



## Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities**  
and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email [livable@aarp.org](mailto:livable@aarp.org)
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE:** *To Be Determined*

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY:** *City of San Mateo, CA*

**STATE:** *California*

**POPULATION SIZE:** *104,983*

**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60:** *17%*

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:** *Mayor Joe Goethals*

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER:** 330 West 20<sup>th</sup> Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403  
[jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org); (650) 522-7522 ext. 6264

### Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

- The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

**NAME:** *Bob Palacio*

**POSITION:** *Community Services Manager, City of San Mateo*

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [bpalacio@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:bpalacio@cityofsanmateo.org)

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** (650) 522-7400

**Please describe the named person's role in the city or community's age-friendly initiative:**

*Bob Palacio, Community Services Manager, City of San Mateo Parks and Recreation*

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the [AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter](#), which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit [AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe](http://AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe).

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**NOTE: The application continues on the next page.**

### Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

#### 1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.

The City of San Mateo California is committed to providing services and programs for older and disabled adults as well as collaborating with local and regional non-profit, public and for-profit organizations and businesses that can maintain and enhance the quality of older adults' lives, reduce their isolation, and promote their socialization. The City's services for older adults are managed by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. Services are provided at the San Mateo Senior Center, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center, Beresford Recreation Center, and in partnership with Self-Help for the Elderly at the Central Park Center. The San Mateo Senior Center offers a nutritious hot lunch program every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday's and Thursday's hot lunch is served at the Dr. MLK Jr. Community Center. In addition to meals, the Senior Center hosts a vibrant mix of activities. On any given day at the Senior Center, there can be a dozen things happening from yoga classes to a history seminar, from bingo to billiards or mahjong. The Parks & Recreation Department offers residents age 60 plus a safe and affordable means of transportation. With the Get Around! Senior Rides Program, participants can schedule their rides in advance or on-demand, 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Cost is \$5.00 each way or \$2.00 if eligible for the City's recreation fee assistance program. The city's [Recreation Fee Assistance](#) program is for participants of the City's Park and Recreation Programs who are living on low-incomes that meet income eligibility requirements. This assistance is available to discount the daily lunch fee or many of the hundreds of classes and programs offered by the department. The senior center staff, in collaboration with a variety of local agencies, offers a variety of other services, including the health insurance counseling and advocacy program (HICAP), shopping assistance for Seniors who are Homebound (SASH), assistance with using NCOA's web-based Benefits Check-Up program, a Latino Support Group and staff who can assist with identifying needed services available from the local field-of-aging network.

The City of San Mateo is also one of the few cities in the Bay Area that has an Advisory Senior Commission to the City Council. The Parks and Recreation Department works closely with the senior commission as they provide valuable feedback on senior programs, projects, and initiatives. The Senior Commission is made up of 5 City of San Mateo residents selected by the city council.

In the winter of 2020, San Mateo launched an Age Friendly Community initiative by recruiting a diverse task force of local residents with a strong commitment to improving the lives of San Mateo's older adult residents. This group is comprised of Linda Burroughs, Task Force Chair and the Executive Director of Mid-Peninsula Villages; Sheila Canzian, City Parks and Recreation Director; Bob Palacio, City Parks and Recreation Supervisor; Vince Siminitus, long-time City advocate; Monika Lee, member of the County of San Mateo Commission on Aging; Wes Taoka, Executive Director, Japanese-American Community Center; Winnie Yu, Program Manager for Self Help for the Elderly, Inc.; Brenda Brown, Project Director of the local SCSEP (Employment) Program at Peninsula Family Service and Shawne O'Connell, Program Manager at Kimochi, Inc.

#### 2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

After the City of San Mateo Age Friendly Community (AFC) Task Force formed in January 2020, they recruited over 50 diverse local older adult residents to participate in five focus groups. Each participant provided input on what they thought were unmet needs in each of the 8 domains of age friendly communities. The first focus group was comprised of older adults age 71 plus, the second focus group was comprised of persons age 55-70, the third focus group consisted of Latinx seniors, the fourth focus group consisted of Asian seniors and the fifth and final focus group was comprised of service providers from local non-profit and public agencies. The City of San Mateo AFC Task Force used this important grassroots feedback as a basis for choosing four inaugural age friendly projects. (See below in Section #3 for details.)

