



City of East Palo Alto Age-Friendly Action Plan

2025–2028



“Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old. We create it by believing passionately in something that still does not exist.” — **Franz Kafka**



Small but Mighty

The Story of East Palo Alto

Visit epacommunityarchive.org/smallbutmighty to watch ***Small but Mighty***, an inspiring story about how a small city fought for self-determination through grassroots organizing, securing its place in the heart of Silicon Valley.

Small but Mighty was awarded three 2023 Muse awards: two gold awards for Cinematography & Short Film along with a platinum award for the Documentary category.



Executive Summary

On June 20, 2023, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) formally designated the City of East Palo Alto an Age-friendly City. This marked the beginning of a multi-year process in the City's age-friendly journey and reflects the community's persistent and ongoing commitment to promoting an inclusive and supportive environment for all ages. This action plan provides a clear, strategic direction for the City's initiatives. This plan will outline specific goals, objectives, actions, and responsibilities that need to be taken to address the needs of all our residents, both old and young.

On a global scale, many developed countries have experienced a demographic change. There are now more older people over 65 than children younger than age five*. In the United States, more than 60 million people are over age 65, representing over 17% of our country's population. This will continue to increase significantly over the next thirty years.

East Palo Alto is committed to being an age-friendly community and developing relevant policies, public services, and programs. We respect our community's values and have conducted outreach to learn about the characteristics that would enhance the quality of life and promote health and wellness for our residents. We have incorporated the voices of our older adult residents and the community organizations that serve them in developing the strategies of this Action Plan. The Age-Friendly Task Force also worked closely with the Senior Advisory Committee, whose purpose includes reviewing and recommending programs and services to the City Council to enhance the lives of the City's senior population.

**Aging in the United States: Strategic Framework for a National Plan on Aging, May 2024.*

The City is creating an action plan as a roadmap to help us build upon our progress since its incorporation over forty years ago. This document demonstrates our commitment to creating a city that supports inclusivity and diversity to help older adults remain vital, independent, active, and engaged in their community for as long as possible.

The Age-Friendly Action Plan outlines applicable priorities for 2025 through 2028 and will provide the foundation for future iterations. It is a living document that will continue to evolve as the needs of our older population change, integrating progress made on age-friendly initiatives. Our commitment reflects the core values of our city, ensuring that East Palo Alto is livable for all ages and abilities, and celebrating our diverse, multicultural community.

As life expectancies increase, our longer lifetimes must be accompanied by opportunities, programs, and services that support a good quality of life as we age. The Action Plan's goals and strategies will support our progress in identifying how we will engage our community, expand our services, create opportunities for residents to thrive, and provide feedback on progress. We will strengthen existing relationships and establish new partnerships to facilitate increased collaborative efforts. We are committed to making our community a place where all individuals can age with dignity and agency in their life journey. We intend to empower our older residents to acquire the programs, services, and connections they need as they age.

East Palo Alto has experienced significant progression and expansion with the formation of brand-new housing, retail establishments, the Four Seasons Hotel, and the University Square community. These have attracted a new population to our already active community. The City invites you to work with us as we advance our vision of building a vibrant, thriving, livable community that fosters connection and engagement for all, with a special focus on supporting our older residents.



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Overview:

AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) published a Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, outlining domains of community life that impact adults over 55. The result of its work was a guide in identifying and implementing eight essential domains to incorporate into establishing an Age-friendly City. Becoming an Age-friendly City involves comprehensively assessing a community's age-friendliness, developing an action plan, and implementing and evaluating initiatives. In 2010, the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities was developed to facilitate an exchange of ideas among cities to enhance the lives of older residents.

The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities is a global initiative to make cities and communities more accommodating for older adults. This organization includes 1,705 towns and communities across 60 countries. Developing age-friendly cities is a way to ensure we can age well where we feel comfortable, safe, respected, and included. The network aims to enable cities and communities to become increasingly age-friendly. This opportunity reflects a city's commitment to listen to its older residents' needs and to assess and monitor their age-friendly physical and social environments. It serves as a platform for cities to share best practices, learn from each other's experiences, and collaborate on innovative solutions to the challenges of aging. Membership demonstrates a city's commitment to global age-friendliness and dedication to learning and improving their community.

In conjunction with WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities, AARP became a network affiliate in 2012. The network started with six members and now has over 65 members, covering over 32 million US residents. Once a member, cities are automatically entered into the WHO Global Network. In addition, there is a wide range of free resources on age-friendly and livable communities. Age-friendly environments should be free from physical and social barriers and supported by policies, services, and technologies that promote physical and mental well-being throughout one's life expectancy. Age-friendly policies, projects, and practices assist older people in meeting their own basic needs, being mobile, building and maintaining relationships, and contributing to their communities.

Overview: Age-Friendly Cities (continued)

