



MONTEREY PARK
BRUGGEMEYER LIBRARY

Transforming Life After 50:

Baby Boomers in Monterey Park and the Neighboring Communities



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September 26, 2011

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Executive Summary

A three-part study underwritten by a planning grant from the California State Library and conducted by the Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library revealed the concerns, aspirations, desires, and challenges facing the baby boomer population (ages 47-65) of the Monterey Park area, especially as they look ahead to the next stage of their lives.

A combination of surveys, focus groups, and a community stakeholder meeting conducted between May and August 2011 confirmed some of our assumptions while challenging some of our notions.

As one might expect, baby boomers in the Monterey Park area expressed concerns that are typically held by those nearing retirement age: financial well-being, healthcare, affordable housing, and care-taking of family members. Despite these real concerns looming before them, they rated their community quite high as an ideal place to retire. Focus group participants expressed clear intentions to continue living being residents in this area for as long as they can afford housing.

There were many findings of notable interest, but one that came to our attention was the number of boomers who anticipate to continue working beyond the traditional retirement age while also planning to make time to regularly volunteer in the community. This demonstration of civic engagement provides a ripe opportunity to align a viable pool of human talent volunteer interests with community needs.

As a community that has long been comprised of individuals of Chinese descent and an increasing number of Hispanics/Latinos, it is important that the City look deeper at the unique needs and desires of the various communities within the boomers rather than assuming that one size fits all. As one might expect, while these various ethnic groups share similar concerns and needs, our studies showed that there are notable differences when it comes to something as simple as their interests in community classes and workshops. This points to the need for community stakeholders to provide programs and services that address specific needs of each of the groups.

This Transforming Life After 50 study took a cursory look at the baby boomer group and was able to scratch below the surface. We understand that to solidify our findings or to dig deeper on any of the points of interest, more in-depth research would be needed. However, even with our basic research, we have been able to make some recommendations for the consideration of community stakeholders. The study has demonstrated that this is a population that has resided here for a while, plans to continue living here, and is engaged with the community. This alone is sufficient information to justify focusing on and addressing the needs and concerns of this group, since investing in the boomers is an investment in the long-term well-being of Monterey Park.

Acknowledgment

Special thanks to the California State Library which made this study possible.

We would also like to thank the TL50 Advisory Committee for its guidance.

Thank you to the dedicated and talented staff of the Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library: Maggie Wang, Reference Librarian and TL50 Fellow; Barbara Williams, Head Librarian; Gwen Kushida, Administrative Secretary; the Library Board of Trustees, and the Friends of the Monterey Park Library.

Thank you to both the Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce and the Langley Senior Center for generously offering their space for TL50 meetings.

We are also grateful to each of the community organizations and volunteers which helped us distribute surveys and conduct our research.

Introduction

The Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Public Library was awarded a grant from the California State Library which made possible a study of the baby boomer generation (ages 47-65) in the city of Monterey Park and its surrounding communities. The goal of this study was to determine the aspirations and concerns of the baby boomers as they enter the next phase of their life and consider retirement. The findings could then inform the entire community, not just the Library, with the expectation that individuals and organizations could work together to improve the livelihood of the boomers.

Located just a few miles east of downtown Los Angeles, the city of Monterey Park is known for having the largest concentrations of Chinese outside of China. At one point in its history, there were a sizeable number of Japanese American residents, and currently it has an increasingly growing Latino/a population. It has been a community that has embraced immigrants and has thrived over time.

The Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Public Library plays an important role in the civic life of the city. Located across the street from the Civic Center, the attractive and modern facility is known to be buzzing with activity, offering courses in computer training, literacy, and citizenship, as well as community lectures and youth programs. It is well regarded for its resources that serve the Asian community, from its multi-lingual staff to its books in various Asian languages. The Library's commitment to serving the community and improving its resources and offerings is demonstrated in its dedication to this study.

Process of Research

The study consisted of a three-part research process that commenced in May 2011:

- 1) Surveying the target demographic (May – July 2011);
- 2) Conducting Focus Group meetings to further clarify issues (August 2011), and;
- 3) Facilitate a Community Stakeholder Meeting to both inform them and obtain their perspectives (August 2011).

1) Surveys

A two-page, 18-question survey was the main source of data collection. We received 646 surveys, exceeding our goal of collecting a minimum of 600 surveys. The results are detailed in the next section and Appendix A.

We offered the survey both online via SurveyMonkey and we also offered a hard copy version. The survey was offered in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

To reach the broadest possible baby boomer audience, we had multiple avenues for survey distribution. We partnered with a local consortium of faith-based organizations, including the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)-Chinatown chapter, the Chinese American Foundation of Education, and the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging. We distributed surveys at the library's front desk, through its literacy and citizenship classes, and on its website.