### **3) Briefly describe the mechanisms the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments.**

The City of San Mateo's Age Friendly Community initiative was launched with the assistance and guidance of the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFÉ), a project of the non-profit Los Altos Community Foundation. Through a contract with the San Mateo County Department of Aging and Adult Services, CAFÉ is assisting the City of San Mateo as well as Foster City and Colma this year to initiate and develop AFC initiatives rooted in a thoughtful planning and implementation process.

After reviewing feedback gathered from virtual focus group discussions and one-on-one telephone surveys with local residents about unmet needs of older adults that relate to the eight domains of age-friendly communities in addition to Task Force discussions, the three age-friendly domains that emerged as areas most in need of attention were Transportation, Communication-Information, Respect and Social Inclusion.

Primarily as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Task Force members and City staff plan to develop and implement projects that address these three domains in two phases. During the pandemic, two "Phase 1" projects have been chosen that can be accomplished while the pandemic continues. Two additional "Phase 2" projects will be explored but not developed and implemented until the pandemic is brought under better control and the City and Task Force have the experience of developing and implementing the Phase 1 projects in collaboration with community partners.

## **PHASE 1 PROJECTS**

### **Project 1: Safe Walking Routes for Seniors – and Everybody!**

- Main Domains Addressed – Transportation and Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Other Domains Impacted – Social Participation and Civic Engagement
- Unmet Need Addressed – During many of the focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews, concerns were expressed regarding sidewalk conditions in some areas of the city. Cracked and raised sidewalks create trip hazards for seniors and people with walkers or wheelchairs. Additional concerns were inadequate time to cross intersections, insufficient flashing signals at key locations and lack of enforcement of violations of pedestrian rights of way. All of these issues contribute to deterring seniors from walking for business needs, exercise and socialization.
- Project Duration – This is both short and long term. The first year will be devoted to identifying the highest priority pedestrian safety risks for the largest concentrations of seniors in the city, followed by the move to address them within the City's resources. Beyond that, this project enhances the City's currently existing "Safe Sidewalks" Program and other City programs by integrating into the annual planning and budgeting process a senior-focused prioritization of repairs and safety enhancements.
- Primary Focus: Identify the specific highest-value walking routes for the largest concentrations of seniors and the hazardous conditions on them. Repair hazardous sidewalks on those routes ahead of their normal repair schedule and critically evaluate needs for signal timing changes, flashing lights, new signage and targeted enforcement or educational efforts on those same routes where warranted, reducing risks and encouraging more walking.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Safe Walking Routes for Seniors – and Everybody!**

The "Safe Walking Routes for Seniors – and Everybody!" project would accelerate the repair of sidewalks that represent tripping and falling hazards for seniors caused by sidewalks that are lifted, cracked, blocked, or otherwise damaged. Pedestrian safety concerns came up frequently in age-friendly focus groups and interviews, primarily under the Transportation and Outdoor Spaces and Buildings domains. As designed, it also addresses social participation and civic participation gaps because seniors often walk with a partner for business or pleasure and provides opportunities for volunteer participation and leadership. The current state of our

sidewalks is not only a community-wide safety hazard - it is a deterrent to walking by residents of all ages, not just seniors. The project also incorporates addressing other pedestrian safety issues as described below.

This project initially involves identifying and mapping major walking routes from high concentrations of senior housing to targeted destinations frequented by seniors, such as nearby shopping districts, health care facilities, senior centers, libraries, places of worship, government offices, etc. Volunteers recruited from existing volunteer-centric groups such as Neighborhood Watch, Homeowner Associations, Senior Centers, YMCA/fitness centers, etc. will walk these routes (ideally with local seniors), document, photograph, categorize and prioritize hazardous conditions and exact locations for the city per a predefined protocol. Data can be input directly into a newly developed app or captured on a paper form for later input into an existing or new database or spreadsheet. For sidewalks, the data would also include descriptive categories such as damage type (lifting, e.g.), cause (tree roots, e.g.) and risk level extent ("not usable without extreme care", e.g.). Where traffic lights exist along these same routes, timing can be documented and visibility and other risk conditions, such as inadequate lighting, noted for follow-up evaluation.