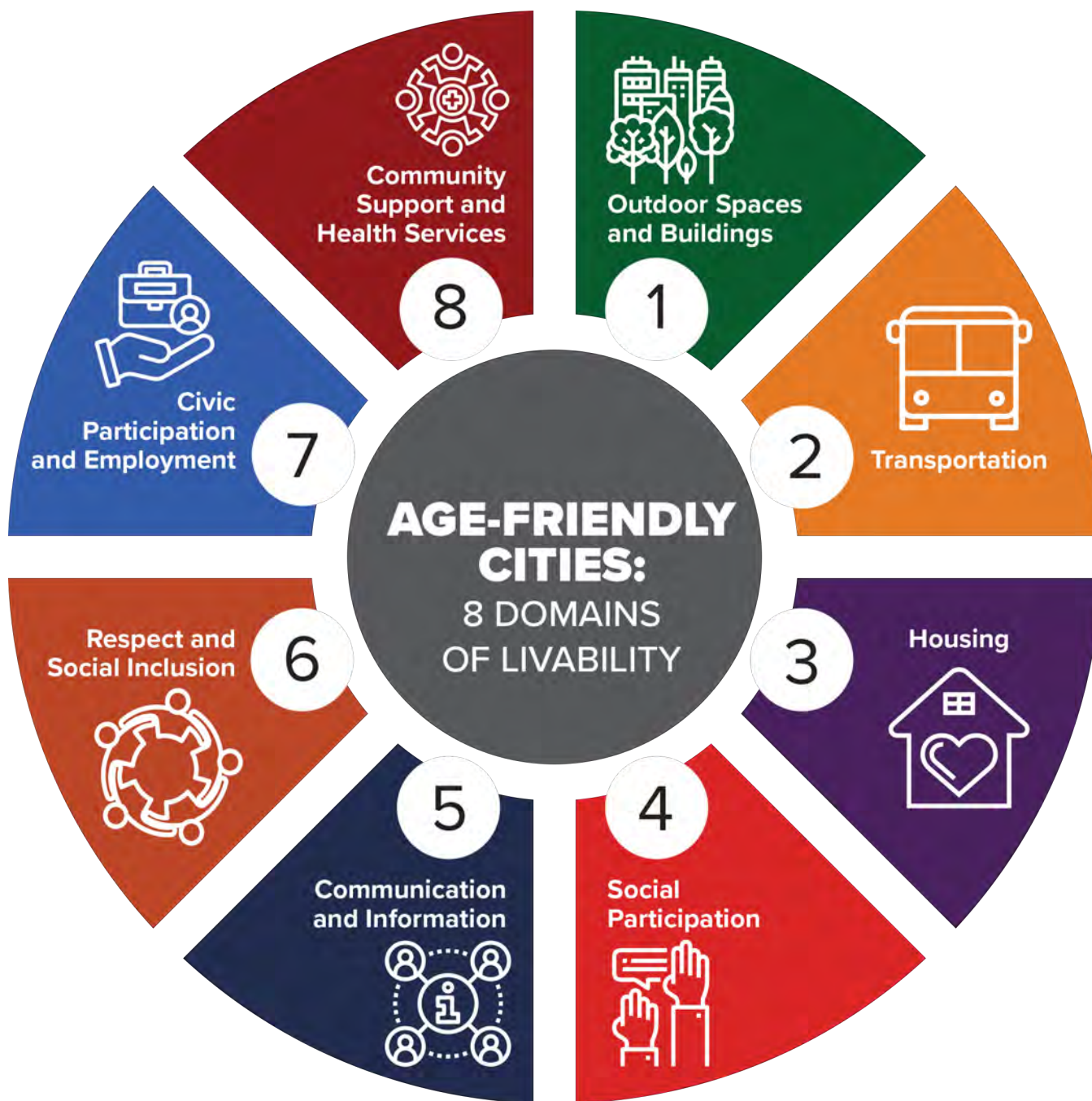
According to California's Master Plan for Aging dashboard, 21% of the California population was 60 or older in 2022. This means approximately 8,334,216 people out of 39,146,273 were 60 or over. In San Mateo County, 25% of the population was 60 or older in 2022. By 2034, the United States will have more adults 65 or older than children under 18.

The benefits of an age-friendly city for older adults are significant. An age-friendly environment and community foster a more inclusive, supportive, and vibrant community, improving accessibility, enhancing social connections and relationships intergenerationally, and also creating a more sustainable and resilient community. This designation is a testament to the commitment to create an environment where older adults can thrive and continue contributing to their communities.

The WHO and AARP aim to make cities and communities age-friendly by developing innovative policies, projects, and programs demonstrating evidence-based and sustainable solutions based on eight domains. This action plan includes an additional domain related to emergency services that does not play a part in the original eight domains. This domain ensures that the older population is well-prepared and supported during emergencies.



AGE-FRIENDLY DOMAINS



NOTE: A ninth additional domain has been added to highlight East Palo Alto's Action Plan for **Emergency Services**.



DOMAIN 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

An age-friendly domain of outdoor spaces and buildings should focus on creating physical environments that are accessible, clean, safe, free of obstructions, and conducive to active aging. Outdoor spaces should be walkable neighborhoods with well-maintained sidewalks, roads, and crosswalks with sufficient crossing times. This domain should focus on fostering social inclusion and community engagement. Promoting an environment where older adults can continue to participate fully in community life and well-being and live independently for as long as possible is critical and essential. Some vital features to explore in this domain for an age-friendly community include, but are not limited to:



- Public spaces and buildings should be easily accessible to older adults, including those with mobility issues or disabilities.
- Building entrances should be easy to navigate and feature ramps, non-slip floors, handrails, automatic doors, accessible elevators, sufficient seating and toilets, proper lighting, and prominent signage.
- Outdoor spaces should encourage walking by providing well-maintained sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and traffic-calming measures. Green spaces and parks should also be spacious, clean, and comfortable for older adults.
- Spaces should also offer opportunities for social interaction and include gathering spaces such as community gardens, open plazas, playgrounds with exercise equipment for both youth and older adults, and open areas for recreational activities.
- Building design should consider the needs of older adults, incorporating features that enhance comfort, safety, and usability for people of all ages. Bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways should be provided separately.



DOMAIN 2: Transportation

An age-friendly community needs affordable, convenient, safe, clean, and accessible modes of transportation to maintain and enhance residents' independence. Public transportation systems need to be designed with universal accessibility in mind. Fostering social inclusion and participation through transportation is critical. Affordable and efficient transportation options enable older adults to access shopping, healthcare needs, libraries, community centers, senior centers, and social activities. These help reduce isolation and promote a sense of community and well-being. Some critical features to explore in this domain include:



- Having designated seating for seniors on shuttles, buses, and trains.
- Clear signage, audible announcements, and user-friendly schedules ensure that older adults can easily navigate transportation systems.
- Transportation should be affordable for older adults. Discounted fares or subsidies for seniors ensure transportation is available for everyone. In addition, volunteer-based transport services can make transportation more accessible and equitable.
- Safety in transportation involves well-lit and secure bus stops, transit stations that have benches with roofs to protect them from the weather, clear signage, and available and readable schedules. Transportation should also be convenient and available at night, on weekends, and holidays.
- Transportation should be accessible and affordable, such as buses, trains, shuttles, taxis, and private transportation. Drivers should be patient and courteous. Transportation must be convenient for residents, and destinations should be widespread.
- Roads should include traffic calming measures and marked bike lanes to reduce accidents. For those who drive, road signs, traffic signals, and parking facilities should be designed for easy visibility and usability. Driver education programs and refresher courses can help older adults maintain their skills and confidence while driving.
- Parking and drop-off areas are plentiful and conveniently located. Priority parking and drop-off areas are critical for people with special needs and must be available and respected.
- Continual education and information are essential to providing clear and easily accessible information about transportation options, applications, schedules, and how to utilize these resources.



