



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FFROM:** Jon Cicirelli

**SUBJECT:** AGE-FRIENDLY CITY INITIATIVE  
UPDATE AND SAN JOSE AGE-  
FRIENDLY 3-YEAR ACTION PLAN

**DATE** September 21, 2020

Approved

Date

9/30/2020

## RECOMMENDATION

- a) Accept the Age-Friendly City Initiative Update.
- b) Recommend this item for full City Council consideration and adoption at the October 20, 2020 City Council meeting.

## OUTCOME

The Committee's action will result in acceptance of the staff report and move the San José Age-Friendly Three-Year Action Plan (See Attachment A) toward final adoption by the Council. This will give the City a framework and specific steps to build a healthy community for all ages.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memorandum describes the age-friendly goals, existing initiatives and action items for the next three years in the relevant domains identified by the World Health Organization, including: transportation; outdoor spaces and buildings; housing; communication, information and technology; community support and health services; social and civic engagement; and employment and financial security. A summary of the age-friendly action plan, including domain goals, initiatives, and action items, as led by the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department (PRNS) is included as Attachment B.

## **BACKGROUND**

Like major cities everywhere, San José's older population is growing rapidly. What was once a population pyramid is fast becoming a population rectangle. Approximately 13 percent of San José residents (121,000) are now over age 65, a percentage estimated to grow to well over 20 percent by 2030. California's Department of Aging estimates that in Santa Clara County, the over-60 population will grow by over 200 percent from 2010 to 2060, with the numbers of people over 85 projected to increase by 605 percent during that same period.

Recognizing these trends, in 2016, the City joined the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, following the City Council's unanimous approval of the initiative in October 2015.

Under WHO and AARP Age-Friendly guidelines, the next step in the process is the submission of a three-year age-friendly action plan. The City Manager's Office has designated the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services as the lead in working with City departments and partners to prepare the San José Age-Friendly Three-Year Action Plan (Action Plan).

The Action Plan was developed based on meetings with representatives from multiple City departments and offices to discuss existing Age-Friendly initiatives and identify additional efforts to support the City's Age-Friendly Initiative. The Action Plan was further informed by community assessments including an Age-Friendly Community Survey, community focus groups, a 2018 health and wellness survey of older adults, and a 2019 roundtable on the social isolation of older adults.

The Age-Friendly San José Advisory Council, established in 2017 and made up of representatives from several sectors, such as business, industry, civic, educational, legislative and other social service organizations, has also provided critical input to the Action Plan.

The Action Plan is further based on a review of best practices from the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, Age-Friendly Action Plans prepared by comparable or neighboring cities, the WHO checklist of essential features of Age-Friendly Cities, and the Milken Institute's Report on Age-Forward Cities for 2030.

## **ANALYSIS**

The WHO and the AARP have identified key domains by which the livability and age-friendliness of a community can be measured. Using these guidelines, the Action Plan highlights multiple City initiatives that are already underway and that directly advance age-friendly goals in the relevant domains. The Action Plan also sets high-level goals for each domain and identifies specific steps to be undertaken in the next three years. Although these are ambitious goals, the

Action Plan also recognizes the effect of COVID-19 on the City and its residents. Many of the specific measures can be implemented by existing staff and/or with the help of volunteers through in-person and virtual settings. The City is also working with the Silicon Valley Age-Friendly Cities Collaborative, a network based on the inclusion of Santa Clara County and all its cities in the Age-Friendly effort.

Existing initiatives and the action items in each domain, together with the responsible departments, are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

A) Transportation

*Action Plan Goal: **Improve transportation options and pedestrian safety for older adults.***

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Vision Zero; Better Bike Plan of 2025; San José Access and Mobility Plan, all led by the City of San José Department of Transportation (DOT); transportation to Senior Nutrition (PRNS); and Climate Smart San José (Citywide).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Compile and distribute information on existing Age-Friendly rideshare programs (PRNS/DOT)
2. Collaborate with other organizations in Santa Clara County that are working to provide additional ridesharing options for older adults (DOT)
3. Expand senior bus pass program to allow use for purposes other than Senior Nutrition, e.g., for medical appointments and grocery shopping (PRNS)
4. Encourage upgrading of bus stops and shelters (Public Works)
5. Continue public education campaign on pedestrian safety, with special focus on older adults (DOT)
6. Continue and expand Vision Zero efforts (DOT)
7. Support efforts to give cities more power to lower speed limits, particularly in areas where older adults live and walk (DOT)
8. Maintain and replace sidewalks, as necessary, for an accessible sidewalk network (Public Works)
9. Continue to pursue Climate Smart San José goals, including less reliance on cars, more time walking or biking, and the addition of more electric car charging stations. (Citywide)

B) Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

*Action Plan Goal: **Promote safe and accessible public parks, buildings and spaces for all ages.***

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that this summary does not include potential community or county partners, which are listed in more detail in the Action Plan, included as Attachment A. More details about existing age-friendly initiatives are also provided in the Action Plan.

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Happy Hollow/Senior Safari (PRNS); Viva CalleSJ (PRNS); Age-Friendly Walks (Council Offices); Beautify SJ (PRNS); and Junk Removal, led by Environmental Services Department (ESD).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Research feasibility of adding fitness areas for older adults in parks and additional benches along walking trails (PRNS)
2. Expand outreach to older adults regarding Happy Hollow's Senior Safari and Viva CalleSJ (PRNS)
3. Continue and expand Beautify SJ initiatives throughout the City (PRNS)
4. Continue improvement of methods for residents to make ESD-related customer service requests (ESD)

C) Housing

**Action Plan Goal: Expand options for aging-in-place and safe, affordable, and accessible housing.**

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Envision San José 2040 led by Planning, Building, & Code Enforcement (PBCE); easing of Accessory Dwelling Unit requirements (PBCE); affordable senior housing projects (Housing); home-sharing (Mayor's Office).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Research and draft amendment to Envision San José 2040 to include "Design for an Age-Friendly City" as a Major Strategy (PBCE)
2. Research partners to increase availability of home-sharing options (PRNS/Mayor's Office)
3. Research and create a resource list of affordable and reliable home repair providers (PRNS)
4. Add more housing units for low-income older adults (PBCE/Housing)
5. Work to extend zoning protection to at-risk mobile home parks (PBCE/Housing)
6. Research availability of assisted-living and skilled nursing facilities, and work with potential developers to remove market barriers to entry (PBCE)

D) Communication, Information and Technology

**Action Plan Goal: Expand digital access and literacy for older adults and improve communication about Age-Friendly initiatives.**

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Silicon Valley Age-Friendly Cities Collaborative (PRNS); San José Digital Inclusion Partnership and multiple related initiatives (Library).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Expand existing Age-Friendly website to include resources, event listings, Age-Friendly initiatives, and methods for user engagement (PRNS)
2. Provide cross-department training to City staff on how to identify and address Age-Friendly issues in planning, operations and outreach (PRNS/CMO)
3. Expand and re-structure Age-Friendly Advisory Council to include strategic partners from private, educational, and civic organizations due to vacancies identified during the development of the San Jose Age-Friendly 3-Year Action Plan (PRNS)
4. Continue to develop digital literacy programming, including culturally based programs in multiple languages and one-on-one training, for older adults at library branches and community centers, with particular focus on low socio-economic communities. (Library/PRNS/Civic Innovation)
5. Partner with Youth Commission and secondary schools to develop options for students to provide technology tutoring for older adults (PRNS)
6. Work with Digital Inclusion Partnership to meet goals of increasing digital access and literacy for older adults (Civic Innovation/PRNS)
7. Continue working with the Silicon Valley Age-Friendly Cities Collaborative and Santa Clara County Seniors' Agenda on digital inclusion policies and projects (PRNS)
8. Continue working on ways to make customer service requests simpler for all residents across all digital and non-digital customer touchpoints (CMO/ESD)

E) Community Support and Health Services

**Action Plan Goal: Expand access to preventative health services and resources for health emergencies.**

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Senior Nutrition (PRNS); Healthy Aging San José (PRNS); Senior Health and Wellness Grants (PRNS); emergency preparedness training led by Office of Emergency Management (OED); Fire Department response (Fire); medicine disposal program (ESD); support of community recovery specific to our Older Adult residents and their recovery during COVID-19 (Emergency Operations Center Community and Economic Recovery Branch (EOC)).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Identify and address health disparities among the older adult community (Emergency Operations Center, Community and Economic Recovery and Senior Supportive Services Branches)
2. Continue to expand Healthy Aging programming at community centers with an emphasis on virtual platforms that can be transitioned to in-person as the pandemic response evolves (PRNS)
3. Continue to provide annual emergency preparedness programs at community centers (PRNS/OEM)
4. Provide training to caregivers for older adults on emergency response procedures (PRNS/OEM)