This system could generate priorities based on pre-established criteria. Results would be integrated into the city's existing Sidewalk Repair Program, which currently addresses repair needs on a rotating 15-year cycle through its neighborhoods. This project accelerates these highest-risk conditions to be fixed outside that schedule, something already allowed by the program. City costs would be controllable due to use of volunteers to do the large majority of the up-front mapping, identification and prioritization work and the fact that many of the prioritized sidewalk repairs are the property owner's financial responsibility. The city would use its existing Public Works infrastructure and processes to notify owners responsible and enforce repairs. Where responsibility is the City's or shared, it would allocate available funds to address the highest priority conditions, either as a stand-alone project or by integrating it into cycled neighborhood-wide bids. Measurement of progress is as straightforward as reporting the number of specifically identified conditions corrected outside the normal neighborhood cycle on an annual basis. For other safety-related hazardous conditions or opportunities for enhancement can be similarly reported to the responsible Public Works or other city department. Ideally coordination across departments would include addressing ALL identified conditions on a specific route, yielding a completely "Safe Senior Route".

This project will be informed by reviewing similar age friendly projects in other communities and will, of course, be implemented through collaboration with City Staff, CalTrans, local property owners and a dedicated and properly trained cadre of volunteers.

## **Project 2: Coordination of Communication about local/regional Senior Services and Events**

- Main Domains Addressed – Community and Health Services
- Other Domains Impacted – Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, and Civic Engagement and Employment.
- Unmet Need Addressed – San Mateo and the surrounding communities provide a great number of services that may be of interest to seniors but the providers of these services do not communicate well with each other and the potential users of these services have a difficult time learning about them and using them.
- Project Duration – Two years to test various strategies with community partners. The most successful efforts will continue after that point.
- Primary Focus: This project intends to increase access by older adults and their family members/friends to information about non-profits, community groups or faith-based organizations that provide services to seniors. In addition, it will develop strategies to organize the dissemination of information in ways that have not been attempted before in this community. Lastly, a priority will be to encourage coordination among various providers of services and

activities for San Mateo's older adult residents.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Coordination of Communication about local/regional Senior Services and Events**

Non-profit, public and for-profit organizations and businesses based in San Mateo and the surrounding communities provide a great number of services that may be of interest to seniors, but the potential users of these services have a difficult time learning about them and using them. In addition, service providers often don't communicate with one another, thus missing opportunities for reciprocal referrals and collaboration. This issue was highlighted frequently in age-friendly focus groups and interviews, primarily under the Communication and Information and Community Support and Health Services domains. It also touches on many of the other domains as well because communication and information about them is also widely needed based on the input from focus group and one-on-one interview participants.

The City's Age Friendly Community Task Force and their collaborative partners will establish a program that: (1) assembles existing information about organizations and services; (2) organizes a newsletter, periodic meetings, or other interaction among the organizations to exchange information, experiences, and explore ways to collaborate; (3) encourages and assists the organizations in reaching out to older adult residents with information about available services, and; (4) utilizes best practice strategies of promoting services for older adult residents of San Mateo that include all forms of media and methods that have been successfully used by similar projects undertaken by other age-friendly communities.

This project will be informed by best practice research of similar efforts by other aging service networks and age friendly communities. It will be implemented through a collaboration that will focus on bringing together non-profit senior service programs/organizations, the County Department of Aging Services, City Staff, City of San Mateo Senior Citizens' Commission, the SM County Commission on Aging as well as other partners, as needed, such as the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and other community organizations.

## **PHASE 2 PROJECTS UNDER CONSIDERATION AFTER PHASE 1 PROJECTS ARE UNDERWAY**

### **PROJECT IDEA TO EXPLORE FURTHER FOR PHASE TWO: Intergenerational Program(s)**

- Main Domains Addressed – Respect and Social Inclusion
- Other Domains Impacted – Social Participation, Civic Engagement and Employment, and Communication and Information.
- Unmet Need Addressed – The desire for positive, meaningful and constructive Intergenerational connection between seniors and young people in the community was apparent during many of the virtual focus group and one-on-one phone survey discussions.
- Project Duration – This project will be considered for development and implementation after the first two "Phase 1" projects are underway and after the pandemic has abated to a point where it will be safer to bring older adults and young people together in person. During Phase 1, the City and Task Force will do a community scan to learn about existing intergenerational programs in San Mateo and nearby communities and best practices from similar projects developed by other age-friendly communities.
- Primary Focus – The City of San Mateo and the Task Force is aware that there are a variety of worthwhile approaches to create positive, meaningful and constructive opportunities for intergenerational connections. Best practice program ideas will be reviewed as a way to learn from other age friendly cities that have chosen to develop similar projects in this area. In addition, we will identify existing successful intergenerational programs that already exist in our city and nearby communities. An organic and revenue



