



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Scott Means
Interim Director, Human
Services

SUBJECT: Commission on Aging 2023
Informational Report

DATE: August 17, 2023

City Administrator Approval

Date: Aug 29, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive The Oakland Commission On Aging Annual Report For 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report from the Commission on Aging details their activities, observations, and recommendations on behalf of Oakland Seniors. Highlighted in this report is the Commission's work on "Age Friendly Cities".

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities, and organizations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in.

In 2018, the City of Oakland entered the Global Network of [Age Friendly Cities as recognized by the World Health Organization](#) (WHO). Since then, the Commission on Aging has sought community input, including hosting "Age Friendly" meetings in all seven districts and a community engagement survey still open for responses. Based on input from the community and internal knowledge, the Commission oversaw the preparation of the Oakland Age Friendly Cities Action Plan which contains recommendations for action priorities about seniors.

In October 2020, the Commission on Aging filed the City of Oakland Age Friendly Cities Action Plan as required by the WHO's Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. The American Association of Retired Persons (now known as AARP) accepted the report on behalf of WHO. With the acceptance of this plan, the Commission on Aging entered its three-year implementation cycle starting July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Summary of Key Findings in 2023 Commission on Aging Annual Report

The Commission witnessed unprecedented advancements in senior technology use during the pandemic. The Senior Center Advisory Board members held hybrid meetings and leadership activities. To support senior technology use Aging, [Aging Services](#) offered training and supplied lending tablets, some with cellular service, to accommodate members who do not have Wi-Fi access. Because of the elevated usage, we discovered information systems for senior benefit programs were not needed to be more equitably noticed, igniting an interest to improve information delivery systems, particularly around emergency events and opportunities for housing.

Pandemic lockdowns and government-imposed mandates that did not expire until July 2023 impacted seniors' mental health due to isolation and their need for in-person interactions despite advancements in the ability to connect through technology. The growing need for Case Managers was highlighted the lack of mental health and social worker resources in Alameda County. As an additional barrier, to qualify for most of the existing programs, seniors must be MediCal eligible. There is an ongoing problem in which seniors are forced to deplete their financial and property resources before they are eligible to receive adequate healthcare and mental health supports. Through a Congressional grant legislated by Barbara Lee, the Commission perceives an opportunity to pilot mental health supports for seniors to address issues brought up by pandemic isolation and other issues.

Senior food distribution programs expanded during the pandemic. However, options for senior meals, other than home delivered meals for high needs seniors, declined due to businesses changing their distribution model as pandemic funding expired. The East and West Oakland Senior Center members reject the government subsidized government-subsidized food program for quality and taste reasons, leaving those sites without on-site meal services. Options for the City to subsidize a senior lunch program are costly, and transporting food is often a major expense and obstacle. The Commission is working with Senior Center staff to identify options for senior lunches.

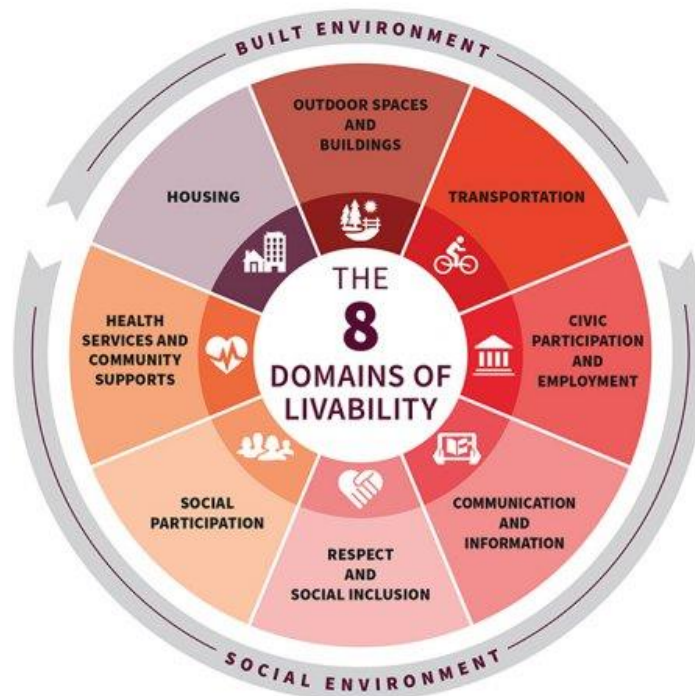
In the domain of housing, the Commission witnessed a growth in local housing stock and improvements to protections for Oakland seniors in the form of eviction moratoriums and legal representation. However, housing preservation is lacking for seniors unless they are homeowners. Simple improvements, such as grab bars in bathrooms, improves improve the livability of standard housing for seniors, many of whom are renters. There are private sector options for addressing the needs of renter access while protecting them from eviction after the property is improved.

