



ADMINISTRATIVE DRAFT

Senior Needs Assessment

CITY OF SANTA CLARA PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT



ASR

Helping People
Build Better Communities

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Executive Summary

Santa Clara is committed to being an age-friendly community that promotes the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages. This effort was set in motion on October 25, 2016 when the Santa Clara City Council adopted a Resolution authorizing the City to participate in the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly City Global Network. Seven months later in May 2017, the City of Santa Clara kicked off a Senior Needs Assessment to align Santa Clara's existing efforts to become age-friendly with the current needs of older adults. The City designed and conducted the 2017 Senior Needs Assessment to provide City Council with information regarding the status of Santa Clara's older residents in the age-friendly domains of Economics and Employment; Community; Housing; Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation and Streets; Health, Wellness, and Nutrition; Social and Civic Engagement; and Access to Community Resources and Information. Together with findings from the 2010 Senior Needs Assessment, the City is able to work in collaboration with the Senior Advisory Commission and non-profit agencies to best align programs and services to community priorities.



Santa Clara's Parks and Recreation Department 2017 Senior Needs Assessment focused on understanding the priorities and interests of older adult residents of Santa Clara ages 50 and over. Sources of data collection included online and paper surveys that were available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and focus groups offered in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. A total of 785 residents completed online or paper surveys and 31 Santa Clara older adult residents participated in seven focus groups. Outreach for the survey was conducted in Santa Clara at the Senior Center, senior resident facilities, community events, and locations visited by older adults such as grocery stores, the library, and a farmers market.

Staff of Santa Clara's Parks and Recreation Department convened partners in May 2017 and February 2018 to obtain input on the assessment design and trends observed by partner agencies and other City Departments. The individuals who participated in the meetings represented nonprofits, hospitals and major county service providers including the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health, Department of Aging and Adult Services, and Valley Transportation Authority. Participation from the City of Santa Clara included members of the City Council, Senior Advisory Commission, Cultural Commission, and staff from various departments. Applied Survey Research, a social research firm, was contracted to analyze the assessment data, prepare the 2017 Needs Assessment report of findings, and facilitate the February 2018 meeting with community partners.

The key findings of the 2017 Senior Needs Assessment are presented below. In comparison to items that also appeared on the 2010 Senior Needs Assessment, responses indicate similar rates of home ownership, natural disaster preparation planning, utilization of the Senior Center, doctor visits, and sadness/depression. Similar responses were also reported for utilization of meal services, missing balanced meals, and the primary reasons for missing balanced meals. Other comparisons suggest slight differences between assessments: respondents rated their physical health as higher, engaged in more frequent exercise, and report slightly less anxiety in 2010 than in 2017.

The City plans to draw upon the assessment findings to formulate a work plan that will align the City's programs, policies, and priorities with the varying priorities of older adults and to inform coordination with providers of older adult services.

Key Survey Findings by Age-Friendly Domain

Domain	Survey Findings
Survey Sample 	■ The survey sample included approximately equal groups of residents in their 50s, 60s, and 70s or older. ■ 66% of survey respondents were female. ■ 93% reported speaking English at home. ■ 78% were White/Caucasian, followed by Asian (13%) and Other (9%). ■ 35% had a household income over \$100,000 while 32% had a household income of \$55,000 or less.
Economics and Employment 	■ 51% of survey respondents were retired or not in the labor force, 44% were employed, and 5% were unemployed. ■ Residents ages 50-59 were the largest group that reported being currently employed (75%).
Community 	■ 58% of survey respondents rated the City of Santa Clara as a good place to live as they age. ■ 78% of respondents indicated that it was important to remain in the City of Santa Clara as they age.
Housing 	■ 97% of respondents indicated it was important to be able to live independently in their own home as they age. ■ 98% of respondents indicated it was important to have a well-maintained home.

Domain	Survey Findings
	89% of respondents indicated it was important to have safe low-income housing.
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings 	99% of respondents indicated it was important to have safe and accessible sidewalks.
Transportation & Streets 	99% of respondents indicated it was important to have safe streets. 98% of respondents indicated it was important to have well-maintained streets. 95% of respondents indicated that they drive themselves to go shopping, attend doctor visits, complete errands, or when traveling.
Health, Wellness & Nutrition 	71% of survey respondents rated their health as “Very Good” or “Excellent.” 81% of respondents reported engaging in frequent exercise. - Between 7% and 15% of survey respondents reported frequent sadness/depression or anxiety over the past two weeks. 70% of the lowest income respondents reported not using meal services.
Social & Civic Engagement 	- Respondents rated the most important activities as those that are affordable (94%), have senior discounts (90%), and social activities with widely publicized and accurate information about them (91%). 70% of respondents interact daily with their friends, family or neighbors in their community.
Access to Community Resources and Information 	- The Senior Center is the top information resource for older adults. 93% of respondents gather their information from the Senior Center. 60% of respondents access the Senior Center. - Senior Center utilization was higher among respondents ages 70 and over and among those with lower income.

Key Focus Group and Partner Findings

Focus Group Participants

- The most frequently cited need by focus group participants was housing, including the lack of affordable housing, the high cost of property taxes, the need for help with home maintenance and modifications, and assistance completing housing applications.
- Focus group participants also frequently cited the need for sidewalks to be repaired or replaced, which were reported to be especially dangerous at night.
- There was also a need for safer intersections and more visible traffic signs.
- With regards to transportation options, older adults indicated a need for more accessible and conveniently located bus stops, more frequent buses, a shuttle or trolley system, assisted rides, carpooling, and education on how to use Uber/Lyft.
- Focus group participants and survey respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the Senior Center, although there is a desire for extended hours, especially hours that can accommodate people who work.
- The ability to access information about services was cited as a challenge by focus group participants.
- Residents discussed the need for affordable activities, classes geared towards older adults still in the labor force, senior job internships, volunteer opportunities, and more intercultural and intergenerational activities and settings.

Santa Clara Partners

The feedback shared by Santa Clara partners validated many of the needs identified by focus group participants, such as the need for affordable housing, safer sidewalks and intersections, convenient and accessible transportation options, and employment opportunities for seniors. Additionally, Santa Clara partners stressed the need for improved mental, physical, and social health services. Partners expressed a need to address the high level of anxiety and sadness reported in the survey, particularly among lower-income respondents. Loneliness was framed by partners as a health-risk that should be a priority moving forward. Also with regards to health, partners discussed the need for greater outreach for nutrition programs, especially geared towards lower-income older adults who are not currently accessing meal services.

About the Senior Needs Assessment

Santa Clara's commitment to being an age-friendly community prompted the City Council's adoption of a Resolution on October 25, 2016 authorizing the City to participate in the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly City Global Network. According to the AARP Policy Book, the guiding principle of an age-friendly society focuses on designing livable communities that are safe and secure, have affordable housing and transportation options, and offer supportive community features and services. "Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence, allow residents to age in place, and foster their engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life."¹



In an effort to strengthen senior services and to identify any gaps in service, the City updated its Senior Needs Assessment last completed in 2010. Survey findings from that time reflect that the majority of Santa Clarans were college-educated, had lived in the city a long time, spoke primarily English, felt safe on the streets, and 77% enjoyed overall good health. Respondents looked to the Senior Center and city publications for information and 75% used the internet. Transportation, housing, and unexpected major expenses were the challenges of primary concern throughout the age groups as individuals planned to age in place.

In the City of Santa Clara in 2015, 12.3% of older adults (65+) live at or near the Federal Poverty Line (138% of FPL), earning under \$1354/month for a single-person household or \$1832/month for a two-person household.² UCLA's Elder Index reflects not just the cost of food in determining poverty, as reflected by the Federal Poverty Level, and looks at the overall cost of living specific to an area. For example, in Santa Clara County in 2015, 26% of all older adults 65+ live at or below the Elder Index threshold of \$2370/month.³ Furthermore, the Index estimates that nearly half (46%) of all older adults living alone and one out of three older adults living in two-elder households in Santa Clara County lack the financial resources required to pay

¹ *Roadmap to Livability: Strategies and Solutions that Make a Community Great for People of All Ages*. AARP Real Possibilities, 2018.

² 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

³ UCLA Center for Health Policy Records, UCLA Felding School of Public Health, *Interactive Dashboard for Santa Clara County, 2015*. <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-disparities/elder-health/elder-index-data/Pages/CostOfLiving.aspx>

for basic needs.⁴ This indicates that a large percentage of older adults are living in a gap between poverty and economic security.

- Individuals in this “gap” often have incomes too high to qualify for many means-tested public programs, yet are too low to provide for their basic cost-of-living needs (housing, food, healthcare, transportation) and all of the supports necessary to age safely and independently in their homes.
- In every state, the share of older adults living “in the gap” between the FPL and the Elder Index is larger than the share living in poverty.

Following the Great Recession, those gaps between resources and supports have become even more of an issue for frail older adults living on fixed incomes. In the time since the 2010 assessment, many residents have not been able to stay in Santa Clara due to rising rents and a lack of long-term care services, such as affordable homecare.

The City of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department conducted its second Senior Needs Assessment in 2017. In developing the assessment, Santa Clara drew upon the Eight Domains of Livability Framework established by the World Health Organization. The framework is used by many communities to organize and prioritize their work to become more livable for older residents and people of all ages.

Report Overview

This report presents the data that was collected for the 2017 Senior Needs Assessment, providing information to help align the needs of older residents with available services. The report is organized by the World Health Organization’s age-friendly domains asked about in the survey: Economics and Employment; Community; Housing; Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation and Streets; Health, Wellness, and Nutrition; Social and Civic Engagement; and Access to Community Resources and Information.

Each section of the report contains: 1) data from online and paper surveys; 2) data from the focus groups, referred to as “Focus Group Observations;” and 3) data from the February 2018 local service providers and advocates partner meeting, referred to as “Partner Reflections.” In addition, a section of the report is focused on highlighting the gaps in resources identified from the assessment. Santa Clara’s findings are compared to results from the Santa Clara County Livability Survey and Sourcewise’s Area Plan on Aging: 2016–2020. Finally, the report concludes with a prompting for the City of Santa Clara to develop an action plan to address priorities and needs of aging older adults in the City.