neutral way to begin an “age-friendly effort with regards to intergenerational (IG) connectedness would be to include existing IG programs as partners and collaborators in our Phase 1 Project: ***“Coordination of Communication about Local/Regional Senior Services and Events”*** as a way to encourage our older adult residents to participate in them and to increase intergenerational activities in the City of San Mateo as well as other nearby cities.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Intergenerational Programs**

As a “Phase 2” project, a final decision will be made on whether or not to proceed on developing a new intergenerational (IG) program when the pandemic is more under control and older adults are less at risk of becoming infected with the Covid-19 virus. In addition, the City and Task Force wants to assess what is required to get the two “Phase 1” projects developed and implemented in collaboration with local stake holders before embarking on any further projects as a way to ensure they are provided with adequate support. With that said, existing intergenerational programs in San Mateo and nearby communities will be included in the “Phase 1” project that will focus on “Coordination of Communication about Local/Regional Senior Services and Events.” In that scenario, the goal would be to increase the number of older adult and younger residents of San Mateo involved with local intergenerational programs. In addition, when time permits during Phase 1, the City and Task Force will explore promising ideas and projects in the field of intergenerational programs for later consideration by inviting experts in the field to meet with them and by reviewing descriptions of successful IG programs.

#### **PROJECT IDEA TO EXPLORE FURTHER FOR PHASE TWO: AGE FRIENDLY BUSINESS RECOGNITION/CERTIFICATION**

- Main Domains Addressed –Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment
- Other Domains Impacted - Community and Health Support
- Unmet Need Addressed – Seniors don’t know where to go or who they can rely on for various personal, business and social needs.
- Project Duration – This project will be considered for development and implementation after the first two “Phase 1” projects are underway and after the pandemic has abated to a point where local businesses and organizations will be fully operational. During phase 1, the City and Task Force will review similar projects developed by other age-friendly communities.
- Primary Focus: Implement an “Age-friendly Business” certification program in partnership with the City’s Chamber of Commerce. Seniors will preferentially frequent such businesses because the physical environment, positive personnel interactions and incentives provided assure a high level of respectful engagement and service.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Age Friendly Business Recognition/Certification**

As a “Phase 2” project, a final decision will not be made on whether or not to proceed on developing this project until the pandemic is under control and most businesses and organizations can return to full operation. In addition, the City and Task Force wants to assess what is required to get the two “Phase 1” projects developed and implemented in collaboration with local stake holders before beginning any other projects as a way to ensure they are provided with adequate support. When time permits during Phase 1, the City and Task Force will explore similar projects by other age-friendly communities and invite their project leaders to meet with the Task Force so they can learn how other communities have gone about doing this.

#### Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

- Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

**4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?**

The City of San Mateo and the San Mateo AFC Task Force is very interested in contributing to and learning from other AFC member communities that is part of this rapidly growing movement around the United States and world. As with most other communities, the City of San Mateo's older adult population will continue to grow beyond its current level of 17%. The City believes that a collaborative and asset based community development (ABCD) approach that engages community members of all ages, businesses, organizations and our region's field of aging network in partnership with our city to look at ways to create a more livable community for all of our residents including those over 60 is absolutely essential. Not only does it take a Village to raise a child, it also takes a village to support the elders who live among us in ways that provide a variety of opportunities to experience a good old age.

**5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?**

The City of San Mateo and their AFC Task Force understands that the expected steady increase in the number of older adult residents beyond the current level of 17% requires us to do our part in exploring and implementing new and cost-effective ways to create a milieu that enables them to thrive and not only "age-in-place" but, more importantly, to "age-in-community." We are grateful for this opportunity to join, learn from and contribute to a like-minded network of age-friendly States and Communities that share these same goals.

**6) Provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights. The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours:**