We also solicited survey takers at local gathering places like an outdoor community exercise class, a donut shop during the morning commute, and an evening community event at the civic center.

To thank them for their participation, we gave each survey taker a voucher for a complimentary DVD rental at the library.

2) Focus Groups

We conducted two focus groups on the evenings of August 1 and 3, 2011 from 7-9pm at the Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce.

The focus group composition was designed to reflect a cross-section of the baby boomer population, and we hand-selected individuals to invite. 15 participants joined us over the course of two nights and they were asked the same questions each night (see Appendix B).

The focus groups were an excellent opportunity to ask open-ended questions and go deeper into areas that the survey alone could not address.

3) Community Stakeholder Meeting

17 representatives of organizations, local officials, agencies, or city commissions with a direct or indirect interest in the local community's baby boomer population attended a community stakeholders meeting on August 25, 2011 from 3-5pm at the Langley Senior Center in Monterey Park (see Appendix C for the list of attendees). The main purpose of the meeting was to share our findings and to receive feedback from their own professional affiliations and perspectives.

Survey Results

The purpose of the survey was to determine the attitudes held by baby boomers concerning what they project will be important to them as transition from their current life routine into this new phase of life. The questions on the survey were designed to elicit who they are (gender, race, economic and educational status), how they feel about their current life situation, and what they would like to see available to them in the future.

The survey collection itself presented some issues not anticipated. The first challenge was the fact we had to conduct the survey in four different languages (English, Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese). Although conducting the survey in multiple languages was not too difficult, the data analysis required the combining of the data which created a few challenges. It was not until we were collating the multiple surveys that we discovered that two possible responses to Question 11 (reading and traveling) were inadvertently omitted from the Spanish language surveys.

Additionally, our initial assumption was that:

- 1) we would be able to obtain adequate e-mail addresses to more than fulfill the minimum 600 survey mandate, and;
- 2) a large number of people would take the survey on-line.

Neither of these two assumptions proved to be valid. Virtually all of the surveys were completed in paper form which then required they be input into the survey data base for analysis.

The majority of surveys were collected at the Bruggemeyer Library. As mentioned in the previous section, we did conduct community outreach to local religious communities and non-profits, plus we literally stood in front of local, high traffic, locations to elicit participation. We did reach the minimum survey requirement of 600 surveys, but experienced some disappointment in regard to ethnic diversity, particularly regarding a low response by the Hispanic community, to be discussed further.

Age

Although the baby boomer generation is defined as those born between 1946 and 1965, we divided that population between those age 46 to 55 (born between 1956 and 1965, 42.3%) and those age 56 to 65 (born between 1946 and 1955, 57.7%). Almost 20% more surveys

were completed by the 56 to 65 age group. This may have been due to a heightened interest in the subject the closer the participant is to traditional retirement age. We additionally found that more females responded to the survey (63.3%) than males.

Ethnicity/Race

The ethnic breakdown was, to be expected, skewed toward Asian ethnicities. As Monterey Park is largely ethnic Chinese, per the most recent United States Census data, not surprisingly 60.4% of respondents identified as being Chinese. The balance of Asian ethnic groups broke down as Japanese (1.9%), Korean (1.4%) and Other Asian/Pacific Islander (10.9%). However, in the Other category the overwhelming majority identified themselves with a “-Chinese” qualifier. Clearly, ethnic Chinese were by far the largest survey participants. Other ethnic groups completing surveys included Caucasian (3.4%), African American (1.2%),

It must be mentioned that, although the Hispanic community is the second largest ethnic community in Monterey Park (26% as per the latest US Census) and the largest ethnic minority/majority in certain surrounding areas (most notably the unincorporated area of East Los Angeles), only 8.5% of the total survey respondents identified themselves as Hispanic. We believe that to achieve a larger representation of Hispanics in the survey results would require a far more focused (and probably costly) and targeted effort for which we had not the resources nor time to accomplish. Such an undertaking might be more appropriate for the Los Angeles County Library system, specifically the East Los Angeles branches, to obtain more ethnic specific information regarding the Hispanic community.

Notwithstanding, when one looks at the response rate of English language and Spanish language survey participants self identifying as Hispanic, a far different picture emerges, as a total of 21.2% of these language groups identified as Hispanic or Mexican American. Therefore, we believe a valid representational response was received, specifically for Monterey Park, from the Hispanic community.