⁴ UCLA Center for Health Policy Records, UCLA Felding School of Public Health, *Interactive Dashboard for Santa Clara County*, 2015. <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-disparities/elder-health/Pages/eidd.aspx>

Findings from the 2017 Senior Needs Assessment were compared to the previous assessment of senior needs conducted by Santa Clara in 2010. Comparisons were possible for several items where the questions and response options were the same. When considering 2010 and 2017 needs assessments, similar rates were reported by respondents for home ownership, doctor visits, and feelings of isolation, sadness/depression, and interest in doing enjoyable activities. Similar proportions were also reported for utilization of meal services, for missing balanced meals, and the primary reasons for missing balanced meals. Lastly, similar rates were observed for natural disaster preparation planning.

Overall, the results were mostly similar, and the few differences that were identified are noted throughout the report including slightly higher perceptions of good physical health and reporting of frequent exercise, and a lower prevalence of anxiety in 2010.

Methodology

Data Collection

Data was collected for the Senior Needs Assessment by Santa Clara's Parks and Recreation Department from May 2017 through July 2017. The data collection consisted of online surveys and paper surveys available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, and focus groups offered in English, Spanish, and Mandarin with older adult residents of Santa Clara ages 50 and over. A total of 785 residents completed the survey. The survey asked residents about their socio-economic background, employment status, physical and mental health, disaster preparedness, and usage of the Senior Center. Residents were also asked about their perceptions of Santa Clara as a place to live as they age, and to rate the extent to which they want to have various age-friendly features in their community. Outreach for the survey was conducted by staff of the Parks and Recreation Department at the Senior Center, senior resident facilities, community events, and locations visited by Seniors such as grocery stores, the library, and a farmers market. Heart of the Valley assisted with the outreach for the survey and delivered the survey to homebound seniors through their door-to-door transportation services.

In addition to the survey, seven focus groups were held at the Senior Center with 31 Santa Clara residents. One of the seven focus groups was held in Spanish and another offered in Mandarin. A focus group was conducted by Heart of the Valley comprised of their agency's client and volunteer base. Focus group participants were asked about their experience in the eight domains of livability, and the programs that could benefit the community in those areas. They were also asked where they would refer community members in need of dementia care services.

Partner Engagement

Santa Clara convened partners in May 2017 to obtain their input on the design of the assessment and again in February 2018 to present the assessment findings. At the February 2018 meeting, ASR presented the key findings to partners and facilitated small groups where partners provided their input on the most pressing needs affecting seniors, model practices,

and strategies to address the unmet needs of older adults. The individuals who participated in the meetings represented nonprofits and major county service providers including the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health, Department of Aging and Adult Services, and the Valley Transportation Authority. Participation from the City of Santa Clara included members of the City Council, Senior Advisory Commission, Cultural Commission, and staff from various departments.

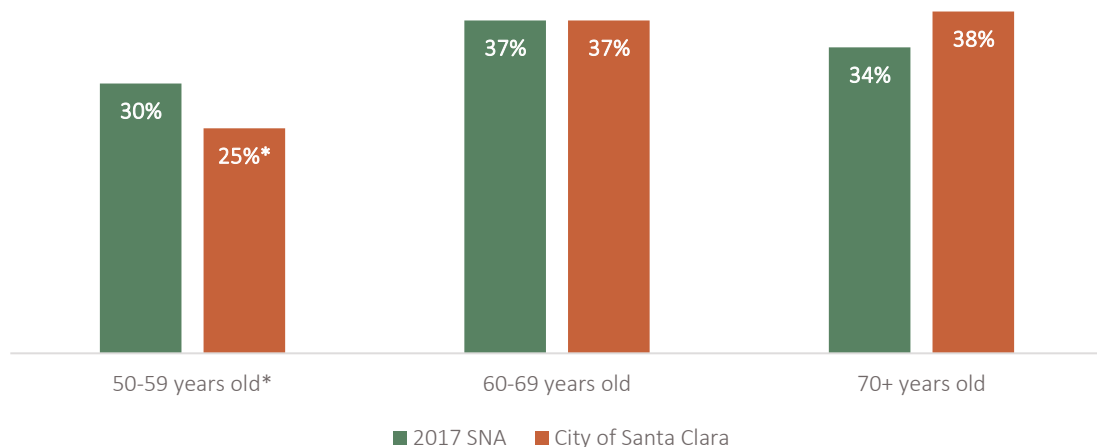
Consultants

Applied Survey Research (ASR) was contracted to analyze the data, prepare the report of data findings, and facilitate the February 2018 meeting with community partners. ASR is a social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities since 1980.

Survey Demographics

A total of 785 residents completed the Senior Needs Assessment (SNA) survey. The sample included residents in their 50s (30%), 60s (37%), and 70s or older (34%). The age of survey respondents closely matched the age distribution of Santa Clara's older adult population.

Figure 1. **Age of Survey Respondents and of Santa Clara Residents Overall**



Source for City of Santa Clara: U.S. Census Bureau, *2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. Note: The age breakout for the City of Santa Clara is for 55-59 year olds. Age breakout percentages for City of Santa Clara ages 55-59, 60-69, and 70+ were estimated using the population estimate 122,725. 2017 SNA n=761.

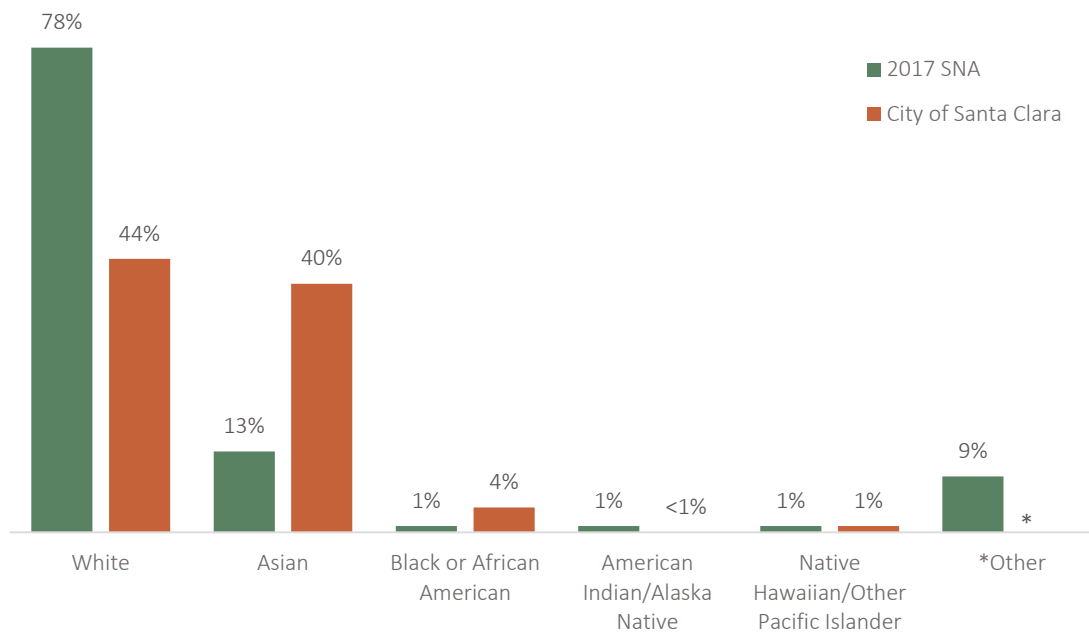
Two-thirds of the survey respondents were female (66%), and more than half (57%) were married. Most respondents (93%) reported speaking English at home, and over three-fourths were White/Caucasian (78%) followed by Asian (13%). Nine percent of respondents selected the Other category for race/ethnicity. The percentages of female and White survey respondents were higher than Santa Clara's overall population as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, while the percentage of Asian survey respondents was lower (see Figure 3).

Figure 2. **Gender of Survey Respondents and of Santa Clara Residents Overall**



Source for City of Santa Clara: U.S. Census Bureau, *2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. 2017 SNA n=776.

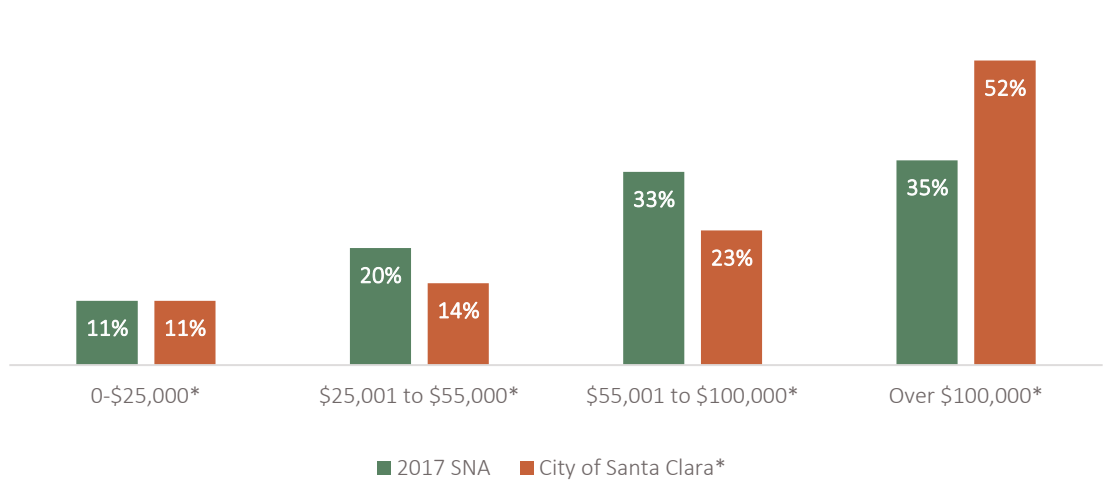
Figure 3. **Race & Ethnicity of Survey Respondents and of Santa Clara Residents Overall**



Source for City of Santa Clara: U.S. Census Bureau, *2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. Note: Ethnicity information for "Other" not featured in the U.S. Census Bureau ACS data. 2017 SNA n=779

Over one-third of survey respondents (35%) had a household income of over \$100,000 while nearly one-third (32%) had a household income of \$55,000 or less. Fewer survey respondents reported an income of \$100,000 or more compared to the City of Santa Clara (35% of survey respondents compared to 52% of the City of Santa Clara population).

