to engage the Communitas group to prepare the study. The feasibility study was based on further meetings and workshops, which confirmed the need for this type of development. An architect was then engaged to design two concepts that met the requirements of the committee. The feasibility study indicated that it is possible to create an inclusive mixed-income facility that is welcoming to LGBTQ2S+ residents and supporters where people can age-in-place in a supportive environment.

ii. Community Survey

In late 2019, the housing committee, now called Housing Development Committee (HDC), determined that a broader consultation within the LGBTQ2S+ community was required to assess actual demand, to promote interest in the project and to act as a launch pad for pursuing actual development. This survey was intended to reach as many people in the LGBTQ2S+ community as possible to:

1. Conclusively confirm the need and demand;
2. Identify individuals and households who might be interested in moving into the development;
3. Confirm the importance of various seniors’ housing features;
4. Determine financial considerations/constraints for potential residents; and
5. Determine timing.

Though we have now released the findings of that survey and are moving forward based on the high degree of interested expressed, we fully intend to continue outreach to the LGBTQ2S+ community, specifically with seniors, to understand the community’s needs and feedback throughout the course of this project and beyond.

iii. Survey Distribution Strategy

To gather this information, the Housing Development Committee developed this survey accessible through Survey Monkey. The survey distribution began on February 28, 2020 and included communication with 32 diverse LGBTQ2S+ social media groups, community groups and key personalities in our community about the need for safe and inclusive seniors' housing. Moderators of these social media groups and various contacts in the community showed enthusiastic support for this project.

Additionally, members of our community sent out the survey link to their informal networks of friends in the community. Follow-up reminders were sent in late March and early April. These reminders increased the survey responses from 114 responses by March 25 to 199 by the survey close date of April 10. In addition, hard copies were made available to those who did not have access to the electronic version. The survey was launched on February 28, 2020 and closed on Friday April 10, 2020.

2. Survey Responses

199 people completed the survey. Of the respondents, 183 provided gender information: 62 (34%) identified as female, 114 (62%) identified as male and 7 (5%) identified as fluid, non-binary, trans and other. Of the 199 respondents, 52 (26%) were interested in moving into the project. This following section provides an overview of key survey results and themes for the total responses and an additional analysis of the subgroup that indicated interest in actually moving into the proposed housing facility.

i. Confirming Interest and Demand for Housing Project

Significant Demand and Support: There is significant demand and strong support in the LGBTQ2S+ community for seniors' housing. Fifty-two (26%) respondents indicated they wanted to move into this housing in 4 to 6 years. 45% of the total respondents also provided their names to form a list of potential residents. This indicates a high level of future demand!

A significant proportion of respondents indicated they were interested in working on the development of the project and being informed about the progress of the development. Specifically:

- 73 (37%) indicated that they were interested in working on the development of the project;
- 87 (45%) indicated that they were interested in having their names added to a list of potential residents; and
- 124 (65%) indicated that they were interested in receiving email updates as the project progresses.

52 Want to Move In: Our most significant result is that 52 respondents (26%) indicated they would like to move into this housing project within 4-6 years. The remaining 67% indicated they were not yet ready to move in but might be in the future.

ii. Rental Costs and Affordability Constraints

Affordability of rental costs is a significant issue. Approximately 60% of the respondents indicated they can pay less than \$1,400 per month.

- Of these 30.3% are willing to pay \$1000 or less and 29% between \$1001-\$1400.
- A further 18.2% indicated they are willing to pay between \$1400-\$1800.
- It is important to note that a majority of respondents (64%) indicated that they would share the suite with a friend, partner or spouse to enhance affordability.

iii. Importance of Various Seniors' Housing Features

One Bedroom plus Den is Preferred: The preferred size of apartment was a one bedroom plus den (48%) followed by a two-bedroom apartment (26%).

Inclusive facility: The vast majority (87.4%) of potential residents indicated an inclusive facility for LGBTQ2S+ seniors & their friends/supporters was the most important housing feature. The most important features and amenities were as follows:

1. Recreation Space (70.1%)
2. Home care/health support services as needed (68.5%)
3. Outdoor courtyard (66.0%)
4. Common Lounge/gathering space (67.3%)
5. Gardening/Green Spaces (64%)
6. Private Outdoor space (59.6%)
7. A pet-friendly building (i.e. small dogs, cats, and birds) (59.4%)
8. Underground Parking (56.1%)

*Note: The percentages indicated are a sum of ratings of “somewhat important” and “very important”.

iv. Age of Respondents

Most respondents were seniors, and most currently own their home. The respondents represented a wide range of ages with the majority (64%) between the ages of 50-69. Five percent were under 40 and 16% were between 40 to 49. A further 15% were aged 70+. A majority (71%) of respondents owned their own home, followed by 27% who rented.