Place of Residence and Longevity

The survey looked at longevity of residence within Monterey Park and found that almost 62% have lived in the community for 10 years or more. Clearly, this is a community with deep roots and the likelihood of long term residency. Although 75 separate ZIP codes were given by respondents, 34% were Monterey Park specific. This does indicate, however, that the City of Monterey Park acts as a hub for many people throughout the area and that city services are being provided to other than Monterey Park residents alone.

Languages

The Chinese language (either Cantonese or Mandarin) is considered the primary language by 75% of the survey’s respondents. Only 38% consider English their primary language followed by 5.3% Spanish and 2.3% Tagalog. This would dictate that to effectively communicate with the community in this demographic, attention must be paid to providing services in both Chinese language dialects, as well as English, Spanish, Tagalog and others.

Education Level and Income Level

63% of respondents claim at least some college and only 12.4% less than high school or a general equivalency degree (GED). When it came to relative financial worth, we saw a different result with 45.7% self reporting they earn less than \$20K per year and only 26% earning more than \$50K, the approximate national average. Their high degree of education does not seem to correlate with high levels of income when looking at the surveys as a whole. It is unclear, however, whether this lower level of earning power is the result of lower levels of education or some other factor.

Proficiency in the English language may, or may not, play a factor, but it should be considered. For instance, when you compare English language earning power against educational attainment, there appears to be a direct correlation i.e. more education (79.1% college/post graduate), more earning power (only 29% earn <\$20K/year).

But when you compare the earning power of the Chinese language group to their educational attainment, the correlation is not as strong. For the Chinese language group, although they are twice as likely to earn <\$20K/year (57.3%), they possess a relatively high level of education (53.4% college/post graduate). For the Spanish language group the percentages appear to correlate closely (40% earn < \$20K/year and a relatively small percentage possess high levels of education (33.4% college/post graduate).

Although many variables not measured may affect these outcomes, it does appear, per the data in the tables below, that a command of English may be a strong determinant regarding earning power.

Educational level attained

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Less than high school or GED	4.7%	16.7%	33.3%	12.4%
High school/GED	16.1%	30.0%	33.3%	24.6%
College	54.7%	38.5%	26.7%	44.6%
Post Graduate	24.4%	14.9%	6.7%	18.4%

Annual income level

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Up to \$20,000/year	29.0%	57.3%	40.0%	45.7%
Between \$20-34,999/year	12.7%	13.0%	26.7%	13.2%

Between \$35-49,999/year	15.9%	13.8%	33.3%	15.0%
Between \$50-74,999/year	15.5%	5.3%	0.0%	9.3%
Between \$75- \$99,999/year	13.1%	6.6%	0.0%	9.1%
Between \$100-124,999/year	5.2%	1.6%	0.0%	2.9%
Between \$125-149,999/year	4.0%	1.6%	0.0%	2.5%
More than \$150,000/year	4.8%	0.8%	0.0%	2.3%

Employment

16.6% of the respondents report either being unemployed or seeking employment, far above the current 12.5% California unemployment rate. Another 10.8% report being retired. 45% reported full time employment and less than 1% were involved in second careers.

Recreation

Although the data was fairly consistent across all language groups, there were a few variants to Question 11, “How do you currently spend your free time?” Overall, the area receiving the highest response was spending time with friends and family, more so for the English language group than the Spanish language group. At home entertainment was lowest among the Chinese language respondents, and computer/internet far and away more popular in the English and Chinese language group than the Spanish language group.

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Activities with friends/family	63.9%	55.4%	46.7%	58.7%
At home entertainment	59.1%	44.6%	53.3%	50.6%
Computer/Internet	53.2%	48.3%	13.3%	49.4%
Educational opportunities	18.7%	19.9%	13.3%	19.2%
Reading	44.0%	31.8%	Omitted	36.9%
Religion/spirituality	23.8%	29.7%	40.0%	27.6%
Theater/museums/concerts	24.6%	17.5%	20.0%	20.4%
Traveling	25.8%	23.1%	Omitted	24.1%
Volunteering	32.5%	17.2%	6.7%	23.1%
Hobbies	33.7%	23.9%	46.7%	28.3%
Physical activity	40.9%	37.4%	33.3%	38.7%

Biggest Personal Concerns

The responses to Question 13, “What are your biggest concerns for your life in this community in the next 10-15 years?” also provided some variants between language groups. Notwithstanding, overall they were fairly consistent. Clearly, of greatest concern to all those taking the survey is care giving; both for themselves and for their families. Similarly, health care (affordability and accessibility) is clearly a big priority for all groups, but especially so for the Spanish language group. Why the English language group was

more concerned about their environment than the other language groups is unclear. As used here, environment meant the urban environment, embracing quality of life factors such as clean air and lack of congestion, as well as more traditionally identified environmental factors i.e. the care for and protection of natural resources.