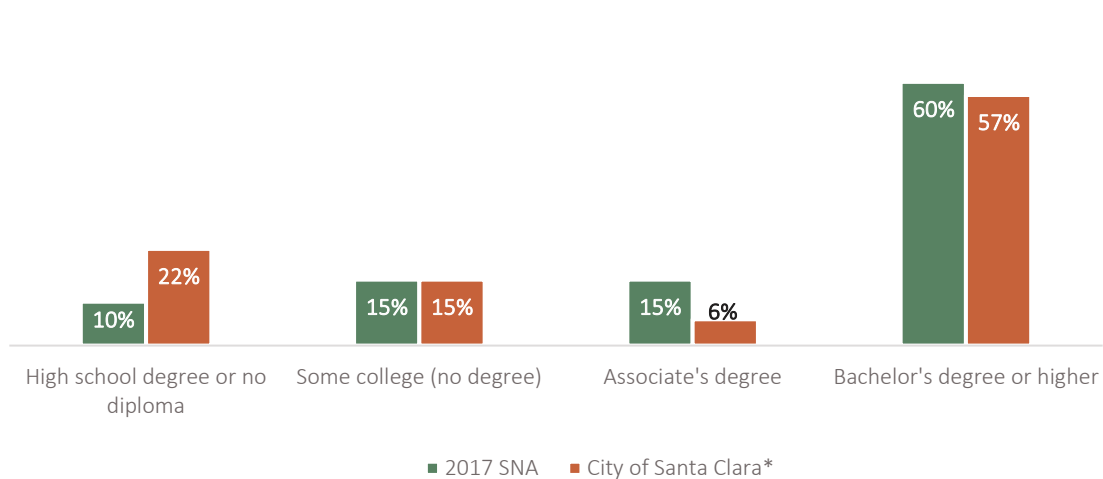
Figure 4. **Income of Survey Respondents and of Santa Clara Residents**



Source: City of Santa Clara data pulled from U.S. Census Bureau, *2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. 2017 SNA n=696. Data for City of Santa Clara followed different income breakout ranges: 0-\$24,999, \$25,000 to \$49,999, \$50,000 to \$99,999, \$100,000 and over.

Six in ten (60%) survey respondents had a Bachelor's degree or higher, similar to the percentage citywide (57%). One in ten (10%) survey respondents had a high school degree or no diploma, which was lower than Santa Clara's proportion of 22%.

Figure 5. **Education Level of Survey Respondents and of Santa Clara Residents**



Source: City of Santa Clara data pulled from U.S. Census Bureau, *2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. 2017 SNA n=770. Data for City of Santa Clara is for the population 25 years and over.

Economics and Employment

Why is it important?

Economic wellbeing is a key component of livability. An age-friendly community provides ways for older people to work for pay or volunteer their skills and be actively engaged in community life.⁵ The reported benefits of volunteering include a sense of self-worth, feeling active, and maintaining health and social connections.⁶



Livable communities provide residents an equal chance to earn a living wage and improve their well-being through quality job and education opportunities.⁷ According to the World Health Organization, older adults desire opportunities for employment and volunteering that are tailored to their needs and interests.

What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

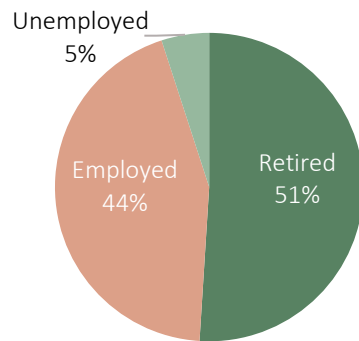
More than half (51%) of survey respondents were retired and not in the labor force. Of those remaining, 44% were employed and 5% were unemployed. Residents ages 50-59 were the largest group that reported being currently employed (75%). Almost half (47%) of residents ages 60-69 are currently employed, while approximately one in six (15%) residents ages 70 and older are currently employed.

⁵ *The 8 Domains of Livability: An Introduction*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html> on March 7, 2018.

⁶ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

⁷ *AARP Livability Index*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/categories/opportunity> on March 9, 2018.

Figure 6. **Labor Force Participation**



Note: n=777.

Survey respondents expressed concern about various living costs, which greatly impacted their ability to age in place in Santa Clara. Issues included being challenged to sustain their quality of life due to rising housing costs, taxes, healthcare, and insurance. A few respondents expressed a desire to access educational opportunities, learn about work opportunities, and use their knowledge and skills to assist the public.

Focus Group Observations

Focus group discussions offered similar observations on affordability and difficulty managing living expenses. Some who are retired pointed to the need for other sources to supplement their income. Those who are willing to work noted that businesses are typically unwilling to hire older adults.

Partner Reflections

Community partners indicated a need for older adult job internships and several suggested forging partnerships with Encore and Sourcewise to provide this service.

Community

Why is it important?

Research conducted by the AARP has found that the vast majority of people ages 50 and older want to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible.⁸ The availability of age-friendly community features and services, such as home support, impacts the well-being of older adults, and their ability to remain in their communities as they age.

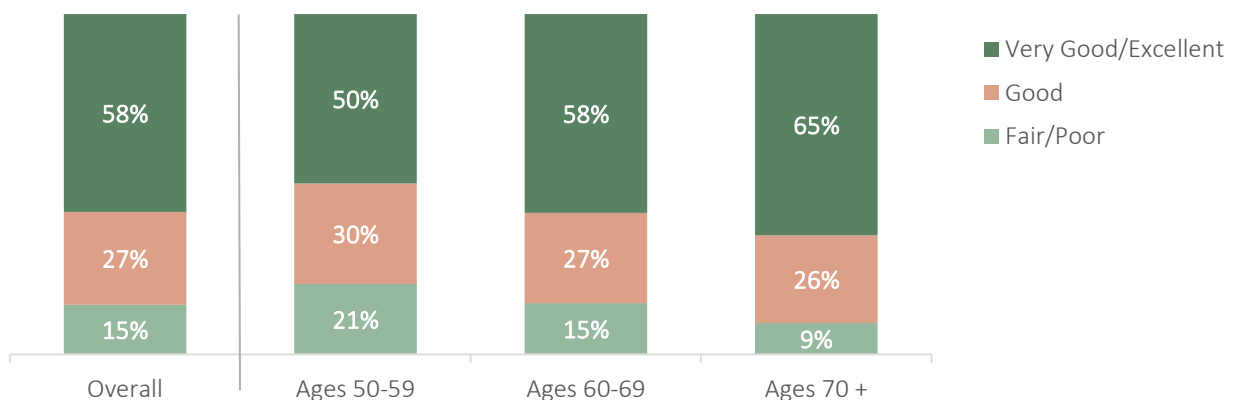


What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

Older adults indicated that the City of Santa Clara was a good place to live. Over half (58%) of 772 respondents rated the City of Santa Clara as a “Very Good/Excellent” place to live as they age, and positive ratings increased with age.

Figure 7. Perceptions of Santa Clara as a Place to Live as People Age, By Age



Note: Overall n=772, Age n= 766.

Three-quarters (78%) of respondents indicated it was “Very/Extremely Important” to remain in the City of Santa Clara as they age, and positive ratings increased with age.

⁸ Roadmap to Livability: Strategies and Solutions that Make a Community Great for People of All Ages. AARP Real Possibilities, 2018.

Housing

Why is it important?

Age-friendly communities provide housing and support that allow older adults to age comfortably and safely.⁹ Aging in place can be possible if homes are appropriately designed or modified, and if a community includes affordable housing options for people of all ages, allowing everyone to live in a quality neighborhood regardless of their circumstances.¹⁰



What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

Over three-quarters of survey respondents (78%) own their home and one-quarter reported living alone.

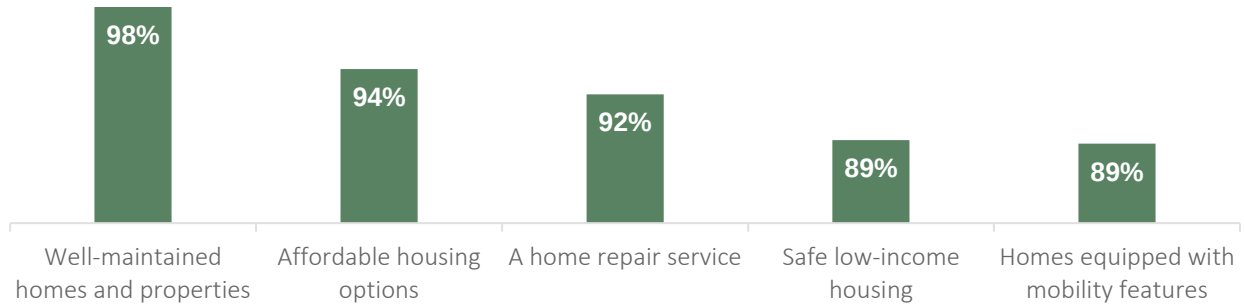
Older adults highly value living independently in their home or in the City as they age. Most survey respondents (97%) indicated it was “Very/Extremely Important” to be able to live independently in their own home as they age.

Older adults value safe and well-maintained homes. Nearly all survey respondents (98%) indicated it was “Very/Extremely Important” to have a well-maintained home. In addition, nearly 90% of older adults indicated it was important to have safe low-income housing.

⁹ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

¹⁰ *AARP Livability Index*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/categories/transportation> on March 7, 2018.

Figure 8. **Percentage of Respondents Who Rated Having Safe, Well-Maintained Homes and Properties as “Very/Extremely” Important**



Note: n=762-776.

Six in ten residents have lived in the City of Santa Clara for over 25 years. One in five (21%) survey respondents have lived in the City of Santa Clara for fifteen years or less.

Survey respondents reported difficulty in finding or being able to qualify for affordable senior housing. Many cited the high cost of living in Santa Clara and the rapid development and growth of residential complexes that appear to be mostly unaffordable to most seniors.

Focus Group Observations

Focus group participants identified the high cost of housing, increasing property taxes, lack of assisted living, and dementia care services as concerns.

Partner Reflections

Several needs and gaps in housing were identified by community partners:

- Lack of affordable housing. Homecare workers are not able to afford to live in the area.
- Perception that there is a lack of home repair and home maintenance services. Partners shared as a preferred model a centralized downtown with housing options nearby.

“I would love to be able to stay once I retire, but with the cost of living going up so much here, particularly rent, and the congestion in the streets, I will probably have to leave.”

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Why is it important?

Outdoor spaces and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence, and quality of life of older people and their ability to “age in place.”¹¹ Green spaces, sidewalks, safe streets, outdoor seating and accessible buildings benefit people of all ages.¹² Age-friendly features could include intergenerational community gardens, senior-friendly parks, parklets, improved sidewalks/walking areas, and wayfinding signs.