DOMAIN 3: Housing

An age-friendly community needs safe, conveniently accessible, and affordable housing that allows older adults to live comfortably and independently for as long as possible in their communities. They must be able to live independently and safely within their own homes and communities. Housing is essential to the security and well-being of the community. Older adults need to be able to age in place with dignity and comfort. Some critical features to explore in this domain for an age-friendly community include:

- Housing should be near essential services such as medical clinics, grocery stores, community centers, pharmacies, libraries, and public transportation.
- Single-story housing with accessible living spaces on the ground floor can reduce physical barriers for individuals with limited mobility. Adaptability is a key consideration in age-friendly housing, and it is essential to ensure that a home can be modified to accommodate the changing needs of aging. Enhancing safety may include installing smart home systems, medical alert devices, grab bars, walk-in showers, lever-style handles, and adequate lighting.
- The availability of community-based support services, such as home health care, housekeeping, and meal delivery will assist older adults in living independently.
- Various housing options must be available and affordable, such as accessory dwelling units, single-room rentals in single-family homes, multi-dwelling units, condominiums, assisted living facilities, and age-integrated neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments integrating housing with retail and public spaces can create a vibrant neighborhood catering to various needs. These housing options foster intergenerational connections, promote social engagement, and offer the possibility of shared resources like transportation.
- Intergenerational housing offers the opportunity for community engagement and interaction. It can encourage interaction between generations by providing communal spaces such as activity rooms, kitchens, and community gardens. It is also culturally appropriate in some communities.





DOMAIN 4: Social Participation

An age-friendly community needs accessible and affordable activities and opportunities for social interaction and engagement for people of all ages, cultures, and abilities. There needs to be substantial value. Fostering strong social connections and engagement opportunities for people of all ages is critical. As a community ages, creating environments that enhance and allow opportunities for meaningful interactions to combat isolation and improve quality of life becomes essential. Social participation benefits older adults and the community, strengthening the social fabric and enhancing all residents' collective well-being. Some features to explore are:



- Affordable or free programs can ensure that economic constraints do not exclude people from participating in community life. This also needs to include transportation for older adults who do not drive so they can attend social activities.
- People have various interests, so a wide array of programs and activities need to be offered to address these needs.
- Events need to be held at times convenient for the older population.
- Venues for events and activities need to be well-lit, conveniently located and accessible by public transportation.
- Cultural programming and proper translation services are significant due to diversity. They foster inclusivity and celebrate the varying backgrounds of the community members.
- For older adults to be responsive, extensive and consistent outreach and dissemination of information in multiple formats, including electronic and hard copy options, and in various languages, are needed.
- Promoting intergenerational activities can help bridge the gap between different age groups, fostering mutual understanding and respect.



DOMAIN 5: Communication and Information

An age-friendly community provides multiple sources of information promptly. Information is multi-lingual, covers various topics, and is readily available and distributed widely throughout the whole community. Residents must be informed, connected, and empowered to navigate daily life effectively and efficiently. Materials need to be disseminated in a timely and continual manner. Connections with the community are essential. Some features to explore include:

- Information should be simple, easy to read, easy to understand, and concise.
- Education and access to the digital world and technology are sources for effective communication with the community.
- Training programs and access to technology will help bridge the digital divide and facilitate connections with loved ones and community members.
- Updates related to health services, transportation, emergency alerts, and social activities and events are needed.
- Regular and widespread distribution of information is coordinated and located in a centralized location that is easily accessible.
- Printed and digital information, including television, radio, newsletters and newspapers are available and visually appealing to older adults.
- Access to computers and the internet in public places such as libraries and community centers is essential.
- When older adults are informed, it increases the foundation of connection, independence, and inclusion.
- All materials should be available in a community's prevalent languages.





DOMAIN 6: **Respect and Social Inclusion**

In an age-friendly community, older adults must feel validated, included, and respected in their community. Older adults need to be valued and acknowledged for their contributions. In addition, they need to be respected and included in all facets of community life. The community must accept older adults regardless of gender, religion, economic status, native language, race, and cultural background. An age-friendly community explores the following features:

- Older people are visible and depicted positively and without stereotyping; they must be considered essential community members.
- Events and community gatherings attract all generations by accommodating age-specific needs and preferences.
- Communities, businesses, and schools provide opportunities to learn about aging and older people and create a more cohesive community that works and socializes.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of older adults to their families and communities. Recognizing older residents in their community for their past and present contributions will help increase self-esteem and sense of belonging.
- Include older adults in the project and policy decision-making process.





DOMAIN 7: Civic Participation and Employment

An age-friendly community values the wisdom and experience of older adults and their contributions to the betterment of their community. Older adults must enhance their sense of purpose, belonging, and economic stability. The aging population is essential to their community's vitality and sustainability. Some critical elements to explore include:

- Creating and supporting both employment and volunteer opportunities.
- Employers should be encouraged to value the experience, skills, and wisdom, and provide education and training to expand their skills so they can participate in the workshop part-time or full-time.
- Ensuring transportation to work and volunteer sites can motivate continued participation.
- Creating an environment that supports community participation and employment involves removing barriers and providing resources.
- Both public and private sectors encourage and facilitate the membership of older people.





DOMAIN 8: Community Support and Health Services

An age-friendly community provides adequate access to healthcare services and community resources locally and regionally. Older adults want to live independently, with dignity and experience, and maintain the best quality of life. As people age, their health and support needs become more complex and require an expanded network of services that are affordable and accessible. Some critical features to explore in this domain include:

- Coordinating services across a wide range of providers to help ensure that older adults receive holistic care tailored to their needs.
- Health and social services must be conveniently accessible to all means of transportation.
- Health facilities and clinics are accessible and safe for all members.
- Resources are easily accessible and easy to navigate.
- Information regarding health service delivery is coordinated and administratively simple.
- All staff are respectful and can relay information concisely and simply; enough staff speak the community's prevalent languages.
- Services promote physical, mental, and social well-being.
- Providing an abundant array of resources, especially when family support is lacking.