The table below affords the reader with the total information gleaned from the surveys.

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
Care giving - being able to take care of yourself/spouse, children/grandchildren, parents	62.2%	55.7%	60.0%	58.4%
Job/Career assistance	28.0%	34.0%	0.0%	30.8%
Entertainment - availability and accessibility of concerts, festivals, exhibits	30.7%	34.2%	40.0%	33.0%
Environment - quality of surroundings and natural resources	56.7%	40.3%	40.0%	46.7%
Fitness resources - swimming pools, exercise centers/gyms	37.4%	34.5%	40.0%	35.8%
Health Care - affordable/accessible medical care	57.5%	56.5%	73.3%	57.3%
Recreation - opportunities to spend your free time with meaningful activities	45.3%	42.4%	33.3%	43.3%
Transportation	37.4%	26.0%	13.3%	30.2%

Community Activities, Classes, or Workshops

Question 14 asked, “What workshops, classes or activities would you like to see provided in your community?” The participants could indicate as many, or as few, as they desired. This provided a rather broad expanse of interests.

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Book clubs	24.0%	21.0%	6.7%	21.8%
Citizenship class	13.4%	23.3%	26.7%	19.5%
Community conversations	18.1%	10.9%	40.0%	14.4%
Computer classes	40.6%	42.7%	6.7%	41.0%
Culinary (Cooking)	31.9%	27.1%	26.7%	28.9%
Exercise	56.7%	22.8%	40.0%	36.5%
Film screenings	24.8%	21.8%	0.0%	22.4%
Investment	22.4%	9.8%	60.0%	15.9%
Internet based activities	18.5%	11.4%	26.7%	28.3%
Job training/information	34.6%	19.9%	13.3%	25.5%
Lecture series	19.7%	13.5%	6.7%	15.7%
Learn/improve English skills	15.4%	40.8%	0.0%	30.0%
Literacy	13.0%	18.6%	46.7%	16.9%
Learn foreign languages	24.4%	30.5%	6.7%	27.5%

Multi generational opportunities	14.2%	17.2%	0.0%	15.7%
Travel	39.8%	35.0%	33.3%	36.8%
Retirement Planning	31.5%	24.7%	33.3%	27.5%
Volunteer opportunities	29.9%	19.9%	6.7%	23.4%
Social activities/meeting opportunities	28.7%	24.9%	6.7%	25.9%
Writing/Art	21.3%	11.9%	0.0%	15.2%

Computer classes were by far the area generating the most interest overall, but primarily in the English and Chinese language groups. Workshops and information related to investing, on the other hand, was of the greatest interest to the Spanish language group but of very little interest to the Chinese language group. Exercise seemed to be of interest to all language groups, more so for the English language group. Learning/improving English language skills was highest among the Chinese language survey takers but of no interest to the Spanish language group.

Job training/information was of interest to all groups, but more so to the English language group. Travel, on the other hand, was of almost universal interest, equally, in all language groups.

Volunteerism was of greatest interest in the English language group, but retirement planning was of almost equal interest in all of the language groups.

The language group differences here may more closely correlate with ethnic group preferences. It is safe to assume that those taking the Chinese language survey were ethnic Chinese and those taking the Spanish language survey were of Hispanic descent. Given those two assumptions, it is interesting to note that although, overall, only 15.9% of survey takers expressed an interest in workshops, classes or activities concerning investment, a full 60% of the Spanish language group i.e. Hispanics, indicated an interest. Community conversations, which garnered interest by only 14.4% of those surveyed, received a vote of interest by 40% of the Spanish language group. Of particular interest to those stakeholders providing literacy training, although this area only garnered an interest rating of 16.9% overall, it was important to 46.7% of Spanish language i.e. Hispanic, group.

These survey results, we believe, are significant in pointing out the importance of considering ethnicity in tailoring programs, workshops, classes and the like. Certain groups may well be more interested in certain topics than others. Armed with this knowledge, stakeholders can ensure they provide the programs desired by all of the ethnic groups within the community at large to ensure inclusion of all residents and all ethnicities.

Of the 20 different options provided, half of those received a response from rate of 25% or greater. Notwithstanding the discussion above, the survey data clearly indicates a high level of diversity of interests, which presents both challenges and opportunities in providing a varied array of different activities to keep the baby boomer generation engaged. One size clearly does not fit all in this demographic.

The baby boomers have good access to computers, primarily at home, as the question below and the survey responses indicate. The only language group that responded indicating a lack of access was the Spanish language group.

Do you have access to a computer and the Internet?