What are the conditions of older adults?

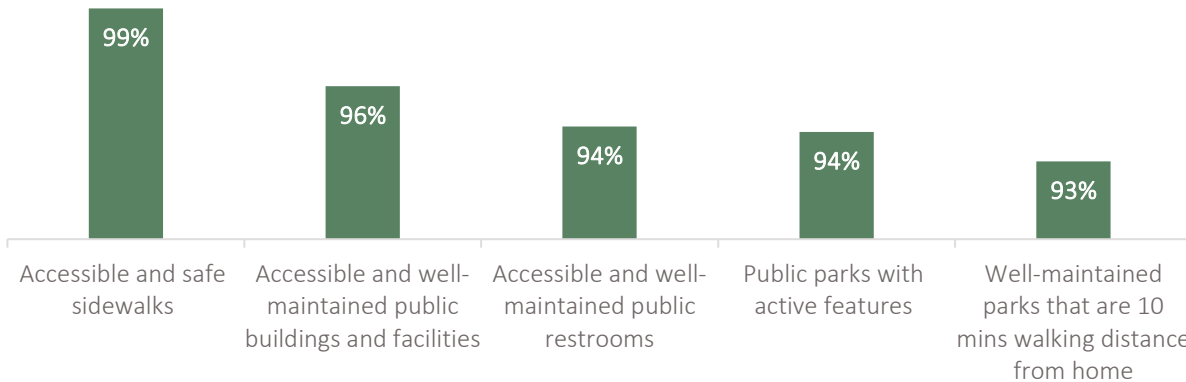
Survey Findings

Older adults highly value safe, well-maintained spaces for active living. Most survey respondents (93% to 99%) attributed high importance to having well maintained, safe and accessible sidewalks, public buildings/facilities, and public parks with active features, such as walking paths and outdoor sports courts in the city.

¹¹ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

¹² Natalie Turner. *Age-Friendly: The 2014 World Tour*. AARP Livable Communities, AARP International.

Figure 9. **Percentage of Older Adults who Rated Safe, Well-maintained Public Spaces for Active Living as “Very/Extremely” Important**



Note: n=772-779.

Focus Group Observations

Focus group participants mentioned a few challenges related to outdoor spaces and buildings, such as poor sidewalks conditions, alcohol use and litter at the parks, and lack of parking at the Senior Center. However, residents did enjoy the ramps added to sidewalk corners, the beauty of Central Park, and well-maintained public restrooms at the park. In general, participants desired interest in access to green spaces, such as parks, trails, and community gardens.

“...our city sidewalks and streets are in need of repair/replacement to allow people to walk safely.”

Partner Reflections

Community partners indicated a need for sidewalk repairs. Partners identified the problem of raised roots in sidewalks, which make walking especially dangerous for older adults.

The current models and practices for outdoor spaces and buildings shared during the partner meeting included:

- Walkable, smaller communities within a larger community so that services and shops are within a few blocks of homes.
- Reassessment of how many handicap parking spaces are required at residential or retail development that will attract seniors. Encourage older adult specific parking spaces close to shopping centers.
- Perform sidewalk audit to help areas in need of repairs.
- Revitalize the downtown with walkable, wide sidewalks.
- Community gardens can create a place for older adults to be social, active and share produce.

Transportation & Streets

Why is it important?

Access to affordable, convenient, and safe travel can have a major effect on quality of life. Livable communities provide residents with transportation options that connect people to needed services, economic opportunities, and social and civic activities.¹³ Age-friendly transportation features include well-maintained streets and intersections, adequate time to cross the street, easy-to-read traffic signs, and low-cost, affordable public transportation options. Age-friendly communities have implemented senior shuttles, improvements in walking environments, and ride shares.



Transportation and Streets plays a vital role in the public's daily lives. From walking and/or biking to school, commuting to work, running errands, or even having groceries or goods delivered, all users interface with the transportation system. When the overall transportation system (roads, sidewalks, trails, transit) is well designed, functioning at a high level, and properly maintained/managed, residents and businesses tend to thrive which has an overall benefit to the local economy. Additionally, when users have a variety of viable mobility options, this provides access to goods and services which can lead to better quality of life.

What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

Many respondents placed a high level of importance on safe and accessible transportation. Nearly all of the survey respondents (98% to 99%) indicated it was "Very/Extremely Important" to have safe and well-maintained streets. Between 94% and 96% of respondents indicated it was "Very/Extremely Important" to have safe transportation stops and accessible and convenient public transportation.

"Transportation is a huge problem when a senior is no longer able to drive. My nearest bus line is 4 blocks away, and runs so infrequently that it would be very inconvenient to use regularly."

¹³ AARP Livability Index. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/categories/transportation> on March 7, 2018.

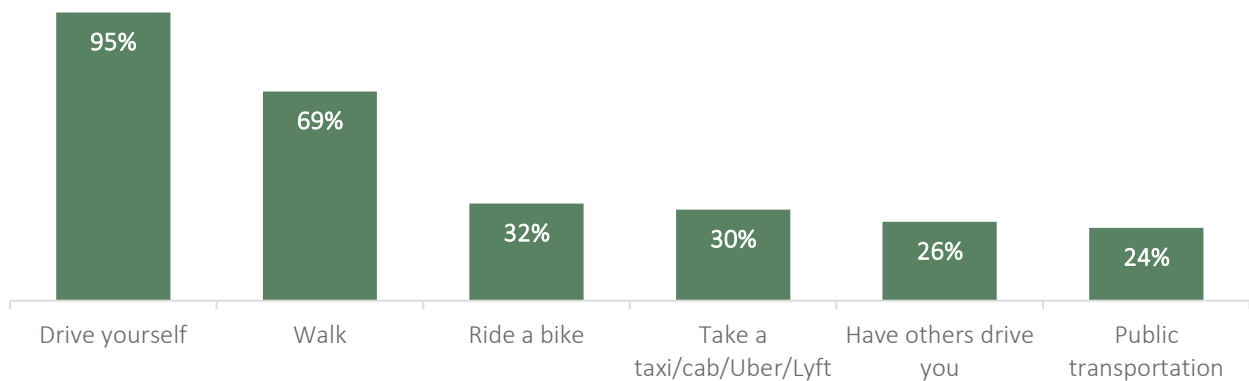
Figure 10. **Percentage of Respondents Who Rated Having Accessible and Well-Maintained Transportation Infrastructure as “Very/Extremely” Important**



Note: n=761-774.

Ninety-five percent of all survey respondents indicated that they drive themselves to go shopping, attend doctor visits, run errands, or travel to other places. Over two-thirds (39%) of lower income residents earning \$25,000 or below reported using public transportation to get around compared to 17% of higher income residents earning over \$100,000.

Figure 11. **Percentage of Respondents who rated how they got around for shopping, doctor visits, errands, and other places**



Note: n=639-773.

Survey respondents commented on the lack of time to cross streets and the need for low-cost transportation options for older adults (such as more bus routes, a senior bus system, assisted rides and carpooling).

Focus Group Observations

Focus group participants identified several transportation challenges, such as limited bus and train routes serving areas away from main streets and the lack of weekend public transportation options. Increased traffic congestion was identified as posing a challenge to pedestrian and motorist safety.

Partner Reflections

At the community partner meeting, participants identified the following transportation needs:

- Increased pedestrian safety (e.g., signage and traffic enforcement for pedestrian crossing).
- A City shuttle service for older adults.
- A mini-transit within the City that is safe and accessible.
- More bus stops (near public facilities, such as the Library and closer to homes to reduce the distance) and more frequent buses.
- Help older adults become more Uber/Lyft savvy.

The current models and practices for transportation shared during the partner meeting included:

- Shuttle services (based on Mountain View, Palo Alto or Heart of the Valley programs).
- Safe routes to parks.

Health, Wellness & Nutrition

Why is it important?

Health and support services are essential to maintaining the health and independence of older adults.¹⁴ Healthy communities provide access to high quality, appropriate, and affordable health care and mental health services. Additionally, they offer easy access to exercise opportunities, nutrition services, and have smoke-free air laws.¹⁵



What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

Respondents reported strong physical health. Seven in ten survey respondents (71%) rated their health as “Very Good” or “Excellent” and 81% reported engaging in frequent exercise. Almost all respondents (98%) indicated it is important to remain physically active as long as possible, and eight in 10 (81%) survey respondents engaged in some form of physical exercise at least several times a week.

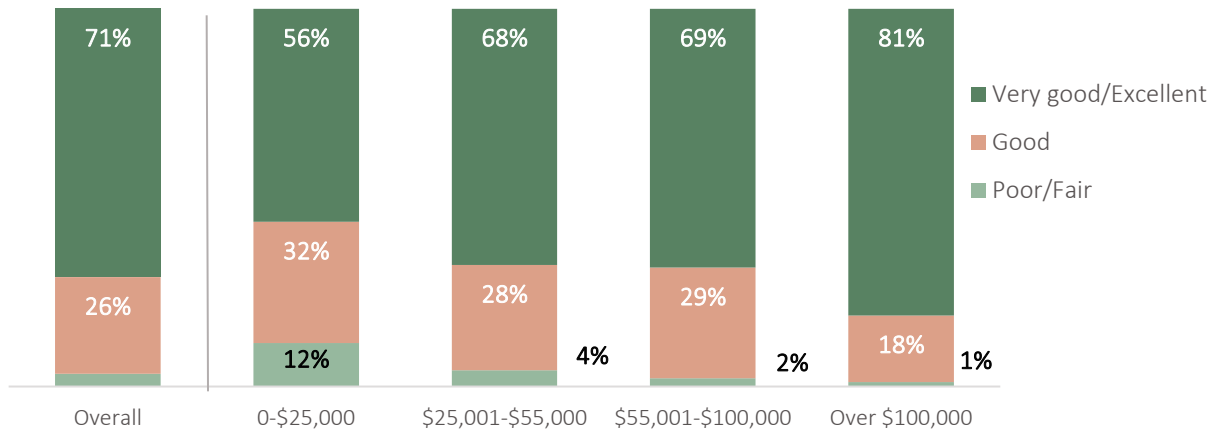
Survey respondents in 2010 reported slightly higher ratings than those reported by 2017 respondents for perceptions of “Good/Excellent” health (77% compared to 71%) and frequent engagement in exercise (85% compared to 81%), respectively.