The Commission on Aging sees value in developing inclusive public spaces that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities. The Commission supports the concept of an intergenerational structure that supports health through play. There are two identified spaces near Lake Merritt that wouldTwo identified spaces near Lake Merritt would be ideal due to the central location and proximity to the other City of Oakland facilities. The Commission has initial concept drawing drawings for this structure, so they are poised to ramp up this project, recognizing that funding will be a major barrier.

The above Domains for Age Friendly Communities includes Council Priorities: housing, economic, and cultural security, vibrant sustainable infrastructure, and responsive trustworthy government.

Oakland Age Friendly Cities Action Plan

The Commission on Aging entered program implementation of the current Age Friendly Communities Action Plan. The WHO has identified “Eight Domains of Livability” through which jurisdictions may organize their work. The eight domains are depicted in the illustration below.



Source: [AARP](#)

Consistent with the WHO and AARP direction, the Commission on Aging has focused its efforts on communications, health, housing, and open spaces. Implementation will continue through the 2024/25 budget cycle. After the implementation phase, an evaluation and a community assessment will provide an opportunity to continue or refocus Commission work on specific Age Friendly Community Domains. Please refer to the following tables for the current status of implementing the project plan.

Communications

Priorities

- a. Create a centralized source of information for seniors
- b. Information distribution is available in accessible formats and languages

Strategies

- a. Advocate elected officials to provide or program budgeted City funding
- b. Work with community partner(s) to build and market the data resource platform

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Build a communication platform to provide information and other resources for Oakland seniors.		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Eden I&R, Four City of Oakland operated Senior Centers, Unity Council’s Fruitvale senior center, Family Bridges Senior Center, St. Mary’s senior center, SOS Meals on Wheels, Affordable Senior Housing Partners, North Oakland Village, both Vietnamese Community Centers and City of Oakland Emergency Management.	moving
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Meet with councilmembers to educate them about the pilot program and secure their support	complete
	Eden I&R to define data warehouse, hire staff, and populate existing data (July-December 2023)	moving
	Develop a plan and test the platform with a City of Oakland senior center, Unity Council Senior Center, and one other entity (Q1 2024)	
How will you measure success? 2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes for evaluation and engaging community partners.	Council or Sugar Sweeten Beverage Tax funds the project, and City of Oakland systems complete the contracting process.	moving
	Seniors testing the platform in 2024 will respond to a short survey such as “Was the information you requested clear and helpful?” or something similar.	
	Usage of the system during an emergency impacting seniors.	
What barriers is the project experiencing or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding: There is an active Council Budget request for the 2023/24 cycle. If this request is unsuccessful, Sugar Sweeten Beverage Tax funds may be used starting July 1, 2023. • RFP Process: To avoid a lengthy RFP/RFQ process, the Communication Committee will use Government Cooperative Bidding or Council Approval. • Contracting: Contract compliance is currently in a reorganization, so we do not 	

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Build a communication platform to provide information and other resources for Oakland seniors.		Progress
	know, in the short run, if this will improve or delay the contracting process.	
Timeline: What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	The system will be running, and the Commission will have initial end user data.	

Health, Wellness, and Food Security

Priorities

- a. Advocate for wrap around health services to support senior wellness to age in place.
- b. Create a resource tool for common senior maladies.

Strategies

- a. Increase the number and scope of case management services available to Oakland Seniors and adults with access and functional needs.
- b. Develop and distribute a resource guide for seniors to provide connections to providers and services.

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Increase the number of Case Managers available to seniors, supported by resource guides at the senior centers and other community locations		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Senior Centers, Oakland Human Resources KTOP: Promotion of initiative so seniors know about the availability of Case Management, as well as others, such as My Senior Center, Eden I&R, etc.	moving
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Case managers are hired, trained to work in a MediCal billing CM strategy, and subsequently assigned to Oakland Senior Centers.	moving
	Train Center Managers to understand wrap around services. For example, including disability and bi-lingual supports, as well as Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging orientation.	
	Change the effective use of the Senior Centers to provide more navigational support change from membership based to needs based activities and resources for the senior population.	
How will you measure success?	Hire Case Managers	complete
	Complete training of Case Managers as well as training internal stakeholder staff so there is a	moving

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Increase the number of Case Managers available to seniors, supported by resource guides at the senior centers and other community locations		Progress
2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes, for evaluation and engaging community partners.	shared internal language around senior mental health and other relevant subjects.	
	Case Managers will have at least 25 active cases.	
What barriers is the project experiencing, or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in the hiring due to Human Resources gaps in staffing and internal processes Community needs may exceed bandwidth or capacity of staff capacity Oakland policy decisions around hiring freezes and budget 	
Timeline: What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	Onboarding and training of Aging service staff who directly provide Case Management or who have a high level of direct contact with seniors, such as Senior Center Directors. Case Managers carry at least 25 active cases with a focus on Mental Health support.	

