

Master Plan for Aging Priorities - Alameda County

From the statewide research project performed by Greater Good Studios, 28 strategies have been developed for the Master Plan for Aging Recommendations Report. Out of those, the following 25 strategies were identified as being most important to the Alameda County community at Senior Services Coalition's July 12, 2019 Community Design Workshop (CDW). Narrowing down even further, the strategies in bold were highly present in the research and concepts that emerged from this community.

The subsequent pages provide more detailed concepts that were generated at the CDW and fall within the respective strategies. The concepts and strategies have been organized by thematic areas – physical environment, supportive services, and social and emotional well-being – which are very cross-cutting (so strategies around caregivers, for instance, show up in all three areas).

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Design for mixed-age, mixed-ability neighborhoods with amenities that meet people's physical, social, and emotional needs.
2. Design intergenerational spaces and communities.
3. **Include the voices of older adults in planning and development processes.**
4. Develop transportation options that can meet a variety of accessibility needs.
5. Make travel convenient and affordable for older adults and people with disabilities.
6. Coordinate transportation offerings across public agencies, social service providers, and private entities in order to make them easily navigable.
7. **Streamline housing application processes to ease the process of finding and keeping housing.**
8. Make it easier to build a variety of housing types for diverse lifestyle needs.
9. **Remove financial and regulatory barriers that prevent older adults from acquiring and keeping their housing.**
10. In addition to providing emergency services, provide pathways out of homelessness for individuals that address a range of underlying causes.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

1. Provide services that consider the whole person--their background, experiences, preferences--and meet individual needs.
2. **Develop service delivery systems that are coordinated, integrated, and easy to access.**
3. **Support collaboration across sectors and between service providers and self-organized communities.**
4. Incentivize planning and saving for long-term care.
5. **Provide accessible and affordable channels for financing and saving for long-term care.**
6. Provide supports that alleviate the financial demands of caregiving.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

1. Promote an aging-positive public narrative.
2. Support new and existing channels that generate peer-to-peer community building.
3. Create opportunities for increased intergenerational connections.
4. Aid older adults in transferring existing skills or learning new skills that can be used in their everyday lives.
5. **Remove barriers and increase incentives that allow people to participate in the workforce longer.**
6. Build pathways for older adults and people with disabilities to access job and volunteer opportunities.
7. **Provide supports that alleviate the physical and emotional demands of caregiving.**
8. **Make planning for aging an integrated part of Californian's lives.**
9. Create resources for families and loved ones to have conversations on aging with older adults.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Design for mixed-age, mixed-ability neighborhoods with amenities that meet people's physical, social, and emotional needs.

Policies:

Zoning For Mixed-Use, Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhoods (*Government Agencies*)
Create and/or better enforce zoning regulations that allow for a range of programmatic uses in proximity to each other that are accessible to everyone - i.e. housing (both affordable and market-rate), workplaces, and essential amenities like doctors offices, grocery stores, and banks - thereby lessening one's reliance on automobile transportation. Precedent: Swan Market, Oakland

Impact Fees (*Government Agencies*)

Require private companies of a certain size, whose presence may be affecting housing markets and driving up real estate values, to pay fees that offset their impact. Revenue generated can subsidize affordable housing and/or services that support older adults and people with disabilities.

2. Design intergenerational spaces and communities.

Programs:

Co-located Services for Older Adults and Children (*Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers, Developers*)

The provision of services for children, such as day care or afterschool programming, at locations that also provide support and other offerings for older adults, such as care facilities or senior centers.

Intergenerational Housing (*Developers, Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

Housing designed for older adults to live alongside younger people. This could look like senior housing on college campuses, younger individuals or families renting out spare rooms to older adults, or multi-unit apartment buildings for older adults with younger "resident assistants" who provide support and companionship.

3. Include the voices of older adults in planning and development processes.

Policies:

Representation Requirements (*Government Agencies, Developers*)

Require representatives of older adults and people with disabilities to sit on cities' and counties' housing, transportation and urban development committees and/or city councils.

Programs:

Get-Out-the-Vote to Seniors (*Community Members, Social Service Providers*)

Program that mobilizes older adults and people with disabilities to vote in local, state, and national elections.