Photo by Christopher Kao,
courtesy of Droneshot

Action Plan

An Age-Friendly Action Plan is a document developed over a five-year cycle that includes an assessment of the significant unmet needs of older adults, prioritizing the potential short and long-term projects to address these needs, and creating the action plan that serves as a roadmap for the city. The assessment process includes focus group interviews of older adult residents and organizations that serve older adults in the community and interviews with City department staff. The information from these interviews is summarized, and priority projects are identified.

The Action Plan is a roadmap and an ongoing resource for the City to determine policies, programs, and initiatives that can be implemented. It creates an environment that supports its older adult community in remaining vital, independent, and active for as long as possible. It is a dynamic tool that can be modified over time due to changes in regulations, the economy, the needs of its residents, or other circumstances. Once the initial five-year cycle has been completed and evaluated, the community assessment process can be reevaluated and updated to integrate future revisions.

In developing its Action Plan, the City of East Palo Alto initially gathered information through three in-person focus groups from April through June 2023 before becoming Age-Friendly Certified. Two focus groups were held with older adults over 55 and ensured that participation was racially and ethnically diverse. The other focus group was comprised of the Age-Friendly Task Force, which is comprised of racially and culturally diverse community advocates and leaders. Although multiple potential

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

projects were discussed in these sessions, it was determined that priority inaugural age-friendly projects needed to focus on the domains of Communication and Information and Social Participation.

When East Palo Alto submitted its membership application to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, and the World Health Organization GNACC, it included the inaugural projects listed below.



Senior Hub

Domain: **Communication and Information**

Although older adults have become more technologically savvy, a digital divide remains. Many need help using electronic devices comfortably. Some may not have a WiFi connection and need financial assistance to obtain a connection, while other people need to purchase a computer, laptop, or other mobile device.

The Senior Center has an appropriate space for creating a Senior Hub for older adults where the environment allows them to become comfortable with computers or electronic devices over time and at their leisure. Seniors may be visiting the Senior Center to enjoy a nutritious lunch, participate in social activities, or browse information on upcoming events. During their visit, it will be convenient that a computer hub is already available where they can informally try out their skills or share learnings with a friend who is also interested. This is seen as a more enjoyable and beneficial opportunity for the senior rather than for the Center to offer one class at a time where there is little or no assistance between classes and the possibility of no WiFi availability at home. The Senior Hub will offer the following:

- Computer stations and WiFi availability
- Older adults may informally use computers each day when the Center is open.
- A welcoming (volunteer/staff) person will be present on specific days and times and can provide technical assistance.

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

The Senior Center would be seen as an information and resource hub, making it easy for older adults to interact whether they are there for:

- Flyers
- List of charities
- Senior resource list
- Cookies, tea, coffee
- Opportunities for learning from a high school student
- Information on emergency planning, dementia, or upcoming events
- Computer classes

City staff and community leaders have already conducted additional meetings to discuss the Senior Hub project in detail. This project is highly beneficial to older adult residents and will require few resources (meaning low cost).

Expand Communication: Focus on Seniors

Domain: **Communication and Information**

In East Palo Alto, the domain of Communication and Information is a work in progress. The City and the Senior Center have wanted to collaborate to improve outreach and support for their older adult residents. Given the community's abundant diversity, providing information in the predominant languages spoken here, including Spanish, Chinese, and Tongan, will also be vital.

Expanded outreach to older adults will increase the dissemination of information:

- Include information for older adults in the City's weekly community calendar of events.
- Expand information related to older adults in the Senior Center calendar of events.
- Create a message board with older adult-specific opportunities and resources at the Senior Center and library.
- Have announcements made at faith-based organizations and churches.
- Distribute newsletters at supermarkets and farmers' markets.
- Phone calls on both landlines and mobile phones.



ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

- Flyers: post on Senior Center and Library bulletin boards, kiosks, and businesses that allow posting of flyers in the window.
- Word of mouth.
- Provide information in languages of our significant demographics.
- Bring back the Senior Expo with vendor booths and workshops.
- Promote countywide resources, for example, *Help at Home* and *Rebuilding Together*.
- Collaborate with nearby cities to share ideas on how to improve communication and information for older adults.



Several categories of information that have not been disseminated in the past will include launching a campaign to increase awareness about emergency preparedness, providing affordable housing information and education for older adult residents to improve access and offer older adults health-related presentations by medical facilities and health service centers and providers.

Increased Opportunities to Socialize

Domain: **Social Participation**

Focus group participants expressed their interest in having more activities and opportunities to socialize with each other; the opportunities can be both organized and informal. There is an urgent need for seniors to interact and converse. Now that the Senior Center has opened, it re-established many of its former activities and offers new ones. Some that are being offered or are being considered are:

- Tai Chi classes (with interpreter).
- Dance, Zumba, Balance and Mobility classes, Bocce Ball, Hula Hoop, Bingo, Singing, and activating the Sewing Room.
- Intergenerational and multicultural activities are opportunities to increase understanding and awareness of aging and all age demographics. Many grandparents and grandchildren live in the same home; this facilitates and offers a chance to have ongoing intergenerational group activities (considered as a pilot program during summer 2023).
- Field trips that are easy to access and culturally relevant.
- Afternoon activities such as movies, concerts, or other outings.

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

- Maximize use of the Senior Center space: classes or activities can be held in collaboration/ partnership with, e.g., the YMCA, or use the park next door to the Center to offer courses.

Also being considered:

- For the more active older adults, a walking group can be initiated; they can eventually plan trips or other get-togethers on their own.
- Identifying park areas that can be used for social activities, singing, or exercise groups.
- Provide benches along the perimeter of parks for easier accessibility and add walking and sitting areas to the beautiful Bay Trail.
- Having age-friendly, comfortable seating available for outdoor events with priority seating for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Offering educational presentations in-person or via Zoom, such as speakers from AARP or webinars on topics that apply to older adults, such as how to identify and avoid scams.
- Senior Center will soon offer mental health counseling again, which is valuable since the pandemic was challenging.
- The new Magical Bridge, an innovative and inclusive playground for all ages and abilities is a long-term project that covers seven acres.