Perceptions of health varied by income. The following figure depicts lower income adults were less likely to report their health as good as compared to adults with a higher income. Fifty-six percent of respondents earning \$25,000 and under rated their health as “Very Good/Excellent” compared to 81% of respondents earning over \$100,000.

¹⁴ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

¹⁵ *AARP Livability Index*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/categories/health> on May 23, 2018.

Figure 12. Perceptions of Health, by Income



Note: Overall n=774, Income n=691.

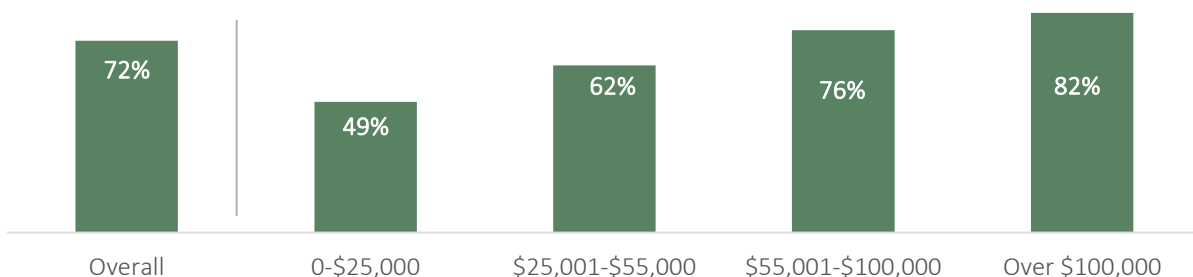
Physical Exercise

Lower income adults also reported lower levels of exercise. Seventeen percent (17%) of lower income respondents reported engaging in physical exercise less than once per month, compared to 2% of those earning over \$100,000.

Prevalence of Disabilities or Handicap

The survey asked respondents whether they have a disability, handicap or disease that has kept them or their spouse from fully participating in daily activities. Close to three-fourths (72%) reported no disability or handicap. Respondents who were ages 50 to 59 and those earning over \$55,000 were more likely to report not having a disability or handicap.

Figure 13. Percent of Respondents Who Reported Not Having a Disability or Handicap, by Income

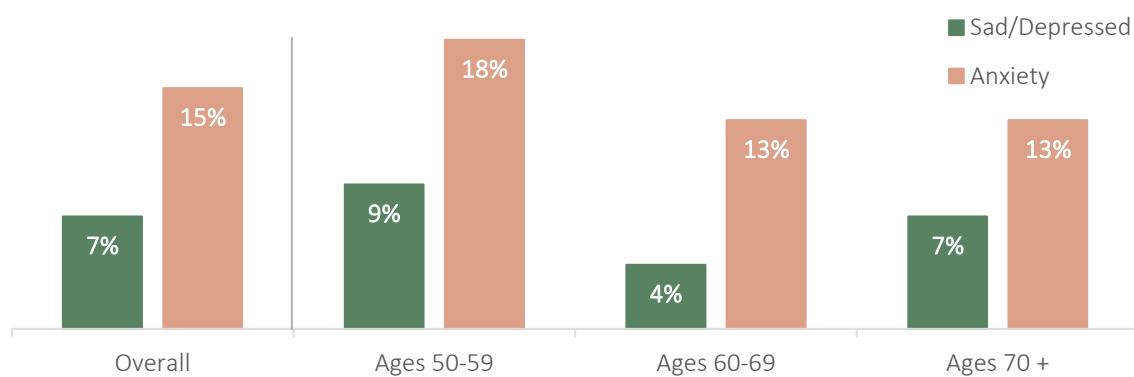


Note: Overall n=768, Income n=691.

Mental Health Status

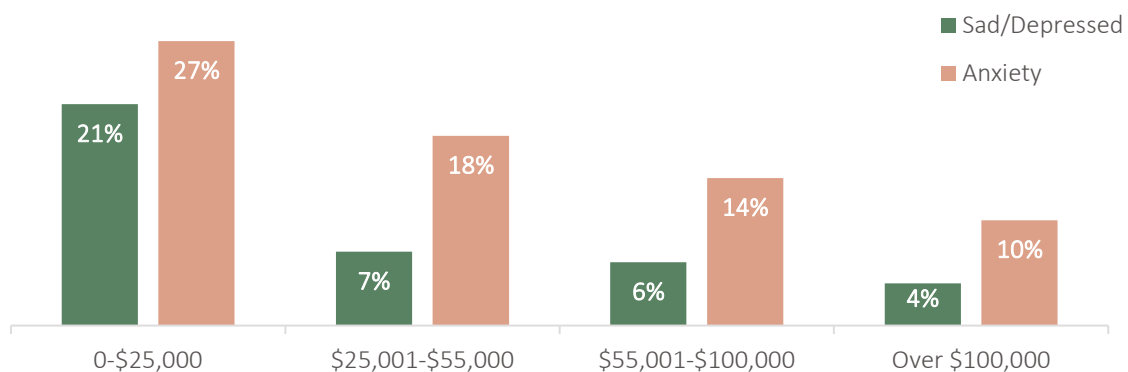
Respondents were asked whether they had felt sad/depressed or anxious during the past two weeks. Seven percent of survey respondents reported experiencing sadness/depression and 15% reported experiencing anxiety. In 2010, rates of sadness/depression stayed the same and anxiety was slightly lower with 11% reported feeling anxious. In the recent survey, reports of sadness/depression and anxiety were prevalent across age groups and were higher among the lowest income and unemployed residents.

Figure 14. **Percentage of Respondents who "Often/Always" Felt Sad/Depressed or Anxious in the Past Two Weeks**



Note: Overall - reporting some level of sadness/depression n=759. Overall - reporting some level anxiety n=749. Age - reporting some level of sadness/depression n=754. Age - reporting some level anxiety n=744.

Figure 15. **Percentage of Respondents Who "Often/Always" Felt Sad/Depressed or Anxious in the Past Two Weeks, By Income**



Note: Sadness/depression n=680. Anxiety n=673.

Figure 16. **Percentage of Respondents Who "Often/Always" Felt Sad/Depressed or Anxious in the Past Two Weeks, By Employment Status**



Note: Sadness/depression n=756. Anxiety n=745.

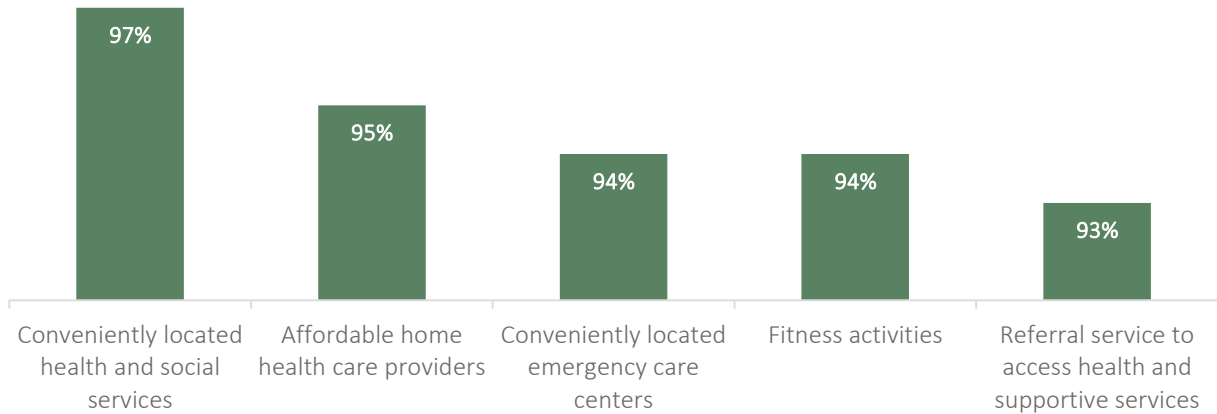
Six percent of older adults reported isolation “Often/Always” during the past two weeks. A similar percentage (8%) of older adults in 2010 reported feeling isolated. Research shows that isolation can be considered a health risk associated with increased mortality and other adverse health effects, such as dementia, increased risk for hospital readmission and increased risk of falls.¹⁶

Wellness Support Services

Older adults highly value health and wellness supportive services. Ninety-seven percent of all survey respondents indicated it was “Very/Extremely Important” to have conveniently located health and social services while 95% thought it was important to have affordable health care providers.

¹⁶ Liz Seegert. *Social isolation, loneliness negatively affect health for seniors*. Association of Healthcare Journalists, March 16, 2017. Retrieved from <https://healthjournalism.org/blog/2017/03/social-isolation-loneliness-negatively-affect-health-for-seniors/> on March 12, 2018.

Figure 17. **Percentage of Respondents Who Rated Having Health and Wellness Supportive Services and Activities as “Very/Extremely” Important**



Note: n=760-768.

Doctor Visits

Just over half (53%) of respondents see a doctor several times a year. Four in ten respondents reported seeing a doctor once a year. Older adults ages 70 and over reported seeing a doctor more frequently than their younger counterparts.

Nutrition

Low-income survey respondents are more likely to miss a balanced meal weekly compared to higher income respondents. Twenty one percent of those earning \$25,000 and under missed a balanced meal weekly, compared to 13% of those earning over \$100,000. Of the of low-income respondents who reported missing a balanced meal weekly, half had not used the meal services asked about in the survey including, Meals on Wheels, Second Harvest Food Bank, and meals at senior centers.



Disaster Preparedness

Over one-third of older adults are not prepared for a disaster. The survey asked respondents if they have a plan to survive in their home after a natural disaster. Over one-third (37%) of respondents did not have a plan in place.

Focus Group Observations

Focus group participants mentioned a few primary concerns related to health, wellness and nutrition such as struggling to find information about community services and where to obtain medical supplies, such as wheel chairs, canes and walkers. Participants noted that resource fairs and support from faith communities have been helpful.

Partner Reflections

At the community partner meeting, participants indicated a need for:

- Improving mental, physical and social health. There are high rates of anxiety among older adults regardless of income and there is a need to focus on loneliness and sadness as health risks.
- Limited transportation and bus passes to travel to nutrition programs.
- There should be a focus on outreach for those who can benefit most from nutrition programs.
- Market and educate older adults about meal service options since the survey data indicate that most low-income seniors are not using meal services.
- Flexibility in regards to the needs of the community. For example, home delivery for homebound older adults and pick-ups or shared meals for the mobile population.