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Have access at home	81.5%	70.6%	53.3%	74.5%
Have access somewhere else	7.9%	8.0%	20.0%	8.2%
Do not have access	10.6%	21.5%	26.7%	17.3%

There is a somewhat inverse correlation, however between access (fairly high) and their self reported comfort level with using a computer. The table below illustrates this fact in response to the survey question. Classes in computers and their use will be of great interest to this demographic going forward.

How comfortable are in using a computer and the Internet?

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Very	53.5%	15.4%	13.3%	30.3%
Somewhat	25.6%	26.8%	40.0%	26.6%
Not Very	12.2%	35.8%	13.3%	26.0%
Not at all	7.1%	19.9%	20.0%	14.9%
No answer	1.6%	2.1%	13.3%	2.2%

Volunteerism

The final question, “In what volunteer opportunities are you interested?” is probably of the most interest to many non-profits, service clubs, museums and governmental organizations. Clearly, the baby boomer generation is interested in being involved in their community as community outreach/involvement ranked higher than any other response (40.2%).

As previously commented upon, language group response percentages varied. The English language group an interest rate of 61%, but the Spanish language group was also higher than the average at 53.8%. Discomfort with English language skills may account for the below average response by the Chinese language group (31.3%), however, if that is true, it

did not translate into their higher than average response rate to a desire to be involved in service clubs (36.5%0, the highest of any language group.

Tapping into this resource will be the challenge. How best to communicate the need and then convert their interest into meaningful and rewarding involvement will take ingenuity and creativity on the part of those wishing to tap into this well-spring of volunteers.

In what volunteer opportunities are you interested?

Answer Options	English Language	Chinese Language	Spanish Language	ALL
	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent	Response Percent
Tutoring	27.5%	19.4%	30.8%	21.0%
Guide/docent at performing arts center/museum	18.2%	16.5%	0.0%	15.4%
Service clubs	25.4%	36.5%	23.1%	29.2%
Community outreach/involvement	61.0%	31.3%	53.8%	40.2%
Parks/recreation	28.4%	46.4%	53.8%	36.0%
Others (please specify)	11.0%	0.9%	13.3%	4.8%

Focus Group Results

This section summarizes the main findings from the two focus groups:

1. Current and Future Employment Status
 - Most of the participants were employed or actively looking for some form of part-time or full-time work. A few have been unemployed for a while and were concerned about their financial well-being. Only one individual was retired. This set the stage for questions regarding their employment for the next stage in their lives.
 - Almost all anticipate continuing to work beyond the traditional retirement age. The majority expects to continue to work out of a combination of both choice and necessity. Even if they were to find a way to no longer need to work, many of them may choose to work at least part-time if they found something they enjoyed.
 - If they were to continue to work, about half of them expect that they might have an “encore” career – a new career that is different from the career that they currently spend the most time in – and the other half said they may remain in the same line of work but perhaps in a different organization.
 - All of the participants said if they could have their way, they would remain living where they are now, through the next stage of their life. They don’t plan to move to a traditional retirement community, another city or another state. The main factor that might force them to leave is lack of affordable housing.

2. We asked them to elaborate on the reasons why these top three reasons came up in the surveys as top concerns for the next 10-15 years of their lives:

- Care giving (defined as being able to take care of yourself, spouse, children, grandchildren, and parents) -
 - Concerns: being able to continue to afford healthcare, having access to quality healthcare, being able to afford housing for themselves and families, how to provide long term care for themselves or a loved one if stricken with chronic illness
- Health care (defined as affordable and accessible medical care) -
 - They desire health screenings in community, workshops on caring for loved ones, workshops on how to cope with Alzheimer's and dementia, preventive illness information, health fairs.
- Environment (quality of surroundings and natural resources) -
 - Multiple individuals are very concerned about increased traffic congestion in the area which causes a public safety issue, some minor crime concerns, and overall they want Monterey Park to remain the safe community it has been.

3. We asked them to elaborate on reasons why the following top three topics were tabulated in the surveys as the most important for them in terms of workshops, classes, and activities in this next phase of their lives:

- Exercise – as they get older they want alternative ways of staying active and being healthy other than going to the gym.
 - They cited examples such as line dancing, yoga, and tai chi.
- Travel – we asked them to specify if they meant domestic or international travel, solo or group travel, etc.
 - They clarified that many of them were interested in organized group day trips or weekend trips. Since California has so many interesting destinations, organized bus excursions and weekend trips would be a fun and budget-conscious way to get out of town and see new sights, etc.
- Computer classes – we asked them what kind of training they would want with computers and it surprised us that many of them want to improve their computer skills for recreational use, not business.
 - Although almost all of them anticipate continuing to work well past the traditional retirement age, and some of them expect to change jobs and possibly careers, they are not seeking computer training for

professional advancement. Yet when we asked them about their computer proficiency, many claim they only have basic knowledge.