Some activities can be offered through the City and the Senior Center. In addition, certain classes will provide an interpreter for Spanish- or Mandarin-speaking participants. Safe and affordable (low- or no-cost) transportation to activities and events was mentioned in all focus groups, as many older residents do not have a secure, convenient way to get around. The Community Services division provides transportation to and from the Senior Center, but more options for transportation are needed. Transportation is seen as essential. More older adults would go to the Senior Center and attend activities in general if there was transportation for them, such as a shuttle designated for seniors.

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

After the focus group comments, the City approved field trips and events for Summer 2023 (end of June through August). City-funded transportation was provided for these activities, including:

- Casino Cache Creek
- Filoli Gardens
- Game Night in the Park
- Brown Estate wine tasting, Napa
- Monterey Bay Aquarium
- Steel Magnolias at Center for Performing Arts, Mountain View
- Japanese Tea Garden, San Francisco



Other events and cultural activities:

- Music in University Circle
- Senior Health Faire
- Senior Day

A pillar of the Surgeon General’s Advisory National Strategy to Advance Social Connection is increasing the connections we have in our lives, as this plays a critical role in societal health. The social connections and strengthening of relationships resulting from these field trips and events align with this strategy. There will also be intergenerational opportunities to enjoy varied experiences, creating an even stronger community.

East Palo Alto received its age-friendly certification on June 20, 2023. The Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFE) then applied for and received approval for a state grant from the California Department of Aging (CDA) to work with the City of East Palo Alto further in developing the City’s Age-Friendly Action Plan. As recent focus groups had already been held, CAFE conducted a Town Hall in September 2024 focused on the unmet needs of diverse, older adult residents in the eight domains of livability. East Palo Alto added the category of Emergency Services due to the impact of climate change, which has increased the frequency and intensity of disasters and has impacted the vulnerability of communities. A copy of the reports for the 2023 focus groups and 2024 Town Hall are available on East Palo Alto’s Age-Friendly City Initiative webpage at: <https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/communityprograms/page/age-friendly-city-initiative>.

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

An Age-Friendly Project Spreadsheet was created to include potential projects from the initial focus groups, the Town Hall, and interviews with City departments.

During 2024, East Palo Alto worked with AARP to disseminate a city-wide survey to identify the unmet needs of older people in their community based on the eight domains of livability: <https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>. General trends resulting from the analysis received are included in the Action Plan. The City advertised the survey utilizing multiple methods, including promotion in its weekly newsletter, sending paper copies through its Senior Advisory Committee, and having each participant complete one while on the Senior Field trips. The City also publicized the survey during multiple City events and contacted several faith-based communities.



The City of East Palo Alto's Community Services Division and the Public Works Department received numerous grants even before becoming age-friendly designated. Many of these will positively impact unmet needs expressed by participants in the focus groups and the Town Hall in the domains of Outdoor Spaces and Buildings and Mobility. Grants received by the Community Services Division included an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Transportation Grant effective from July 2023 through September 2024, and San Mateo County Aging and Adult Services Older Americans Act Regulation/Rule (OAAR) Intergenerational funding effective July 2023 through September 2024. Grants received by the Public Works Department included:

US101/University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing and Interchange Project — \$16,101,000

Project funding was provided by the federal (HPP Grant), state (SB1 Grant), and local (SMCTA and Stanford Recreation Mitigation Grants) sources. The construction project is being administered by the City and Ghirardelli Associates. The overcrossing includes improvements and increased safety to two highway ramps and will improve access to shopping, parks, and other amenities and also increasing the connection between residents who live on both sides of Highway 101. The project improvements include constructing a pedestrian overcrossing of US 101, constructing a Class I bikeway connecting the pedestrian overcrossing modifying existing traffic signals, installing new street lights, installing

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION (continued)

landscaping and irrigation, and more. Detailed information can be found at the following link: <https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/publicworks/page/us101-university-avenue-pedestrian-overcrossing-and-interchange-project>.

Joel Davis Park Improvements — \$424,695

The project included the installation of a public restroom at Joel Davis Park which will help support greater use of the park by older adults and all residents: <https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/publicworks/page/joel-davis-restroom-project>.



East Palo Alto Library — \$3,075,000

The City of East Palo Alto (EPA) is also designing the new East Palo Alto Library that will be located on Pulgas Avenue. The library project will include a new public library building of approximately 25,000 square feet. It will consist of a two-story structure with offices and community spaces on the ground floor and additional library space, stacks, and exterior decks on the upper floor. Work began on designing FA-16 City of East Palo Alto Library during Summer 2024. The current library is owned and operated by the County of San Mateo located at the Government Center located at 2415 University Ave. Federal and local grants have made this design possible, including American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the City in 2022. More information is available at [EPA Library](#).

Streetlight Replacement and Upgrade Project — \$208,991

Public requests for additional street lighting led to City staff compilation of a list of locations needing new streetlights. New streetlights included poles and foundations, installation of mast arms on existing PG&E poles, and conversions of existing light fixtures to LED fixtures: [Project Plan](#).

Additional information and details are provided in Appendix B Current Age-Friendly Practices, Public Works Department.



An age-friendly community provides a clean and safe environment to enjoy activities. Recreational areas are well-maintained, pedestrian walkways and crosswalks are secure, and rest areas are sufficient with protections against inclement weather. The environment is respectful of older adults by providing accessibility to outdoor activities that they can routinely access. This increases socialization and participation, improving their health and ability to stay engaged and mobile. Building structures are safe and accessible with wide doorways, adequate signage, rest areas, ramps, restrooms with handicap access, and good customer service for older people.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents felt that the parks were well-maintained.
- Respondents felt that traffic signs were generally easy to read.

“We need more opportunities to participate in outdoor group activities, but there are too few areas where we can safely walk and stay active.”

*** Please refer to Appendix A for extensive recommendations in the project spreadsheet. The Goals and Strategies described below in the following domains are just a quick overview of potential projects and options. This is only to be used as a guide rather than as a definitive project to implement.*



GOAL: Provide accessible, clean, safe, and supportive environments that promote the well-being of older adults and people with disabilities.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Implement and continue projects that improve and support the walkability and accessibility of outdoor areas; publicize when completed/available.
 - a. Improve and maintain U.S. 101/University Avenue pedestrian overcrossing and interchange bridge: <https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/publicworks/page/us101-university-avenue-pedestrian-overcrossing-and-interchange-project>
 - b. Continue progress on Martin Luther King Jr. Park Master Plan that includes senior-inclusive designated areas and intergenerational components: <https://sites.google.com/view/mlkparkplanepa/home>
 - c. Increase walkability for seniors in the Baylands and other green areas.

