

“What makes a neighborhood healthy?”

Using newsprint (which can be obtained free from your local newspaper - ask for the ends of the rolls), post the blank wall at a level that can be accessed by people of all heights and abilities. Don't forget kids and wheelchair users! The Bloomington mural measured approximately 5' x 14'. Seek a smooth wall, use masking tape around the entire edge to prevent fraying. Make a test on the paper to make sure the ink doesn't bleed through.

Attach markers on strings to various points along the wall or place markers for use on a nearby ledge or shelf. If needed, place a laminated instructional placard nearby for curious people who want to know more about why this is being done before committing to express themselves.

In the Bloomington project, the mural was posted in conjunction with a multi-media display on aging at the local community arts center. The mural was placed in a hallway utilized by the public attendees over the course of two weeks. Other venues, depending on your target audience, might include:

- Public malls
- Senior Centers/Community Centers
- Schools
- Lobbies in municipal buildings, city hall, etc.
- Public transportation lobbies
- Work place cafeterias
- Outdoor spaces, kiosks, etc.

- Store windows along heavily traveled sidewalks
- Hospital/Medical Center Lobbies

Some other questions that might be placed on the mural for a response could be:

What is your favorite place in this community?

What would make _____ town more elder-friendly?

What would make _____ town a good place for all ages?

What do you like best about this senior center?

You get the picture... you want to ask provocative questions that anyone can answer and provide an opportunity for pictorial responses as well.

Make sure the mural is monitored regularly to prevent vandalism, weather damage, marker theft, etc. This may influence your choice of a location.

When you determine that sufficient time has been provided for responses (or when the wall is filled with responses), remove the mural and transcribe the responses to an alternate format. While the method is not scientific, of course, you can count similar responses and report them by frequency or use this to identify key themes. If you have taken pictures of graphic elements from the mural you can scan these and incorporate them into your report. Your report might be a section in a larger community planning document, a brief pamphlet, even a website or a newspaper insert. The more visually appealing the document, the more likely it is to be read by the public. That's one reason why graffiti walls are a great way to raise public awareness and interest.