The current models and practices for health, wellness and nutrition shared during the partner meeting included:

- Meal sharing service. It was suggested that a social media site could pair people who need food with people who are making food.
- Neighborhood 'Meals on Wheels' program.
- A community where someone's skill, service or other means of barter can be traded for meals.

Social and Civic Engagement

Why is it important?

Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being.¹⁷ Livable communities promote the inclusion and contribution of older adults into all areas of community life. Opportunities to connect and feel welcomed help lessen social isolation among older adults and strengthen the entire community.¹⁸ Additionally, a livable community provides ways for older residents to volunteer their skills and creates intergenerational settings for young and older residents to learn from and value each other.¹⁹



What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

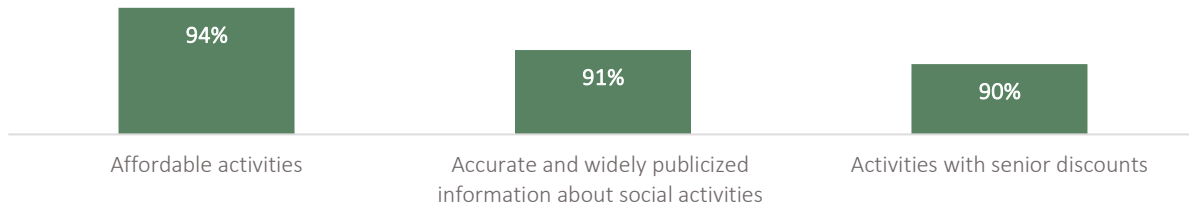
Older adults placed high importance on the availability of a wide array of social and volunteer activities in their community. As shown in the figure below, between 90% and 94% of older adults attributed a high level of importance to affordable activities, widely publicized information about activities, and activities with a discount.

¹⁷ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

¹⁸ *AARP Livability Index*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/categories/transportation> on March 7, 2018.

¹⁹ *The 8 Domains of Livability: An Introduction*. AARP Real Possibilities. Retrieved from <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html> on March 7, 2018.

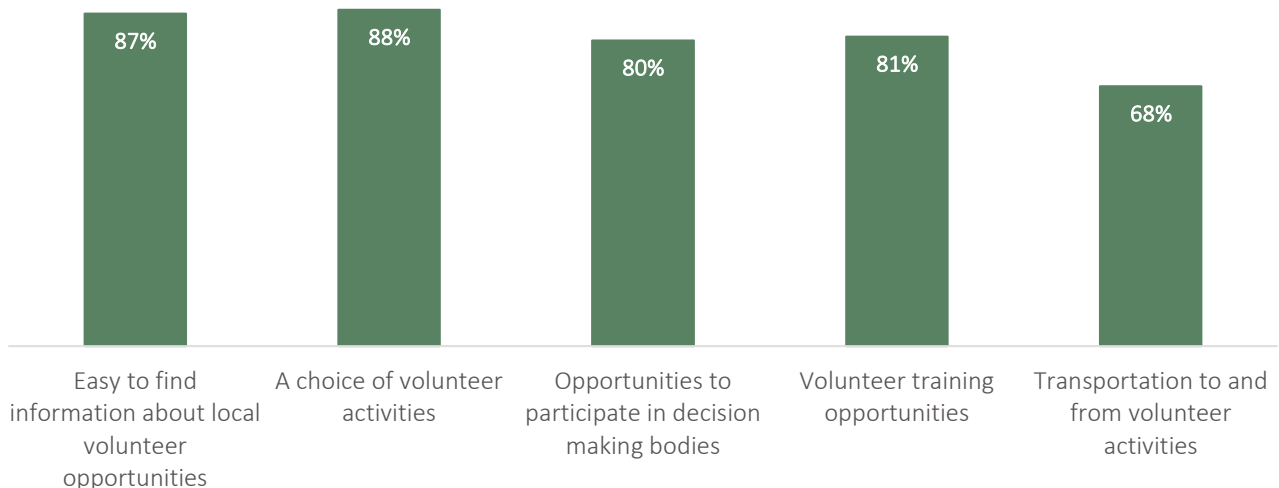
Figure 18. **Importance of social activities rated as “Very/Extremely Important”**



Note: n=764-766.

Between 87% and 88% of respondents rated easy to find information about local volunteer activities, as well as a choice of volunteer opportunities, as “Very/Extremely Important.”

Figure 19. **Importance of volunteering and civic participation rated as “Very/Extremely Important”**



Note: n=765-775.

Seven in ten survey respondents (70%) interact (in person, by phone or online) daily with their friends, family or neighbors in their community.

Survey respondents commented on the importance of social and civic engagement, including creating spaces for activities in the downtown area and engaging Santa Clara City residents in local decision-making. Respondents expressed a desire to participate in cultural activities and noted the need for greater inclusion and social cohesion.

Focus Group Observations

Focus group participants expressed an interest in volunteering opportunities to feel valued and included, and in participating in an array of intergenerational social activities and settings (e.g., City programs, parades, community projects). Some noted that the City of Santa Clara is doing well with providing opportunities for residents of all ages to interact. In addition, participants mentioned an appreciation for diversity and cultural inclusion.

“Give more volunteer opportunities to seniors because this activity allows them to feel more included and valued.”

One participant reported feeling a general lack of respect in the community for the elderly and a few participants pointed to the value of providing more visible roles and opportunities for older adults to contribute to the community.

Partner Reflections

- Partners indicated a need for programs/classes or mentors for younger seniors 50-65 (those still in labor force).
- Partners recommended a senior discount booklet to offer senior discounts/coupons for various programs and activities.
- The current models and practices for social and civic engagement shared during the partner meeting included providing offsite programs/meet-ups for “younger older adults” who work.

Access to Community Resources and Information

Why is it important?

Livable communities provide access to information about community activities and needed services through a variety of means adapted for a spectrum of vision and hearing abilities.

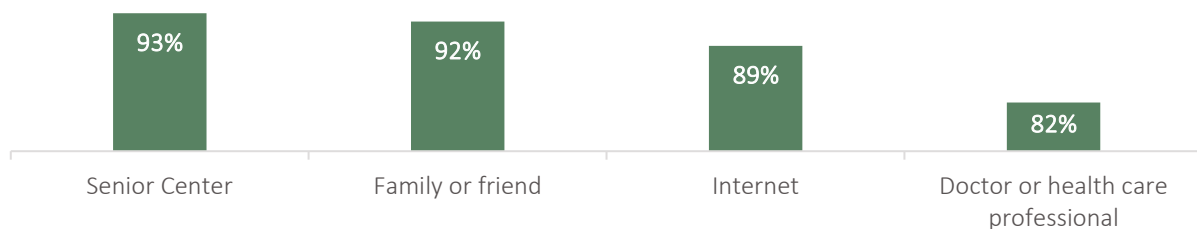
What are the conditions of older adults?

Survey Findings

The Senior Center is the top information resource for older adults. Ninety-three percent of older adults gather their information most often from the Senior Center followed by a family or friend (92%), the internet (89%), and their doctor or other health care professional (82%). Older adult residents ages 70 and over were less likely to report using the internet to access information.



Figure 20. Where Respondents Most Often Access Information About Services



Note: n=727-771.

A large majority (89%) of respondents want a centralized source of community information, 86% want free access to computers and the Internet in public places, and 78% want in-person delivery of community information to home-bound seniors as well as clear displays of information with large lettering. Respondents noted a lack of information about services and expressed a strong interest in learning how to better access this information.

Senior Center Usage

Sixty percent of survey respondents accessed the Senior Center, with usage increasing with age: 37% of residents in their 50s use the Senior Center, as compared to 73% of those ages 70 and over. When asked about what prevents them from using the Senior Center, residents in their 50s most often indicated “Hours of operation don’t meet my needs” (36%); “Don’t know what is offered” (32%); and “I don’t identify with the name Senior Center” (22%).

“The Senior Center needs extended hours for people who work.”

Utilization of the Senior Center was higher for lower income adults. Close to three-fourths (73%) of older adults earning \$25,000 and under reported using the Senior Center, compared to 40% of respondents earning over \$100,000.

Survey respondents provided positive comments on their experiences accessing and utilizing the Senior Center, and working adults suggested extending Center operating hours in order to better access the services and programs. It is clear that the Senior Center is perceived as providing opportunities to support active lifestyles and to learn about age-appropriate services and resources.

Focus Group Observations

Similar to the survey findings, focus group comments reflected very positive views about participant experiences with the Senior Center, but many expressed the need for extended hours and more activities. As noted in the survey findings section, participants also expressed an interest in a centralized information system about resources to better link seniors to appropriate services.

Focus group participants mentioned a few challenges in regards to community resources and information such as:

- Residents without internet or cable cannot access information.
- Some rely solely on information from electricity bill inserts, libraries and Senior Center bulletins.
- Northside residents experience transportation challenges and have limited access to information from the Senior Center.

Partner Reflections

At the community partner meeting, participants indicated a need for:

- Improved communication with older adults. Sometimes older adults are not called back.
- More information on things to do in the City of Santa Clara.

- A better way to disseminate information, as there is a lot of information, but it is not being accessed.
- Extended Senior Center hours.