Priorities

- a. Close food availability gaps for seniors throughout Oakland
- b. Improve Congregate Lunches (Meals) at Senior Centers

Strategies

- a. Adequate and Consistent food security funding
- b. Offer diverse, culturally appropriate meals for seniors

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Increase the number and quality of nutritious food distributions offered to seniors.		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Local meal providers, City of Oakland Purchasing, Oakland Senior Centers. Assets and Human Resources for staffing support.	moving
	Senior Center Advisory Council members and Commission on Aging representatives must have an opportunity to taste and approve the vendor(s) for this project.	
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Determine the preparation and delivery methodology.	moving
	Create a Council Resolution to approve of the Scope and vendor choice.	moving
	Provide senior meals for a one-year pilot	

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Increase the number and quality of nutritious food distributions offered to seniors.		Progress
How will you measure success? 2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes, for evaluation and engaging community partners.	The initial provider chosen based on Senior Center Advisory taste and quality approval	
	Satisfaction survey	
What barriers is the project experiencing, or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracting requirements • Meal providers responding • Cost of a sustainable meal program • Consistent additional staffing dedicated to the food program 	
Timeline: What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	Senior meal pilot will be available at a senior center with supplemental staff provided through Assets or volunteer staff (internal) and young adults (18-25, external)	

Housing

Priorities

- a. Advocate with City leaders to produce affordable housing and equitable solutions to senior homelessness
- b. Improve safety net programs for seniors that protect renters and preserve housing to prevent homelessness

Strategies

- a. Advocacy and partnerships with City leadership and relevant Oakland Departments focused on housing, including participation in planning committees and public meetings
- b. Develop home repair resources for seniors to make accessibility and environmental health improvements

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: The City of Oakland will assist seniors in preserving their existing housing by identifying and addressing accessibility and environmental health issues in their homes.		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Rebuild Together, City of Oakland Community Housing Departments/Divisions, Oakland Senior Centers	complete
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Partner hires Occupational Therapist (through existing grant secured by Rebuilding Together) to accompany the roving Case Managers to conduct environmental assessments.	complete
	Employ two (2) Roving Case Managers stationed at Oakland Senior Centers to provide resources, referrals, and conduct needs assessments.	moving

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: The City of Oakland will assist seniors in preserving their existing housing by identifying and addressing accessibility and environmental health issues in their homes.		Progress
	Information and Referral staff located at each of the senior centers will also provide support to seniors at the center and help link them to a case manager for more support.	
	Conduct Assessments to assess the support, accessibility, and environmental amenities and services older adults need to live safely and independently in their home.	
How will you measure success? 2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes for evaluation and engaging community partners.	A combination of achieving the goals in the Scope of Work with a survey of all participants to capture their feedback and perspective on their livability needs.	
	Advocate for changes and improvements in city housing codes based on the identified patterns and solutions from collected data.	
What barriers is the project experiencing or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding limitations affect the ability to serve a sizeable sample size of 100 older adults over two (2) years to demonstrate the effectiveness of the pilot. The pilot includes all housing types, and property owners may not be receptive to these assessments since they may identify expensive fixes. 	
Timeline: What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	Assign staff to conduct assessments. At least 50 of the 100 clients were assessed and surveyed. Completion of minor repairs. Large home repairs documented and assessed for any common patterns. Possible expansion or change in delivery model based on client and collaborative agency feedback.	

Priorities

- a. Assess & improve ability to connect people to housing and supportive services, focusing on housing stability
- b. Improved systems navigation for seniors

Strategies

- a. Create an assessment tool
- b. Gather data from a diverse sampling of agencies and organizations