4. Develop transportation options that can meet a variety of accessibility needs.

Policies:

Increased Funding for Public Transit (*Government Agencies*)

Allocate more funding towards public transportation systems in order to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

5. Make travel convenient and affordable for older adults and people with disabilities.

Policies:

Free / Reduced-Price Public Transit Fares (*Government Agencies*)

Provide public transportation for free or at a significantly reduced price for people over the age of 65.

Taxi Vouchers (*Government Agencies, Business Owners*)

Increase access to vouchers for free or reduced-priced taxi rides for low-income older adults.

Expanded Public Transit (*Government Agencies*)

Allocate more funding towards public transportation systems in order to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Programs:

Affordable Rides to Key Destinations (*Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers, Business Owners*)

Free or low-cost shuttles to and from places that provide essential needs as well as recreational opportunities: healthcare clinics and hospitals, supermarkets, movie theaters, etc. Shuttles could be provided by one primary agency or could be offered by the destination.

Reduced-Price Rideshares (*Government Agencies, Business Owners*)

Partnerships with rideshare companies to provide reduced-price rides to older adults.

Tools:

Volunteer Rideshare App (*Business Owners, Community Members*)

An app that connects older adults to drivers willing to provide a set number of pro-bono rides each month.

6. Coordinate transportation offerings across public agencies, social service providers, and private entities in order to make them easily navigable.

Policies:

Expanded Paratransit Service Corridors

(*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

In rural areas, expand the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA) corridor in which guaranteed paratransit services are provided to fixed routes (currently 3/4 of a mile on either side).

Programs:

'Daily Routine Routes' (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Regular circuit routes that allow individuals to access key destinations - i.e. the post office, the bank, the grocery store, the library - using one transportation service.

Shared Accessible Vehicles (*Social Service Providers, Businesses*)

A system to share accessible vehicles between organizations within an area, so that any group can provide accessible transportation to and from events or destinations.

7. Streamline housing application processes to ease the process of finding and keeping housing.

Programs:

Housing Navigators (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Individuals trained to assist older people every step of the way as they navigate, secure, and retain viable housing. This role could be incorporated into existing positions (i.e. case managers), or it could be an entirely new and separate role.

Housing Mediation Services (*Social Service Providers, Educators, Business Owners*)

Readily known and available mediation and legal services for individuals to avoid unwanted relocation, displacement, or evictions.

Tools:

Universal Housing Application (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Developers*)

A centralized website that clearly conveys the rules and steps involved with applying for housing, as well as a universal application that can be sent to multiple housing options with a single click. Precedent: Dhalia (the SF Housing Portal)

Free Housing Application (*Government Agencies, Business Owners, Developers*)

A free (or waived-fee) housing application (and other auxiliary steps, like credit checks) for low-income individuals.

8. Make it easier to build a variety of housing types for diverse lifestyle needs.

Policies:

Zoning for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (*Government Agencies*)

Allow accessory dwelling units, or second small dwellings on the same grounds (or attached to) a single-family house, to be developed, rented out, and occupied.

Visitable Housing Requirements (*Government Agencies*)

Mixed-Use Development Incentives (*Government Agencies*)

Through tax credits and other means, incentivize Neighborhood Developers to build mixed-use developments that include housing for older adults and people with disabilities, along with amenities they need and would enjoy, from health providers to places to shop. Precedent: Phoenix Commons, Alameda

Streamlined Building Processes (*Government Agencies*)

Streamlined processes and lower fees for building or renovating affordable housing as a way to encourage increasing stock.

Increased Investments in Affordable Housing (*Government Agencies*)

Increase financial investment in affordable age-inclusive housing by state and local governments, and require large companies to invest in affordable housing as well.

Programs:

Home Modification Programs (*Social Service Providers*)

Free or low-cost programs that assist older adults and people with disabilities to make modifications to their homes, including wheelchair ramps, grab bars in bathrooms, widening doorways, stair lifts, walk-in tubs, and beyond.

Cohousing (*Developers, Community Members*)

Communities of individual homes or apartments clustered around shared living, cooking, and dining spaces, thereby providing, privacy, opportunities for socialization and mutual support.

Tools:

Home Sharing Digital Tool/Hotline (*Social Service Providers, Business Owners, Community Members*)

Older adults wanting affordable housing are matched with people with room to share.