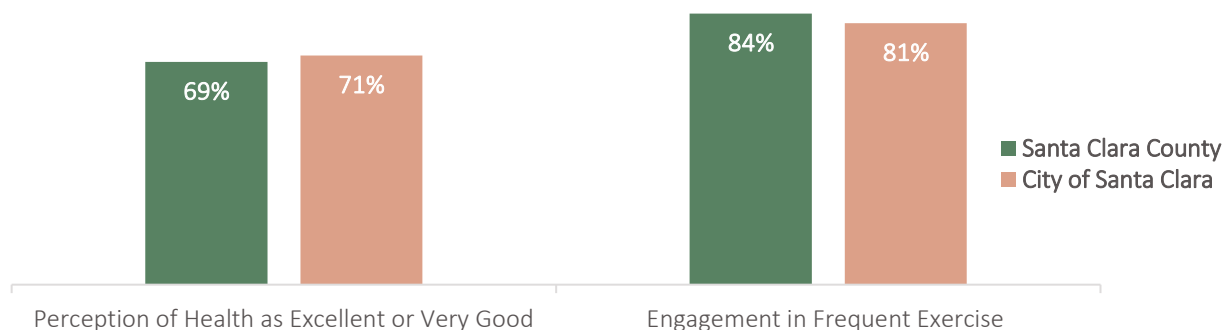
Comparison to Other Local Studies

Santa Clara County Livability Survey

To better understand how the findings of Santa Clara’s Senior Needs Assessment aligned with other local studies, Santa Clara’s survey results were compared with the results from Santa Clara County’s Livability Survey conducted by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department in 2016. The surveys were evidence-based and asked similar questions, which allowed for a thorough comparison of the results. In both surveys, respondents were asked how important it was to have various age-friendly features, services, and activities in their community. A comparison of the survey results showed that respondents attributed similar ratings to the age-friendly features asked about in the county and city surveys. The highest rated age-friendly items across both survey samples were: accessible and safe sidewalks; well-maintained streets; affordable activities; and widely publicized information about social activities. Additionally, there was similarity in the top resources used for information about services for older adults, which included the local senior center and the internet. Although the top rated items were similar across both studies, the ratings were more favorable among City of Santa Clara residents as compared to residents countywide.

There were also similarities with regards to perceptions of health and engagement in frequent exercise as shown in the figure below.

Figure 21. **Perceptions of Health Items & Level of Exercises, by Locality**



Note: City of Santa Clara Perception of Health n=774. City of Santa Clara Engagement in Frequent Exercise n=768.

The comparison of results between the countywide and Santa Clara surveys showed differences with regards to perceptions of their communities’ livability as they age, with ratings being higher in the countywide sample. Eight in ten (80%) of residents countywide reported their city as “Excellent” or “Very good” for people to live as they age, compared to 58% of Santa Clara residents. However, the percentage of residents who said it was “Extremely” or “Very important” to remain in their city as they age was higher for the city (78%) than the county (66%).

Sourcewise's Area Plan on Aging 2016-2020

Sourcewise, Santa Clara County's Area of Aging Agency, provides programs for older adults, such as the Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program, Multiple Senior Services Program, Meals on Wheels, and acts as the county's payment facilitator for In-Home Supportive Services. Sourcewise has taken a leadership role in addressing issues important to seniors in Santa Clara County. In order to develop their Area Plan on Aging, Sourcewise conducted a comprehensive Needs Assessment in 2015 to obtain information specific to the identified needs of adults 60 years or older living in Santa Clara County. The Assessment consisted of a random-digit dial telephone survey, focus groups, and surveys of caregivers and providers.

The needs that surfaced from the Sourcewise study were compared to Santa Clara's findings to understand the extent to which there was alignment of need, and to validate Santa Clara's results since the Sourcewise study was more comprehensive. However, the Sourcewise study employed a methodology distinct from Santa Clara, which limited the comparability between studies. Several of the general areas of alignment are described below:

- Focus group respondents in the Sourcewise study were asked to identify which resources were currently available in Santa Clara County to address their needs. Seniors most frequently responded that the (senior) community center where the focus group was held helped them address their needs. Similarly, the top resource cited by older adults in Santa Clara was the Senior Center.
- Countywide residents were asked to identify, from a list, which services were lacking for older adults. The services most often identified by respondents as missing were: fraud & financial abuse education (27%); help finding housing (25%); legal services (23%); and general information on aging (22%). The common themes that emerged from the Santa Clara focus groups also included housing and information on aging.
- Among providers in the Sourcewise study, the top five most identified unmet needs of older adults were: help finding housing (74%); access to transportation (67%); counseling or care management (56%); health services (44%); and help with health insurance (37%). The top needs that emerged from partners in Santa Clara were consistent, with housing, access to transportation, and physical/mental health frequently cited.
- In the Sourcewise study 73% of older adults reported driving themselves as the most frequently identified mode of transportation, similar to the Santa Clara assessment, although the percentage was much higher in Santa Clara (95%).
- 20% of Sourcewise older adult respondents indicated they did not feel comfortable using public transportation. The commonly cited reasons were consistent with the needs expressed by Santa Clara focus group participants including: does not stop near residence; does not go where needed, and it's difficult to plan a trip.

- Focus group participants in the Sourcewise study discussed difficulties related to accessing information. The most frequent issues mentioned by participants were language barriers, outdated lists, and limited printed resources. In Santa Clara, focus group participants also expressed a need for more paper communication.

Next Steps – Action Planning

The mission of the City of Santa Clara is to promote a living and working environment that allows for the best quality of life by serving the community with resourceful, efficient, progressive and professional leadership.

What is the City currently doing to improve the conditions of older adults?

Santa Clara, now a designated Age-Friendly City, is committed to be a livable community, and understands that being age-friendly benefits the entire community. For example, barrier-free buildings and streets enhance the mobility and independence of people with disabilities of all ages, and families experience less stress when their older members have the community support and health services they need. Moreover, post-retirement, many older people continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities.²⁰ Santa Clara recognizes and values the participation and contribution of older adults.

Using the lens of an Age-Friendly City, Santa Clara can categorize their department updates as well as work plan and project goals into one of the eight domains of focus. Current updates or reports are described in detail below:

Housing

The cost to rent or purchase housing in the Bay Area is becoming increasingly expensive for thousands of seniors, both for those on fixed retirement incomes as well as those who have not yet reached retirement. In 2015, UCLA's Elder Economic Security Standard (The Elder Index) which reflects the cost of housing, food, healthcare, transportation, and other expenses, estimates the annual basic cost of living for an older adult couple in Santa Clara County at \$36,660, or \$3,055/month.²¹ For those who have only small pensions, social security, and a few assets, their only hope for safe, secure, and affordable housing is through units built with the assistance of local government resources and through Federal tax credit programs.

Part of the problem for cities like Santa Clara is simply a lack of affordable housing. Santa Clara can be characterized as a "job rich" community, where the number of jobs has well exceeded the number of housing units. According to a March 2017 report published by SiliconValley @ Home²², the City of Santa Clara has a 2.38 jobs-housing ratio imbalance (i.e., 2.38 jobs for every

²⁰ *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide*. World Health Organization, 2007.

²¹ *UCLA Center for Health Policy Records, UCLA Felding School of Public Health, Interactive Dashboard for Santa Clara County, 2015*. <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-disparities/elder-health/elder-index-data/Pages/CostOfLiving.aspx>

²² <https://siliconvalleyathome.org/resource-map/jobs-and-housing/>

housing unit) making it even harder for seniors, particularly those on a fixed income, to access housing.

The City of Santa Clara is committed to ensuring availability of affordable housing to moderate, low, very-low and extremely-low income households and seniors through the adoption of the Affordable Housing Ordinance and Impact Fees. The new requirements will include a combination of inclusionary requirements for residential projects and impact fees for smaller projects and nonresidential projects to provide a steady stream of affordable housing units and income to fund the provision of affordable housing projects across the City.

The City also uses its Federal grant allocations to help seniors in a variety of ways. The City's Neighborhood Conservation and Improvement Program (NCIP) provides minor rehabilitation to owner-occupied, single family homes. Loans and grants are provided to low income residents, whose incomes are at or below 80% of the County median, adjusted for household size. Many of the program's participants are seniors who use the program to implement accessibility upgrades, enabling them to age in place.

Additionally, the City distributes a portion of its annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award to local public service agencies, many of which serve Santa Clara seniors. These agencies include:

CATHOLIC CHARITIES--LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

2625 Zanker Road, Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95134

(408) 944-0567

Under the direction of the California Department of Aging, provides advocacy, complaint investigation, including violations of personal rights and elder abuse, and problem resolution for primarily elderly (60+ years of age) residents in the City's two nursing facilities and 15 assisted living/residential care facilities for the elderly.

SANTA CLARA SENIOR CENTER--SENIOR NUTRITION

1303 Fremont Street, Santa Clara, CA 95050

(408) 615-3170

Provides daily, balanced meals to persons 60 years and older, targeting frail, isolated senior citizens. Meals are served at the City's Senior Center. The median age of clients is 76. The Program is operated by the City Parks and Recreation Department, under a contract with the County of Santa Clara.

SENIOR ADULTS LEGAL ASSISTANCE (SALA)--ELDERS LEGAL SERVICES

1425 Koll Circle, Suite 109, San Jose, CA 95112

(408) 295-5991

Provides free legal services to seniors (age 60 and older). Services are provided by appointment, two intake days a month at the City Senior Center on Fremont Avenue, and by phone. Homebound elders may receive home visits. Services include legal advice/referrals, simple document writing, and legal representation.

LIVE OAK ADULT DAY SERVICES--SENIOR ADULT DAY CARE
1147 Minnesota Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125

(408) 971-9363

Serves frail and dependent seniors with an adult day care program consisting of recreation, interactive social activities, adaptive physical exercise, nutritious meals and personal care. In addition, caregivers receive respite and support services, including counseling and referrals, to assist them in their efforts to maintain their senior relative in their home.

HEART OF THE VALLEY—SENIOR TRANSPORTATION
1550 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95050

(408) 241-1571

City CDBG funds provide support for door-to-door transportation and assist with day-to-day tasks for seniors who are 65 years of age or older. Riders pay no fee. Transportation and in-home services are provided by volunteers. The program does not provide transportation for persons in wheelchairs. Persons needing accessible vehicles for transportation are referred to the countywide paratransit program.

SILICON VALLEY INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER—HOUSING PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2202 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95131

(408) 894-9041

This program provides City of Santa Clara residents who have disabilities with education and training on all aspects of how to conduct a housing search for affordable, accessible housing to transition from homelessness, healthcare facilities or unstable, temporary housing including emergency assistance, security deposits, rental assistance (based on available resources), information and referral and access to independent living services. This support is accomplished through one-on-one service provision and group workshops.

Over the next 5 years, the City of Santa Clara hopes to create at least 400 new senior affordable housing units by leveraging Federal, County, and local subsidies. These units will provide resources, amenities, and supportive services to seniors in Santa Clara, enabling them to downsize if necessary.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Sports and Recreation Assets

In September 2013, Council adopted a goal to enhance community sports and recreational assets. Since then, Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding has been prioritized and allocated on an annual basis from available sources such as the Capital Project Reserve Fund, the [Housing Development Impact Fees](#) (subject to Quimby Act & Mitigation Fee Act) and supplemented with grants, corporate and individual donations.