- 14 out of the 15 participants have a computer at home. Most of them use the computer for basic recreational purposes such as email, surfing the web, uploading photos, and watching movies.
- 10 out of the 15 have used the computers at the Library. 6 of them have taken computer classes there. 4 out of the 15 have utilized the reference staff for computer assistance, research, etc. Many of them also are aware that computer training is available at other nearby locations such as the community college, adult school, WorkSource Center, and the senior center.

4. Volunteering

- 12 out of the 15 participants will actively volunteer in the community (approximately 3-4 hours a month).
- While some of them may continue volunteering at organizations they are already a part of, many claim they are open to finding new opportunities.
- When finding out about volunteer projects, they say their sources are typically by word of mouth, church bulletins, or they are asked.

5. Multi-lingual programs and services

- 13 out of 15 say that it's very important to have multi-lingual programs and services in the community. The other two said it was of moderate importance to them.
- Over half of the participants say that availability of multi-lingual programs and services will be a factor in determining whether they stay in their current place of residence. Even a few English-only speakers said that, although they themselves did not personally require programs and services in other languages, they felt that it was important to live in a community that offers them because it encourages more community participation which they view as an important part of civic life.

6. "What keeps you up at night?"

- We asked them what kept them up at 3am to try to understand the main items that are bothering them at their core. The answers ranged from their financial stability, care giving for themselves and their family, the health and well-being of their loved ones, the politics of the country, the state budget crisis, and the future for their grandchildren.

7. Rate Monterey Park and your community

- We asked them to rate on a scale from 1-10 (10 being highest), how they view Monterey Park and its surrounding communities as a place to live in this next stage of their lives. 9 out of 15 participants gave it a rating of 8 or greater which surprised us because often focus group participants take the opportunity to complain and communicate their complaints and dissatisfaction. On the whole, they are quite content with their current place of residence:

Rating of a perfect 10 – from five individuals

Rating of 9 – from one individual

Rating of 8.5 – from one individual

Rating of 8 – from two individuals

Rating of 7.5 – from one individual

Rating of 7 – from two individuals

Rating of 6 – from two individuals

Rating of 5 – from one individual

- The two individuals who gave a rating of 5 and 6 cited concerns with public safety (one had been a victim of home burglary) and increasing traffic congestion.
- When we asked all of the participants what it would take to increase their rating, they offered: safer neighborhoods, lower housing prices, less crime, streets without potholes, more community resources such as library open 7 days a week, more access to senior center, proximity of their family, more public safety, and better school districts so parents don't take their children to Arcadia.

We then asked them to choose one word to describe their rating. We heard a range of responses:

- Excellent, Variable, Educational/cultural, Family-oriented, Convenient (native Chinese speaker who says it is convenient to retail shopping, doctor, etc), Convenient (in terms of access to streets/freeways, multi-cultural options), Convenient (in terms of location and services), Great, Comfortable, Accessibility (to services, movies, gym), Location, Safe, and Enjoyable.

8. At the conclusion of our questions, we offered them an opportunity to offer any feedback that they would like us to include with our findings. The two individuals that spoke up are residents of the neighboring cities of Montebello and South Pasadena. Both pointed out that they are grateful for the services in Monterey Park and feel that the city has a genuine sense of inclusiveness, all of which motivates them to drive to Monterey Park on a regular basis to take advantage of the public parks, restaurants, 4th of July festivities, the public library, etc. Then everyone expressed their gratitude for this opportunity to participate in the study.

Community Stakeholder Meeting Results

We hosted a meeting for community stakeholders which had a goal of 1) informing stakeholders of our study and our findings, 2) soliciting their feedback about the findings, and 3) provide an opportunity for people to meet each other.

The meeting was held on August 25, 2011 at Langley Senior Center in Monterey Park. In attendance were 17 community stakeholders ranging from a local hospital to an elected official's office, from a city commission on aging to the local chamber of commerce (see Appendix B for full list of community stakeholder participants).

While some stakeholders regularly focus on the baby boomer population due to the nature of their work and organization (AARP, Senior Center, Commission on Aging), many others had not thought particularly about the baby boomer group in their work. The meeting was successful in bringing the baby boomer population to the forefront of everyone's minds, raising the awareness of each stakeholder when it comes to boomers' aspirations, concerns, and desires.