5. Develop Excessive Heat Response Plan, taking into account needs of older adults (OEM/PRNS)
6. Work to restore public education program previously administered by the Fire Department (Fire/PRNS)
7. Provide materials for emergency responders to hand out to residents regarding home safety features, when to call 911, and other medical issues relevant to older adults (Fire/PRNS)

F) Social and Civic Engagement

**Action Plan Goal: Expand opportunities for volunteerism and participation by older adults in social and civic life.**

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Active Adult programming (PRNS); intergenerational programming (PRNS); multiple volunteer opportunities, including trail clean-up, library programs, and airport hosts; diversity and inclusion programming through Office of Immigrant Affairs and Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA); advocacy for and by older adults (Senior Commission/PRNS).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Build database of organizations serving older adults in order to expand outreach and inform this population of volunteer opportunities (PRNS/Library)
2. Continue to create opportunities for engagement on virtual platforms, with particular focus on homebound older adults (PRNS)
3. Explore feasibility of a citywide “Volunteer Coordinator” position to track and make available volunteer opportunities for older adults across City departments (PRNS/Library/CMO)
4. Communicate volunteer and other opportunities to retired City employees through the Federated Retirees Association and Police and Fire Retirees Association (Human Resources/PRNS/Library)
5. Streamline onboarding process for volunteers by purchasing additional “Live Scan” technology and establishing clear process for background checks (PRNS/CMO/Mayor’s Office)
6. Add Gen2Gen coordinator and build capacity for programming between Senior Services and Youth/Leisure programs (PRNS)
7. Explore viability of building village-style older adult peer networks in San José neighborhoods (PRNS)
8. Work with local restaurants, businesses and other partners to develop Age-Friendly business practices and certification that will make older adults feel welcome and included (Office of Economic Development/PRNS)
9. Encourage creative aging through City efforts aimed at promoting cultural participation (OCA)

G) Employment and Financial Security

*Action Plan Goal:* **Develop employment options and financial resources for older adults.**

*Existing Age-Friendly Initiatives:* Employment of retired City workers (HR); Workshops for Older Women on economic security (Office of Economic Development/PRNS); tax return assistance at community centers (PRNS).

*Action Plan Items:*

1. Increase pipeline to older adults interested in working full or part-time for City, including by reaching out to veterans' groups (HR/PRNS)
2. Offer workshops and education on financial planning and elder fraud abuse (PRNS)

**CONCLUSION**

The Age-Friendly San José Action Plan proposes to make progress over the next three years in key domains that determine a city's age-friendliness. The result will be a cross-departmental collaboration that will make the city more livable for people of all ages and more adaptable to the city's changing demographics.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

PRNS will report back to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee (NSE) following the first year of the Action Plan implementation to assess progress. In accordance with AARP Age-Friendly guidelines, PRNS will prepare a progress report assessing the implementation of the Action Plan, identify updates to the plan, and set updated goals and priorities prior to the expiration of the three-year period covered by the plan.

**CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSE**

The recommendation in this memorandum aligns with one or more Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

As noted above, the Action Plan was prepared in consultation with multiple City Departments, the County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency's Department of Aging and Adult Services, and community members. This memorandum will be posted on the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee website for the October 8, 2020 meeting.

## **COORDINATION**

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Budget Office, Mayor's Office; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Public Works; Transportation, Office of Emergency Management, Office of Cultural Affairs, Office of Immigration Affairs, Office of Economic Development, Human Resources and San José Public Library.

## **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

The Senior Citizens Commission unanimously approved the Action Plan at their meeting on September 10, 2020.

This item will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on October 7, 2020.

## **FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT**

There is no immediate economic impact from the recommendation. Future requests for funding may be made with respect to certain Action Plan items.

## **CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/

JON CICIRELLI

Director of Parks, Recreation  
and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Andrea Flores Shelton, Interim Deputy Director, at (408) 535-3571.

### Attachments

Attachment A: San José Age-Friendly 3-Year Action Plan

Attachment B: Summary of Age-Friendly Action Plan