9. Remove financial and regulatory barriers that prevent older adults from acquiring and keeping their housing.

Policies:

Bad Credit Allowances (*Government Agencies*)

Adjust bad credit, remove violations, or waive the credit check during the housing application process for people over 65 and people with disabilities.

Tax Rebates (*Government Agencies*)

Tax rebates for low-income renting and home-owning older adults.

Housing Subsidies for Widow(er)s (*Government Agencies*)

Subsidies provided to the surviving spouse to account for a potential sudden loss of income.

Affordable Unit Requirements (*Government Agencies*)

Require housing developments to provide a set amount of affordable units.

Programs:

Landlord Incentives (*Government Agencies, Developers*)

Incentives to landlords (i.e. tax exemptions) to participate in Section 8 and accept low-income tenants, especially in rural areas where Section 8 options can be extremely limited.

10. In addition to providing emergency services, provide pathways out of homelessness for individuals that address a range of underlying causes.

Programs:

Expedited Rehousing (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Quickly connect older adults and people with disabilities experiencing homelessness to permanent housing options, rental assistance opportunities, and other supportive services.

Caregiving in Shelters (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers*)

Caregiving services for older adults experiencing homelessness.

Wraparound Services (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers, Business Owners*)

Provide a range of services to individuals experiencing homelessness at shelters, including medical and mental health care.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

1. Provide services that consider the whole person--their background, experiences, preferences--and meet individual needs.

Policies

Staff Trainings on Cultural Competency/Implicit Bias (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers*)

Require all healthcare and supportive services staff to undergo trainings that teach them about approaching clients with sensitivity and helping them recognize ageism and other implicit biases that may be present within themselves as well as the operations and culture of the organization.

Services and Projects

Integrated Mental Health/Trauma Support (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders*)

Staff training to recognize mental health issues and take a trauma-informed approach to providing services, as well as directing older adults to mental health resources for further support.

Senior Centers Based on Affinity Groups (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Developers*)

Affinity-based sites that provide a safe and comfortable space for older adults to gather, obtain services and resources, and find companionship with other older adults that share similar interests and experiences.

Tools:

Translation Kiosks (*Social Service Providers, Business Owners*)

Translation services at supportive service facilities, in the form of kiosks with digital translation services or on-the-spot translation provided by an on-site person.

2. Develop service delivery systems that are coordinated and easy to access.**Policies:**

Stringent Provider Evaluations (*Government Agencies*)

Require stringent third-party evaluations for social service providers and care facilities, particularly around the presence of qualified staff in a facility, discharge procedures, and the communication of patient rights.

Dual-Eligible Alignment (*Government Agencies*)

Continue combining Medicare and Medicaid benefits through one managed care plan under the Financial Alignment Initiative, and/or through other state-led legislation.

Healthcare Plans with Mental Health Services (*Government Agencies, Healthcare Providers*)

Require mental health services to be covered as part of healthcare plans, and through Medicare/Medi-Cal, similar to the coverage of physical healthcare needs.

“No Wrong Door” Model (*Government Agencies*)

Adopt a “no wrong door” approach to supportive services at the state level and trickle down through funding and trainings so holistic services can be provided at a local level. A “no wrong door” model supports that idea that clients should be able to approach the agency with the problem they need to address, rather than a preconceived idea of the programs or services they think that they should receive.

Care Coordination Model (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers*)

Adopt a coordinated care model at the state level and require healthcare and social service providers to improve health information exchanges and transitions between facilities, as well as provide increased continuity and communication of medical and non-medical services, such as housing and nutritious food.

Services and Projects:

“One-Stop Shop” Model (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Centralized supportive services available in one location that is easily accessible and centrally located within a community.

“No Wrong Door” Trainings (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Staff trainings that support a “no wrong door” approach and allow service providers to identify the client’s needs upfront and identify the best next steps for the client (referring the client to an external agency or community service, screening for eligibility, or taking in benefits applications).

System Guides (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

Individuals assigned to an older adult or person with a disability to help them navigate a range of supportive services, either coordinating services themselves, or directing them to the right resources.