The group discussed the study's finding about boomers' desire to volunteer in the community and the community's desire to identify more qualified, capable volunteers. This is an area that generated a lot of interest. The discussion centered on ways to identify boomers who are interested in volunteering and matching them with appropriate organizations and programs. Apparently, such a program existed in the past and was overseen by the city. Various challenges, such as background checks and the collecting and storing of volunteer information, were discussed by the participants.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is clear that the survey participants feel that the City of Monterey Park is an excellent place to live. Over 60% of the baby boomers have been here in the Monterey Park area for 10 yrs or more, and 17% over 30 years. They anticipate being here throughout the next stage of their lives, so long as they can afford to be. Many said they can't imagine being anywhere else, citing various amenities including convenience as a positive influential factor.

This is very good news for the community as these baby boomers will be staying in the community during their retirement years and are willing to give back to their community through volunteerism. We recommend that the community stakeholders devise programs by which they can tap into this wellspring of good feelings about the community. Marrying up the talents and skills of the baby boomer generation with the needs of non-profits, both secular and religious, in addition to government and quasi governmental organizations will require working across sectors to achieve goals held mutually by all groups. We recommend that the Library partner with other organizations to apply for implementation grants to assist in building the framework needed to achieve such true collaboration.

The need to not ignore ethnic preferences when designing programs was pointed out in the survey data. Rather than causing divisiveness, by acknowledging differences and addressing the needs of all groups, inclusiveness will manifest and benefit the entire community as a whole. Encouraging participation by groups that may have previously been underutilized benefits everyone.

Aligning the desires of baby boomers to continue to be productive members of the community with the needs of the community needs to be achieved. Clearly, this group of residents is here to stay and want to be engaged in the life of the community. Community stakeholders are well positioned to take advantage of this group to further their goals. We recommend that service organizations and clubs need to proactively reach out the baby boomer generation and embrace them. If an implementation grant is sought, we recommend involving these organizations into the execution.

But the baby boomer generation also needs something from the stakeholders. There clearly is concern over health care and care giving as baby boomers continue to transition into old age. They will need support and assistance from the community, even as they provide support and assistance to others. As much as they will be on the giving end of the equation, they will be increasingly on the receiving end. We recommend that programs and support mechanisms be put in place to address these needs.

Appendices

Appendix A

Both the online and paper surveys consisted of the following questions:

1. Into which age category do you fit?
 - Born between 1956 – 1964 (age 47 to 55)
 - Born between 1946 – 1955 (age 56 to 65)

2. How do you identify yourself?
 - African American
 - American Indian/Native Alaskan
 - Caucasian
 - Chinese
 - Hispanic
 - Japanese
 - Korean
 - Non-Hispanic White
 - Other Asian/Pacific Islander
 - Vietnamese
 - Other

3. How long have you lived in the community (Monterey Park and surrounding areas)?
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1 to 5 years
 - 5 to 10 years
 - 10 to 20 years
 - 20 to 30 years
 - Over 30 years

4. Survey Participant's ZIP Code

5. What is your primary language?
 - English
 - Cantonese Chinese
 - Mandarin Chinese
 - Japanese
 - Korean
 - Spanish
 - Tagalog
 - Vietnamese
 - Other

6. Gender

7. Educational Level Attained

- Less than high school or GED
- High school/GED
- College
- Post Graduate

8. Do you:

- Live alone or with spouse
- Live with friends or roommate other than family
- Live with relatives
- Assisted living or other group arrangement
- Own you home/condominium
- Receive a government subsidy for housing (Section 8, etc)

9. What is your income level?

- Up to \$20,000/year
- Between \$20-34,999/year
- Between \$35-49,999/year
- Between \$50-74,999/year
- Between \$75- \$99,999/year
- Between \$100-124,999/year
- Between \$125-149,999/year
- More than \$150,000/year

10. At what stage are you in your current life?

- Working full time
- Working part time
- Second career
- Homemaker
- Unemployed
- Seeking employment
- Retired
- Semi-retired (working fewer hours while transitioning into retirement)

11. How do you currently spend your free time?

- Activities with friends/family
- At home entertainment (television/DVDs/CDs)
- Computer/Internet
- Educational opportunities
- Reading
- Religion/spirituality

- Theater/museums/concerts
- Traveling
- Hobbies (gardening, arts/crafts, music)
- Volunteering
- Physical activity (play sports, go to the gym, swim, running, Tai Chi)
- Others (please specify)

12. Religious preference

13. What are your biggest concerns for your life in this community in the next 10-15 years? (please select at least four)