Table 1: Age of All Respondents

Age of Respondents	Number	%
Under 40	8	5%
40 to 49	29	16%
50 to 59	57	32%
60 to 69	57	32%
70 plus	26	15%
Total	177	100%

Note: 22 respondents did not provide their age.

3. Overview of Respondents Interested in Moving In

This section provides an overview of the 52 respondents who indicated an interest in moving in.

Demand

52 (26%) respondents indicated they were interested in moving in within 4-6 years.

Demographics of Potential Residents

The average age range of this group was older than all respondents. The overwhelming majority (94%) of respondents were over 50. Of these, 76% were aged 50-69, and a further 18% were 70+. The majority of this

group (64%) own their own home. However, compared to all respondents, a larger proportion of this group (34%) rent their accommodation.

Of the 52 interested respondents, 48 provided gender information. 16 (33%) identified as female, 30 (63%) identified as male, and two respondents identified as Other or trans.

Table 2: Age of Respondents Who Want to Move In

Age of Respondents	Number	%
Under 40	2	4%
40 to 49	1	2%
50 to 59	15	31%
60 to 69	22	45%
70 plus	9	18%
Total	49	100%

Note: 3 respondents did not provide their age.

Rental Costs and Affordability Constraints

Affordability of rental costs is a significant issue. Approximately 60% of the respondents indicated they can pay less than \$1,400 per month.

- Of these 38.5% can only pay \$1000 or less and 21.2% between \$1001-\$1400.
- A further 17.3% indicated they could pay between \$1400-\$1800. Therefore, approximately one third can pay between \$1,400 and \$2,800.
- It is important to note that a majority of respondents (71%) indicated that they would share the suite with a friend, partner or spouse to enhance affordability.

Since there is a range of affordability preferences, the Housing Development Committee will need to engage in further discussions of potential strategies to develop a mixed income model with subsidized rents.

Importance of Various Seniors' Housing Features

The vast majority (85%) of potential residents indicated that inclusivity and friendliness for LGBTQ2S+ seniors & their friends/supporters was the most important housing feature for this project. The potential residents ranked the importance of various features differently than all survey respondents. A common lounge, outdoor spaces and a pet friendly building were ranked higher by those in the potential resident group, and interestingly this group also ranked home care and health support services as less important than the average pool of respondents.

The most important features and amenities were as follows:

1. Recreation Space (70.1%)
2. Common Lounge/gathering space (67.3%)
3. Outdoor courtyard (63.5%)

4. Private Outdoor space (65.4%)
5. A pet-friendly building (i.e. small dogs, cats, and birds) (58.7%)
6. Gardening/Green Spaces (55.8%)
7. Underground Parking (55.8%)
8. Home care/health support services as needed (50.0%)

*Note: The percentages indicated are a sum of the ratings of “somewhat important” and “very important”.

4. Implications for Moving Forward

- The degree of interest and the stated actual demand indicates a tangible need for safe and inclusive LGBTQ2S+ seniors’ housing.
- Given the significant interest in this housing project, it is critical that this momentum and interest is maintained by ensuring these respondents and others in the LGBTQ2S+ community are provided with regular updates as the project progresses.
- Since affordability of rental costs is a major issue, it is necessary to develop a housing model of mixed income with appropriate subsidization to meet the needs of the community.
- In addition to maintaining growing support and interest, it is essential to personally connect with members of the LGBTQ2S+ community to ensure the project implements inclusive, safe and welcoming community-focused principles.
- Strategies to make strong linkages with the LGBTQ2S+ community are critical to ensure the project secures appropriate partners along with development and construction funding support. There may be opportunities to explore financial investments by the LGBTQ2S+ community in this project.
- The information from this broad-based community survey along with the Feasibility Study will be important considerations when the project applies to various federal, provincial and municipal funding strategies as the development proceeds.