



# Reaching Underserved Populations Through UMore Park

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-TWIN CITIES  
PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE IN HOUSING AND  
COMMUNITY

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# Purpose

To provide recommendations to UMore Park developers and officials, to aid them in making informed decisions in the planning and development processes.

To emphasize the need for further study of underserved groups in UMore Park.

# Underserved Populations: Why This is Important

- Diversity in UMore Park
- Research opportunities
- Housing to fit needs of currently underserved populations

# 3 Underserved Populations in Twin Cities

- Deaf
- Muslim
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered

# Deaf

16 senior housing facilities for the Deaf in U.S.

Most important:

1. Staff is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL)
  - Deaf seniors are healthier in environments where people sign
2. Assistive technology

Community of peers is highly valued:

- majority of Deaf people would choose living in a Deaf community over living with/near hearing family.

If a senior housing facility for the Deaf is presented:

- Willing to relocate farther distances

# Muslims

Less than 1% of U.S. Muslims are over the age of 62 and the majority are converts or immigrants

Senior Needs:

- Communal prayer space
- Connection to local mosque
- Halal food
- Same-sex nursing care

Tend to come from cultures with strong intergenerational ties and a belief Islam requires one to take care of elderly relatives:

- Best current option: multi-generation single-family homes
  - Universal design
  - Assistive technology for healthcare

# Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Seniors

1. Acceptance as opposed to tolerance
2. Safety
3. A feeling of Community

“Out” LGBT seniors are healthier as they age and prefer LGBT service providers

If an LGBT senior housing option is presented:

- More likely to move to senior housing at an earlier age
- Willing to travel a longer distance to move

# Technology & Seniors

- Independence
- Ease of Access
- Education
- Communication
- Privacy
- Research





# Implications for Underserved Senior Populations



## **Deaf**

- Communication

## **Muslim**

- Privacy

## **GLBTA**

- Connectedness

# Universal Design in Transit and Walkability

- Street design
- Crossings
- Transit vehicles
- Transit stops



# Implications for Underserved Senior Populations

- Signage
- Crossing technology
- Education programs
- Discrimination policies



# Conclusions

Most important issues for seniors:

1. Safety
2. Mobility/Accessibility
3. Living in a community of peers
4. Connectedness
5. Privacy

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