- Care giving – being able to take care of yourself/spouse, children/grandchildren, parents
- Job/Career assistance
- Entertainment – availability and accessibility of concerts, festivals, exhibits
- Environment - quality of surroundings and natural resources
- Fitness resources - swimming pools, exercise centers/gyms
- Health Care - affordable/accessible medical care
- Recreation – opportunities to spend your free time with meaningful activities
- Transportation

14. What workshops, classes or activities would you like to see provided in your community? (please select all that apply)

- Book clubs
- Citizenship class
- Community conversations
- Computer classes
- Culinary (Cooking)
- Exercise
- Film screenings
- Investment
- Internet based activities
- Job training/information
- Lecture series
- Learn/improve English skills
- Literacy
- Learn foreign languages
- Multi generational opportunities
- Travel
- Retirement Planning
- Volunteer opportunities
- Social activities/meeting opportunities Writing/Art

15. Do you have access to a computer/Internet?

- Have access at home
- Have access somewhere else
- Do not have access

16. How comfortable are you in using computer and Internet?

- Very
- Somewhat
- Not very
- Not at all

17. In what volunteer opportunities are you interested? (please select all that apply)

- Tutoring
- Guide/docent at performing arts center/museum
- Service clubs
- Community outreach/involvement
- Parks/recreation

Appendix B

Focus Groups

The two facilitators asked the following questions on each night of the two focus groups:

1) Raise your hand if you currently:

- work full time
- work part-time
- unemployed
- retired
- any other status

2) Raise your hand if you anticipate being fully retired from your current occupation at the age of 65.

How many of you anticipate working full or part time after the age of 65?
Is this by choice or out of necessity?

3) When you complete this current phase of your life, do you anticipate having an encore career? If so, do you plan to continue more of what you have been doing, just in a different place or organization?

4) What or who could assist you to better define how you will spend the remaining years of your life?

5) Do you foresee that your retirement years will be in the same community you reside in right now do you foresee that you will be relocating somewhere else? If so, where and why? What factors would play into your decision?

6) The survey contained the following question:

“What are your biggest concerns for your life in this community in the next 10-15 years?”

There were 3 answers that rose to the top, in this order:

- #1) Care giving – being able to take care of yourself/spouse, children/grandchildren, parents
- #2) Health Care - affordable/accessible medical care
- #3) Environment - quality of surroundings and natural resources

Tell us, specifically, what your concerns are about each. Then tell us what you would like your community to do, provide, or act upon to address each of these issues.

7) On the survey, we also asked this question: “What workshops, classes or activities would you like to see provided in your community?” The top 3 responses were:

- #1) Exercise
- #2) Travel
- #3) Computer classes

For those of you who selected these, please elaborate and tell us more.

- Exercise – What specifically?
- Travel – Did you mean group travel? Personal travel? Education travel? Domestic, international?
- Computer classes – What kind of training? What kind of software? Would it be for work or personal/recreational? In terms of access to computers, many of you stated that you have a computer at home yet, despite that fact, you do not feel very computer competent. What are you currently using the computer for at home?

8) Raise your hand if you have utilized the Bruggemeyer Library computers. Have you participated in any of their training classes? Have you availed yourself to any of their reference staff for computer assistance? Can you identify any other community resources in this area for computer training or workshops?

9) Raise your hand if you foresee yourself volunteering on a somewhat regular basis (3-4 times per month) in the next few years? What kind of volunteer activity interests you? With what type of organization do you want to volunteer with? How do you anticipate getting involved (proactive or waiting to be asked)?

- 10) What is your native language?
- 11) How important is it for the community to provide multi-lingual programs and services?
- 12) Will the availability or accessibility of multi-lingual programs and services be a factor when selecting the community in which you retire? How much of a consideration will this be for you?
- 13) What keeps you up at night about your life? What wakes you up at 3am with concern?
- 14) On a scale of 1 – 10, 1 being horrible and 10 being absolutely ideal, how would you rate this community as a place for you to continue to live over the next 10-15 years? If you had to use one word to describe your rating, what would it be?
- 15) Are there any questions, comments or concerns that you would like to share?

Appendix C

Community Stakeholder Meeting

The following organizations were represented at the community stakeholder meeting on August 25, 2011:

- Monterey Park Commission on Aging
- Monterey Park Hospital
- Langley Senior Center
- AARP – Chinatown
- Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church
- Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of the Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Public Library
- Office of Assemblymember Mike Eng
- Chinatown Service Center
- Monterey Park Commission on Environment
- Monterey Park Commission on Arts and Culture
- Monterey Park Commission on Planning

Others who were invited but were not in attendance:

- Office of Senator Ed Hernandez
- Monterey Park Police Department
- Monterey Park Commission on Community Relations
- Monterey Park Commission on Parks and Recreation