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Create a housing needs assessment on the housing opportunities, support, and resources that meet the needs of older adults in Oakland.		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Rebuilding Together Oakland (existing housing), Oakland Dept. of Aging, East Bay Housing Org, Planning Dept., IHSS, East Oakland Collective (unhoused), SAHA, CEI, St. Mary's Center, HumanGood, Everyone Home, Home Match, Eden Housing, RCD, Habitat for Humanity, Office of Homeless Care and Coordination / Housing Services, Meals on Wheels, Spectrum, At Home with Growing Old (located in Berkeley but also works in Oakland), Housing Department, BOSS, Empowered Aging, EBALDC, ECHO, Bridge, Oakland Spur, Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County	moving
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Establish monthly Sub-committee Meetings to start working on a 6-month research and data collection project. (4th Tuesday of the month)	complete
	This project will take a non-traditional approach. It will include data and research collection. However, for us to learn how to implement impactful changes, we need to hear directly from our older adults. There will be focus groups with older adults from various communities across Oakland.	moving
	Curate a list of agencies and organizations focused on homeless prevention and various housing types (board & care, affordable housing, assisted living, shared housing, homeless prevention & support).	
How will you measure success? 2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes for evaluation and engaging community partners.	Information gathered from partners/stakeholders and Housing Department and data contributing agencies/organizations	moving
	Qualitative feedback from older adults participating in any focus groups as we gather information to learn more about their housing status and needs.	
What barriers is the project experiencing, or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gaps in data ● Unidentified agencies/organizations ● Agencies and organizations that we do not have access to for data (for profit, government, non-profit) ● Staff capacity and time 	
Timeline:	Sub-committee will be able to complete their research and data collection. Focus groups will	

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Create a housing needs assessment on the housing opportunities, support, and resources that meet the needs of older adults in Oakland.		Progress
What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	take place with the selected groups, and the draft report will be complete.	

Open Spaces

Priorities

- a. Increase outdoor access for seniors and their families by addressing design, safety, and transportation
- b. Collaborate with other City Departments to create more senior-friendly outdoor features

Strategies

- a. Engage in community input for outdoor space renovations to advocate for senior-friendly design
- b. Produce: create accessible open space activities designed to facilitate participation among seniors and persons with disabilities

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Create a multi-generational playground design, identify funding, and finalize the location.		Progress
Critical Partners: Necessary to move forward, including project leads.	Councilmember Carrol Fife, Miracle Playgrounds, AC Transportation Urban and Regional Planning, City of Oakland Capital Improvement Project Coordinator, East Oakland Neighborhood Collaborative, Children’s Fairyland, North Oakland/Ashby Village, Downtown Oakland Senior Center, St. Paul’s Towers, St. Paul’s School, Oakland Parks & Rec Advisory Commission and Foundation, East Bay Regional Parks District, Local Oakland Schools w/out playgrounds, Oakland Public Works, Oakland City Administrator, Oakland Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission, AC Transportation Commission, CalTrans, Friends of Sausal Creek, Kaiser, Downtown Oakland Rotary Club, Clorox Grants: CalFire	moving
Next Steps: List 3 tangible next steps to accomplish this action	Identify a full slate of critical stakeholders to decide on the location	moving
	Raise funds sufficient for the Scope of Work to build a Senior friendly playground	stalled
	Prioritize the project with City of Oakland	
How will you measure success?	A vetted list of key community stakeholders, funding prospects, and location	
	Finalize fundraising and collateral material needs	

Priority Project Plan		
Project/Action Statement: Create a multi-generational playground design, identify funding, and finalize the location.		Progress
2-3 tangible deliverables/outcomes for evaluation and engaging community partners.	Project Management: outline of tasks and schedule with milestones	
What barriers is the project experiencing, or needs to overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No finalized location. • The Director of Parks and Recreation and Human Services positions are not permanent. • Coordination and workload issues caused by Department merger. 	
Timeline: What will you be able to accomplish in the next 12 months?	Develop a detailed process and project timeline Strategize, Prepare and Engage in a comprehensive Fundraising Campaign The Commission recognizes this as a multi-year project extending beyond the next 12 months.	

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is for informational purposes only and does not have any fiscal impact.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The current Domain work was determined by a community input effort by the Commission in 2019. Community engagement will launch in 2024 for the next cycle of Age Friendly Domains.

COORDINATION

Senior and Aging Division staff coordinated with the Chair of Oakland Commission On Aging in the preparation of this report.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Investing in initiatives that support seniors aging in place benefits the local tax base. Seniors pay taxes but use far less locally funded services than families.

Environmental: The Communication and Housing Domains address access and functional needs equity issues around climate change.

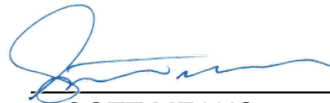
Race & Equity: Age Friendly Cities is an equity model that will implement the principles of the City of Oakland Department of Race and Equity during the next Domain process that will begin in 2024.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive The Oakland Commission On Aging Annual Report For 2023.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Hakeim McGee, Acting Aging and Adult Senior Services Manager, at (510) 238-2311.

Respectfully submitted,



SCOTT MEANS
Interim Director, Human Services

Prepared by:
Hakeim McGee, Acting Aging and Adult Senior
Services Manager