Tools:

Centralized Online Tool for Supportive Services (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

A centralized online platform where general forms for supportive services can be completed and shared with service providers, as needed, to reduce paperwork and redundancies.

Guidebook of Supportive Services Resources (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers*)

A user-friendly, consolidated list of supportive services and resources available to older adults and people with disabilities in California. This should be available in print and digital forms.

3. Support collaboration across sectors and between service providers and self-organized communities.

Services and Projects:

Cross-Organizational Sharing Program (*Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers*)
Connect organizations with duplicative and/or complementary resources so they can easily transfer and share those resources. Precedents: Village Model; Friendly Visitor Program

4. Incentivize planning and saving for long-term care.

Policies:

Government Long-Term Care Savings Program (*Government Agencies*)

State-Sponsored Long-Term Insurance (*Government Agencies*)

Tax deductions from gross income allowed for payment of qualified long-term care insurance/savings premiums.

Services and Projects:

Employer Incentive Program for Long-Term Care (*Government Agencies, Healthcare Providers, Business Owners*)

5. Provide accessible and affordable channels for financing and saving for long-term care.

Policies:

Stringent Oversight over Care Facility Costs (*Government Agencies*)

Long-Term Care (LTC) contributions out of employee paychecks put into a large pot and then paid out as benefits to those who are eligible, similar to Social Security benefits.

Increased Medicare/Medicaid Coverage (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

Medicare/Medicaid coverage that includes preventative and wellness measures (e.g. exercise classes), as well as coverage of other factors that impact health, like housing and food.

Increased Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

SSI benefits that match the cost of living and healthcare costs for older adults in California.

Tools:

Long-Term Care (LTC) Guide/Checklist (*Social Service Providers, Healthcare Providers*)

A web-based and paper-based resource that lists all long-term care options and the steps that need to be taken to obtain those forms of care

6. Provide supports that alleviate the financial demands of caregiving.

Policies

Livable Wages for Caregivers (*Government Agencies*)

Increased hours and wages for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers that accurately reflect the time spent to meet the needs of their clients.

Subsidized Caregiver Healthcare Plans (*Government Agencies, Healthcare Providers*)

Subsidized healthcare services, including Medicare/Medicaid eligibility and benefits, for caregivers of older adults receiving benefits.

Services and Projects

Free/Reduced Mental Healthcare for Caregivers (*Government Agencies, Healthcare Providers, Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders*)

Free and/or subsidized mental health services for caregivers of older adults, to alleviate some of the stress and anxiety of caring for a loved one during this challenging time of life.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

1. Promote an aging-positive public narrative.

Policies

Regulations against Ageist Communications (*Government Agencies*)

Require private and public sector agencies to change communications, replacing ageist language with more inclusive language for older adults and people with disabilities.

Services and Projects

Public Activation Campaign (*Healthcare Providers, Social Service Providers, Business Owners, Community Members*)

Campaign that makes the general public aware of issues around aging and activates them to take actions to support older adults (changing language, planning for aging, volunteering with older adults, hiring older adults, etc).

University Fellowship Program (*Social Service Providers, Educators*)
Partnership with universities to create fellowship programs where students conduct research with older adults, collect data, and identify trends.

2. Support new and existing channels that generate peer-to-peer community building.

Policies

Funding for Peer-to-Peer Connections at Existing Gathering Spaces (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders*)

Increased funding for social programming for older adults at existing spaces such as adult day centers, community centers, or libraries.

Services and Projects

Personal/Professional Development Stipend (*Government Agencies*)

An annual stipend all older adults receive that can be used towards non-formal extracurricular education or social activities of their choosing.

Clubs and Classes for Older Adults (*Social Service Providers, Educators, Community Members*)

Clubs and classes offered specifically for older adults, allowing them to learn and participate in social activities.

Neighborhood Support Group (*Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

Neighborhood groups in which individuals provide support and services to one another, ranging from providing meals to rides, to even providing companionship and emotional support to those in social isolation.

Meal Prep Buddies (*Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

A program where older adults can be assigned a personal shopper (another older adult or from a younger generation) that grocery shops and cooks with them, while they exchange recipes and tips on healthy eating.

Tools

Community Meal Calendar (*Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

A web-based tool where people can sign up to prepare and deliver nutritious meals to older adults in the neighborhood.