<p>PARTNERS Community Services Senior Advisory Committee IT Department</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Public Works</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)*</p>
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- 2** Improve and enhance accessibility for older adults and those with disabilities.
 - a. Install yellow markers at crosswalks to improve visibility and safety for pedestrians.
 - b. Ensure park restrooms are clean, safe, and accessible for people of all abilities and are ADA-compliant.
 - c. Conduct a City survey to identify locations where benches are needed in parks, along trails, and other public spaces.

<p>PARTNERS Community Volunteers Senior Advisory Committee Community Services</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Public Works</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 6 Months/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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* I/P: In Progress



GOAL: Provide accessible, clean, safe, and supportive environments that promote the well-being of older adults and people with disabilities.

STRATEGIES (continued)

3 Improve sidewalk and street conditions to increase pedestrian safety.

- a. Conduct a walkability survey of neighborhoods to identify areas needing sidewalk repair, better safety markers at crosswalks, benches for rest, ADA compliance, and increased security: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html>.
- b. Assess pilot project results using Pedestrian Crossing Flags: <https://www.seemeflags.com/>.
- c. Provide education on the importance of wearing reflective clothing/shoes for night visibility.

<p>PARTNERS Community Volunteers Task Force Members Senior Center, Inc. Senior Advisory Committee County Library Services</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Public Works Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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An age-friendly community provides affordable, accessible, safe transportation for older adult residents and those with disabilities. This includes shuttles, buses, paratransit, and on-demand options. The age-friendly environment also facilitates mobility by providing safe and walkable sidewalks and streets, visible signage in large font, clearly marked street crossings, benches to rest, and sufficient lighting. Transportation and mobility education is paramount in allowing residents to know their options in accessing available services. This is essential to age well, their continued social and civic life engagement, and their ability to access health services and experience a good quality of life.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents tended to drive themselves or walk to their destination.
- Respondents felt that public transportation was affordable.
- Respondents felt that traffic signs were generally easy to read.

“We need better and safer transportation throughout and beyond our City for seniors and people with disabilities for our medical appointments, food shopping, church, and ongoing day-to-day activities.”



GOAL: Expand accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation and mobility options to support older adults in maintaining their independence, accessing required services and activities safely, and remain connected with their community for as long as possible.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Provide education on available transportation services and how to use them.
 - a. Disseminate information regarding transportation options.
 - i. SamTrans
 - Ride Plus: <https://www.samtrans.com/microtransit-samtrans-ride-plus>; has an app similar to other on-demand services; ADA Ride Plus vans available.
 - Discounted fares for seniors: <https://www.samtrans.com/rider-info/seniors>
 - Local transportation routes: ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/publicworks/page/public-transit
 - ii. Got Wheels! program: <https://peninsulafamilyservice.org/got-wheels/>
 - iii. Peninsula Rides provides information about transportation options for people with mobility challenges: <https://peninsularides.com/>
 - iv. Gogo transportation: <https://www.gogograndparent.com/>
 - v. San Mateo County Senior Mobility Guide (available in English, Spanish, and Chinese): <https://www.samtrans.com/media/8381/download?inline>
 - vi. City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) equity program that aids with transportation for qualified persons.
 - vii. Community Services transportation for Senior Congregate Meal Program.
 - b. Offer technical classes to teach residents how to use available transportation systems and transportation apps.
 - i. Provide multilingual training on completing required transportation forms.
 - ii. Computers should be offered in the lobby where seniors can look up transportation information.

<p>PARTNERS SamTrans County of San Mateo Senior Center, Inc. County Library Services</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 6 Months/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Expand accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation and mobility options to support older adults in maintaining their independence, accessing required services and activities safely, and remain connected with their community for as long as possible.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Enforce traffic laws and traffic safety regulations.
 - a. Increase police patrol at dangerous traffic intersections.
 - i. Strictly enforce traffic rules and stop signs at crosswalks.
 - b. Evaluate additional areas that may need speed bumps to slow traffic and determine crosswalks that may need added/repaired lighting or flashing lights.
 - c. Install cameras on streets to alleviate illegal driving activities.

<p>PARTNERS Public Works</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Police</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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- 3** Look at the possibility of intercity collaboration in offering transportation options.
 - a. Discuss a potential partnership with the Menlo Park city government to develop a cooperative intercity transportation service.
 - b. Consider collaborating with neighboring cities to offer a pilot program that can serve both/multiple cities.

<p>PARTNERS Public Works City of Menlo Park Neighboring Cities On-Demand Transportation Services</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF City Council</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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Age-friendly communities should have affordable, safe housing near public transportation, businesses, health options, and access to services. Maintaining and modifying one's home is essential to allowing a person to stay in it. Preserving existing safe housing structures and creating new affordable housing units is critical.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- **Residents want to be able to stay in their current homes as long as possible and live independently.**
- **Residents want trustworthy contractors who are affordable and perform quality work.**

“I wish there were more senior housing options; we need assisted living and board and care homes to help us in our golden years.”



GOAL: Provide residents with resources to age in place and incorporate housing projects and policies that offer safe and affordable housing options.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Provide, educate, and disseminate information to increase awareness of available and affordable housing options and promote diverse housing options.
 - a. Educate residents about available housing resources and target proactive public outreach, providing fair housing and support services.
 - i. HIP Housing: hiphousing.org or call 650-348-6660.
 - ii. Offer workshops on affordable housing options for older adults twice a year.
 - iii. Provide opportunities to ensure older adults are included in discussing housing options.
 - iv. Direct older adults to the East Palo Alto Housing Element, which produces affordable housing in the community.
 - v. List of affordable housing units: epacando.org/housing
 - vi. Rental Assistance Program: <https://www.cityofepa.org/rent-stabilization/page/rent-stabilization-program>
 - vii. Legal Assistance: <https://www.legalaidsmc.org/housing-resources>
 - viii. Anti-displacement resources: <https://www.cityofepa.org/rent-stabilization/page/rent-stabilization-program>
 - ix. Nuestra Casa provides general housing support services for residents, as well as resources and referrals to assistance in the community: nuestracasa.org. Call 650-330-7472.
 - x. Housing Endowment and Regional Trust (HEART) of San Mateo County Housing Assistance Options: <https://www.heartofsmc.org/housing-resources-page/>
 - xi. Doorway Housing Portal: <https://housingbayarea.mtc.ca.gov>
 - xii. San Mateo County Housing Resources: smc.gov/hsa/housing-resources
 - xiii. East Palo Alto Mobile Park: <https://baysfuture.org/east-palo-alto-mobile-park-residents-last-shot-at-ownership/>



GOAL: Provide residents with resources to age in place and incorporate housing projects and policies that offer safe and affordable housing options.