New Development Parkland Dedication, Credits & Fees

Parkland dedication, credits and fees are city building requirements (outlined in Chapter 17.35 Park and Recreation Land of the City Code) which help the City acquire and develop adequate public parkland to meet the additional demand created by new residential housing projects and/or to mitigate the impacts of new housing developments on existing park and recreation facilities. The amount of parkland to be dedicated is based on the type and size of the proposed development. Credits refer to fee reductions for parkland dedication, when eligible for specific private open space and recreation amenities. Fees in-lieu of parkland dedication are used by the City to acquire and develop additional public parkland, and/or for capital projects to improve existing parks and recreation facilities. The City encourages developers to contact the Parks and Recreation Department with preliminary ideas, questions and schematic plans early in the planning process in order to find ways to meet requirements.

Park Amenity and Design Standards

The City of Santa Clara Parks & Recreation design standards were developed by the Department of Parks & Recreation. The goal of establishing design standards is to identify the elements that are consistently found in the City of Santa Clara park system and to provide standard guidance to landscape architects, grounds maintenance staff and others as to what is acceptable. These standards cover a wide range of park elements, identifying specific product types, materials and installation practices.

The Parks & Recreation Department uses the following criteria when developing outdoor spaces:

- Use research-based best practices, and comply with all current Codes;
- Incorporate principles of inclusive playground design in the individual elements and the overall playground environmental design;
- Provide “age-friendly” (multigenerational) spaces;
- Integrate nature and habitat (California native, drought resistant palette) into play environments;
- Provide outreach/education and master planning with residents and community partners;
- Incorporate seven elements of play (balancing, swinging, sliding, climbing, brachiating spinning, running/free play);
- Address safe routes to parks (system connectivity) and ADA;
- Provide, measure and report desired outcomes such as health/fitness; and
- Be sustainable (in materials, construction, operations, and maintenance).

It is understood that City park sites should be easily accessible to the public by various modes of transportation: vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian. Current Federal ADA accessibility guidelines must be incorporated into the design of parks, park facilities and amenities. ADA accessibility should be accommodated at all sites to the fullest extent practical. It is also understood that all new park

facilities, elements and components must conform to the most recent uniform building codes, California laws, regulations and safety guidelines. Finally, where applicable, all current City ordinances, Public Works standards and Utilities standards will be followed. Such guidelines are published elsewhere.

Facility Condition Assessment

In April 2017, The City of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (CSC) selected Kitchell CEM to perform Facility Condition Assessments (FCA's) for 49 park and building facilities located within the City of Santa Clara. The purpose of this assessment was to determine the conditions of the facilities in order to identify the costs of current deficiencies of the existing City infrastructure as well as to forecast anticipated future capital renewals for site systems for the next 20 years.

Transportation and Streets

Santa Clara is currently in a transitional period with respect to developing from suburban to a more urban lifestyle. As the growth contemplated in the City's General Plan becomes a reality, in addition to roadway and traffic signal improvements, the City is also looking to alternative methods of travel to: 1) reduce the need for automobile use and 2) increase health benefits to our constituents. For example, non-motorized transportation infrastructure (such as bicycle, pedestrian, and trails) is being master planned. Also, necessary regional funding for roadway maintenance is starting to open up with the 2017 passage of California Senate Bill 1 and the 2016 approval of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Measure B ballot measure.

The City has allocated funding in the City's Budget towards improvement to the overall transportation system. Specific to senior needs, the City is working on implementing senior and accessible friendly improvements in the transportation system. This includes:

- Retiming traffic signals to increase the "Walk/Don't Walk" intervals to assist those with slower walking speeds.
- Installing crosswalk sensors at traffic signals that will detect if a person is still crossing the street when the pedestrian crossing phase nears completion. If successful, the opposing traffic would be slightly delayed to allow pedestrians to safely finish their crossing of the intersection.
- Working with technology companies to facilitate implementation of smart traffic signals to connect transportation users to traffic signals. Uses include communications to vehicles to provide optimal travel speeds, remaining green time, dynamic rerouting of traffic, presence of pedestrians crossing the roadway, confirmation of detection of bicyclists/pedestrians, presence of emergency vehicles and crash avoidance notification.
- Installing low stress level bicycle facilities (Class 1 trails and Class 4 Protected Bicycle Lanes) on City bike routes.

- Implementation of wider roadway stripes to assist autonomous vehicles and human drivers
- All new traffic signs will exceed reflectivity standards for better nighttime recognition.
- When possible, installing wider sidewalks with buffers from the roadway to enhance comfort for pedestrians.
- Installing/retrofitting streets to better prioritize pedestrian movements (i.e. tightening of street corner returns and removal of free right turn islands).
- Retrofitting handicap ramps to ensure ADA compliance.

As the City continues to grow and change, we strive for a multimodal (automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, transit) transportation system that provides safe, efficient, and effective mobility options for all Santa Clara residents and businesses. This system would be implemented to accommodate all members of the public, regardless of age or abilities.

Health, Wellness and Nutrition

The Parks & Recreation Department's Senior Center houses the City's Health & Wellness Program (H&W Program), which assists Santa Clara's adults age 50+ and their families with public health and social service needs free of charge, by appointment. In 2017, program staff engaged over 4200 individuals (non-unique), or approximately 350/month.

Staffed by Registered Nurses and a Social Worker, this program focuses on key areas of support relevant to a variety of client needs, evidence-based goals, and desired public health outcomes:

- Safety net for at-risk older adults to prevent elder abuse via home visits and collaboration with Adult Protective Services;
- Navigation of healthcare systems to access appointments and connection to services;
- Public health screenings and events, such as a weekly blood pressure clinic, pre-diabetic assessments, bi-annual hearing tests, and an annual health and wellness fair;
- Health teaching and care management for those with chronic diseases (heart disease, diabetes, dementia) and behavioral health (mental health, substance use) conditions;
- Assessment of older adults' functional abilities and needs, research for available resources, and partnering to implement supports and interventions with the goal of helping individuals maintain optimum health, independence, and safety in their homes;
- Assistance locating, affording, and transitioning to housing at all levels: rooms, apartments, board and care/assisted living, and skilled nursing placements;
- Accessing transportation resources;
- Locating and engaging home care;

- Social engagement experiences to combat isolation and loneliness, such as movie screenings, home visits, support groups, and a “friendly face” destination for newcomers to the Senior Center;
- Collaboration with other City of Santa Clara departments (library, police, fire, community development, Silicon Valley Power) to identify and reach out to older adult residents who may need services;
- Partnerships with area universities and non-profits for community education and enrichment, such as The Alzheimer’s Association, The Health Trust (Diabetes Self-Management), USF School of Nursing, Santa Clara University;

The 2017 Senior Needs Assessments survey respondents indicate that the majority of Santa Clara older adults feel healthy, active, and socially well-supported as they continue to grow older within their community. While 71% report their health as “Very Good” or “Excellent,” even this population requires occasional health/social service planning or resource assistance. It is the focus of the City of Santa Clara Senior Center’s Health & Wellness Program (H&W Program) to assist the remaining 29% of older Santa Clarans who do not report good overall health access to consistent healthcare; safety and functional supports at home; exercise opportunities, or access to or the ability to prepare healthy food.

In addition to The Health & Wellness Program, Santa Clarans access medical and behavioral health care and social services through their primary healthcare systems within City limits:

- Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF)
- Stanford Healthcare
- Santa Clara Urgent Care
- Private practices: medical, dental, and behavioral health care needs

The services and resources provided by The Health & Wellness Program have proven to be a valuable resource to Santa Clara’s older adults and their families. It is the goal of this program to continue to offer the range and depth of services currently provided, while remaining flexible and responsive to future community needs.

Social and Civic Engagement

Older Santa Clara residents have a variety of social engagement opportunities, through participation in community groups, religious organizations, service organizations, city commissions, City-wide special events, and volunteer opportunities at all levels of involvement. Adult education and life-long learning experiences are available for a wide range of interests, through the Santa Clara Senior Center, Library, and Santa Clara Unified School District.

Access to Community Resources and Information

The City of Santa Clara promotes a wide range of government and community events and disseminates information via the City's website, utility bill inserts, Municipal TV Channel 15, banners at key street intersections, fliers at community gathering places, and email notifications.

The City of Santa Clara Library is a community hub that provides all types of presentations, classes, and events ranging from genealogy to health care to hobbies.

The Santa Clara Senior Center promotes Senior Center classes, events, and community activities via communication boards in the Senior Center, a monthly newsletter that is also posted to the Senior Center website, email notifications, and flyers. The "Be Strong, Live Long" Health & Wellness Fair is held annually in May, which hosts high-caliber non-profit and government agencies that provide information about their services.

The Senior Center front desk staff and the Health & Wellness Program's RNs and Social Worker are extremely knowledgeable about resources and services in the community, including county, state, and federal programs. In addition, the Senior Center has a weekly volunteer who is a trained resource specialist, available by appointment, free of charge. City residents are able to meet with staff to learn information and resources free of charge.

For those who don't own a computer or who are not computer-savvy, Health & Wellness Program staff can help facilitate accessing information and services online. Tech classes are conducted frequently at the Senior Center and at City libraries to provide 1:1 training on how to better utilize social media, email, and search functions, and all locations host computer labs for free computer use. The City of Santa Clara also provides free outdoor Wi-Fi throughout the City via SVP Meter Connect.

Sourcewise, the Santa Clara County Area Agency on Aging, maintains a comprehensive database for resources and services, accessible online or by 1:1 assistance provided by Sourcewise volunteers over the phone. The United Way's 2-1-1 system is another opportunity for learning information.

The City of Santa Clara desires to maintain and promote the range and depth of services currently provided, while remaining flexible and responsive to future community needs.

In Conclusion

The City plans to draw upon the assessment findings to formulate a work plan that will align the City's programs, policies, and priorities with the varying needs of older adults and inform coordination with providers of older adult services. As the assessment illustrated, the needs of older adults vary depending on a diverse array of factors, such as age, employment status, and income. As a next step, the City will build upon the strategies that were suggested by focus group participants and partners, and identify evidence-based, cost-effective practices that have been implemented by other communities. Additionally, Santa Clara will align strategies with

other planning efforts focused on older adults. Santa Clara may utilize the AARP's framework of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of progress. In doing so, Santa Clara will be joining a growing number of communities around the world striving to create livable communities that benefit and support older adults.