3. Create opportunities for increased intergenerational connections.

Policies

Funding for Shared Intergenerational Gathering Spaces (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders*)

Increased funding for physical spaces that serve the needs of younger generations and older adults, such as a gym, library, maker space, or even combining a daycare center with an adult day center.

Services and Projects

Intergenerational Volunteer Program (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Educators, Community Members*)

Volunteer program specifically targeting and matching older adults with younger generations. Precedent: Foster Grandparent Program

Wisdom-Seekers School Curriculum (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Educators, Community Members*)

Intergenerational exchanges integrated into school curriculums such as “Bring an Older Adult to School” Day or asking students to interview an older adult as part of an assignment.

4. Aid older adults in transferring existing skills or learning new skills that can be used in their everyday lives.

Services and Projects

Tech Classes for Older Adults (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Educators, Community Members*)

Free tech classes for older adults to keep them updated on new technology, particularly technology that supports their daily needs, such as using smartphones, smart TVs, rideshare apps, video chatting, etc.

Free/Reduced College Tuition (*Government Agencies, Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Educators*)

Free or reduced tuition for older adults at universities and colleges.

5. Remove barriers and increase incentives that allow people to participate in the workforce longer.

Policies

Senior Employment Programs Funding (*Government Agencies*)

Fund existing and new employment programs that provide job training and job placement services to older adults and work with employers to break down barriers of ageism. Precedent: Senior Community Service Employment Program

Services and Projects

Corporate Pledge (*Business Owners, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

A pledge in which corporations make a commitment to train and hire a certain number of older adults.

6. Build pathways for older adults and people with disabilities to access job and volunteer opportunities.

Services and Projects

Age-Friendly Job/Volunteer Fairs (*Social Service Providers, Business Owners*)

Job fairs with job and volunteer opportunities specifically targeted towards older adults and people with disabilities.

Tools

Volunteer Hotline (*Social Service Providers, Business Owners*)

Hotline that older adults and people with disabilities can call to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

7. Provide supports that alleviate the physical and emotional demands of caregiving.

Services and Projects

Flexible Work Hours for Caregivers (*Business Owners*)

Mutually supportive work policy between caregivers and their employers that allows the caregiver to take time off work and work flexible hours to provide care to family members, without risk of losing their job.

Caregivers for Caregivers (*Social Service Providers*)

Respite program that sends temporary caregivers to relieve caregivers of their duties for a short period of time.

Caregivers Support Groups (*Healthcare Providers, Social Service Providers*)

Support groups caregivers can attend while the older adult care is being cared for

Tools

Caregiving Respite App (*Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

A web-based or phone app that connects those interested in providing caregiving services with those that are needing services. It also allows caregivers to find and schedule other caregivers to come in and relieve them for a period of time

Calendar for Caregiving (*Social Service Providers, Community Members*)

A digital calendar that allows caregivers and older adults to schedule family and friends to provide various caregiving services (rides, meals, etc).

8. Make planning for aging an integrated part of Californian's lives.

Services and Projects:

Public Campaign on Long-Term Care (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

Campaign that makes the general public aware of issues around aging and activates them to take actions to support older adults (changing language, planning for aging, volunteering with older adults, prioritizing public funding, hiring older adults, etc).

School Curriculum on Planning for Aging (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

Curriculum for school-age children that introduces the physical, financial, and emotional parts of aging and prepares them to plan for it from a young age.

Planning for Aging Classes (*Government Agencies, Philanthropic Funders, Social Service Providers*)

Classes offered for adults to learn about the physical, financial, and emotional parts of aging.

9. Create resources for families and loved ones to have conversations on aging with older adults.

Service and Projects:

Family Coaching Program (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders*)

A family coach dedicated to working with a family as they plan with and for aging members of the family.

Tools:

Aging Checklist (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Community Members*)

Easy-to-use and reference checklist that outlines the most important considerations when planning for aging.

Planning for Aging Card Deck (*Social Service Providers, Philanthropic Funders, Community Members*)

A deck of cards with conversation starters, facts about aging, and resources that can be used by families.

Aging Gameboard (*Philanthropic Funders, Community Members*)

Aging game where families can learn and have conversations about aging in a fun way.