STRATEGIES (continued)

<p>PARTNERS HIP Housing Project Homekey Nuestra Casa San Mateo County Department of Housing</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Housing Department Rent Stabilization Division</p>	<p>TIME FRAME Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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2

Develop a list of trusted home repair providers.

- a. Home Modifications: rebuildingtogether.org
- b. Housing Rehab programs: <https://www.smcgov.org/housing/housing-repair-programs>
- c. Housing accessibility modification (HAM): cidsanmateo.org/services/housing-accessibility-modification.php
- d. Aging in Place Design and Fall Prevention California Residential Code: <https://up.codes/s/aging-in-place-design-and-fall-prevention>

<p>PARTNERS San Mateo County Department of Housing</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Economic and Community Development</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Provide residents with resources to age in place and incorporate housing projects and policies that offer safe and affordable housing options.

STRATEGIES (continued)

3 Ensure older adults have an opportunity to engage in housing policies and issues.

- a. Involve older adults when discussing the Housing Element and housing policies: <https://www.cityofepa.org/housing/page/housing-element-update-1>

PARTNERS San Mateo County Department of Housing	RESPONSIBLE STAFF Planning Department Economic and Community Development	TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing	METRIC YES/NO (I/P)
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An age-friendly community supports opportunities to stay connected and active and to contribute to the community's economic, social, and cultural life. It enhances quality of life by providing the ability to remain engaged and includes diverse interests. Activities are offered at hours convenient for older adults, and there are accessible transportation options. Dr. Vivek Murthy's U.S. Surgeon General Advisory warns about the public health crisis that loneliness and isolation pose to the American public, with the antidote being connection (*Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation, 2023*). Offering affordable, accessible, multigenerational, inclusive activities helps to avoid isolation and loneliness and contributes to positive health outcomes and the well-being of the elderly population and all ages.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents trended toward using local organizations or businesses, the Community Center, the Senior Center, or some other source for continuing education or self-improvement classes or workshops in the community.
- Respondents felt the community offered a variety of cultural activities for diverse populations.

“We need programs that are culturally relevant and age-diverse; some activities need to have interpreters available.”



GOAL: Offer affordable and accessible activities, events, and programs that provide social interaction for diverse backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Expand programming and activities offered for older adults.
 - a. Survey to identify what additional programs they are interested in; include targeted outreach to older adults at their residences.
 - b. Increase accessible, affordable, senior-focused events and culturally relevant outings, and include interpreters to ensure inclusivity.
 - i. Offer culture-specific and bilingual events.
 - ii. Consider having an interpreter available during Senior Center hours.
 - c. Initiate ideas for potential informal activities.
 - i. Independent walking groups of active, non-disabled older people.
 - ii. Encourage seniors to organize their activities in public spaces, fostering community connections and empowering seniors to lead others.
 - c. Provide socialization around current events or other relevant topics.
 - i. Stream AARP webinars for seniors and archive them for on-demand access; have an AARP representative as a speaker; and include topics on using technology or avoiding scams.

<p>PARTNERS Library Senior Center Inc. Faith-Based Organizations Senior Advisory Committee</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Offer affordable and accessible activities, events, and programs that provide social interaction for diverse backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Increase and promote intergenerational programs to encourage the development of positive connections between generations.
 - a. Discuss potential partnerships with the Ravenswood School District to offer intergenerational programs such as having young people and seniors share their stories.
 - b. Offer library programs such as seniors reading to youth and having young adults teach older adults how to use their electronic devices.
 - c. Explore a non-profit program in San Francisco that provides after-school tutoring where older adults help support under-resourced students ages 6 to 18: www.826valencia.org
 - d. Look into programs that bridge generations by (vetting and) pairing older adults with kids or young people for mentorship, connection, learning, and thriving.
 - i. Eldera: a global virtual village for generations to come together; kids and youth 13+ are paired with mentors 60+: <https://www.eldera.ai/>
 - ii. Perfect Pair: an organization that connects older adults with college students to create a sense of community; works with University chapters, including San Francisco State University: <https://www.perfectpair.org/>

<p>PARTNERS School District County Library Services Non-Profit Organizations</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Offer affordable and accessible activities, events, and programs that provide social interaction for diverse backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 3** Conduct outreach to homebound seniors.
 - a. Work with agencies to develop criteria and strategies to engage homebound seniors through outreach, activities, and services.
 - i. Consider a weekly visitation program for seniors in their homes.
 - b. Expand meal delivery programs as a resource hub for disseminating information on available community services.
 - c. Host “meet and greet” events, e.g., at the Senior Center or East Palo Alto library.
 - i. Provide programming highlighting the talents and contributions of older adults in the community.

<p>PARTNERS School District City Library Meal Delivery Programs Nonprofit Agencies</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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An age-friendly community ensures information is accessible and inclusive. It is disseminated in various formats, languages, and venues so that residents can be aware of services, programs, and events and stay connected with people important to them. With the older population growing at an increased pace, it is essential to know how to reach a broader senior audience. Information is provided in traditional hard copy format, face-to-face and electronically, and is visually and/or audibly clear. Training is available to support older adults and address the digital divide. This allows them to remain engaged and informed in their community life.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents feel the community offers free access to computers and the Internet in public places such as libraries, senior centers, or government buildings.
- Respondents feel that community information is available in many different languages.

“Many older adults need training on using our electronic devices; the training should be offered in multiple languages.”



GOAL: Ensure that information about activities and resources is available in multiple languages and formats. Information should be easily accessible and distributed widely at numerous venues and central locations.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Develop various ways to disseminate senior-related information, online and in hard copy in all major languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Mandarin, Tongan).
 - a. Use diverse formats such as television, kiosks, bulletin boards, and flyers.
 - i. Publicize activities and events in e-newsletter.
 - b. Determine locations where seniors frequent and distribute information, including churches, coffee shops, businesses where flyers can be posted, shopping areas, library, and the Senior Center.
 - i. Install a dedicated bulletin board with plastic holders at the Senior Center to provide announcements on activities and other information relevant to older adults; this would be rotated out monthly.
 - c. Develop a dedicated webpage for older adults that consolidates links to relevant resources, services, activities, and age-friendly information.
 - i. Use social media platforms to share information broadly with the community.
 - d. Research ways to install large-screen televisions at the Senior Center and other locations to provide scrolling multilingual information for seniors.
 - i. Explore the possibility of including intelligent city functions with touch screens.

<p>PARTNERS Senior Center, Inc. Community Volunteers Senior Advisory Committee Faith-Based Organizations Non-Profit Organizations Library School District Local Businesses IT Department</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF City Council Community Services Library</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Ensure that information about activities and resources is available in multiple languages and formats. Information should be easily accessible and distributed widely at numerous venues and central locations.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Increase promotion of available information and resources.
 - a. Promote countywide resources such as such as the *Help at Home* booklet, *Rebuilding Together*, and the San Mateo County Community Information Handbook 2024 (see Community Support and Health Services for links).
 - b. Bring back the Senior Expo with numerous vendor booths and workshop offerings.
 - c. Collaborate with nearby cities to share ideas on improving and expanding communication and information for older adults.

<p>PARTNERS Senior Center, Inc. Library Senior Advisory Committee City Council Local Businesses Non-Profit Organizations</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 6 Months/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Ensure that information about activities and resources is available in multiple languages and formats. Information should be easily accessible and distributed widely at numerous venues and central locations.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 3** Increase access to technology resources, training, and support to address the digital divide.
 - a. Provide access to computers and WiFi for residents who need them; offer training for interested individuals.
 - b. Continue progress in creating a Senior Hub/Computer Lab in the Senior Center for mini-technical class offerings.
 - c. Expand intergenerational activities by pairing younger adults with older adults to teach them how to use their electronic devices and navigate online services such as on-demand transportation.
 - d. Partner with educational organizations such as StreetCode Academy.
 - i. Offer sessions on how to avoid online scams.
 - e. Ensure that technical training is offered in a comfortable, welcoming environment.

<p>PARTNERS Senior Center, Inc. Senior Advisory Committee Non-Profit Organizations School District Library</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services Senior Center, Inc.</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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An age-friendly community promotes programs that encourage respect for older adults. It also urges intergenerational activities so that younger and older people can learn from each other and value what each offers. Older adult residents are involved in decisions that impact them. Social and physical environments support healthy aging and easy ways to stay connected and engaged.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents felt the community allows older adults to participate in decision-making bodies such as the City Council or Committees.
- Respondents felt the community provides a variety of cultural activities for diverse populations.
- Respondents felt the community offers conveniently located health and social services.

“Many seniors want to be valued and useful, but we are overlooked; we are not asked to contribute our knowledge or wisdom.”



GOAL: Provide an inclusive environment that respects and values older adults. Incorporate programs that serve and support the community's diversity.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Create a welcoming model of inclusion, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose for all ages.
 - a. Increase opportunities that acknowledge older adults and help decrease isolation and loneliness, such as celebrating birthdays with cakes, cards, and flowers.
 - b. Educate restaurants and businesses on respecting older persons and all cultures; increase awareness of Age-Friendly certifications and practices.
 - i. Consider implementing an Age-Friendly Business Certification pilot program. See an example from the City of San Mateo: <https://cityofsanmateo.org/4826/Age-Friendly-Business-Certification>
 - ii. Encourage restaurants to use large fonts on menus, utilize adequate lighting, and ensure service staff is respectful and courteous to older adults.
Age-Friendly Business Checklist:
<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Checklist.2019-docx.pdf>
 - c. Offer ESL classes in dominant languages, including Spanish, Chinese, and Tongan; ensure appropriate translation and interpretation to help serve the community's diverse population.

PARTNERS Businesses Non-Profit Organizations Senior Center, Inc. Library	RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services	TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing	METRIC YES/NO (I/P)
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GOAL: Provide an inclusive environment that respects and values older adults. Incorporate programs that serve and support the community's diversity.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Increase the number of opportunities for interaction between younger and older generations.
 - a. Provide inclusive events for all ages, such as game days where seniors can play board games with students.
 - b. Partner with schools to educate youth on how they can be helpful to older adults.
 - i. Provide programs where students teach seniors new skills and seniors can share valuable life lessons.
 - ii. Connect youth and older adults for tutoring or story reading.
 - c. Explore reinstating programs like the Stanford student television program that remotely offered social interaction for seniors.

PARTNERS School District Non-Profit Organizations Community Volunteers Faith-Based Organizations	RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services Library	TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing	METRIC YES/NO (I/P)
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GOAL: Provide an inclusive environment that respects and values older adults. Incorporate programs that serve and support the community's diversity.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 3** Promote positive messages about seniors to help decrease ageism.
 - a. Have the City incorporate an older adult lens during its strategic planning process.
 - i. Increase awareness of the increasing number of older residents who plan to age in the community and the related services that will be needed.
 - b. Create a campaign that positively highlights the value of seniors and acknowledges their contributions to the community.
 - c. Have experts give presentations to educate seniors, the community, and the public on the value of older adults and how to foster greater inclusion.

PARTNERS Task Force Members Community Volunteers Senior Advisory Committee	RESPONSIBLE STAFF City Council City Departments	TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing	METRIC YES/NO (I/P)
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An age-friendly community ensures that older adults have volunteer and employment opportunities to remain informed and engaged in the community. Employment training is provided to support their continued relevance and connection. Senior residents' civic participation is encouraged so that they have a voice in decisions that help positively impact the environments for aging.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected trends in the following areas:

- Respondents felt that they would likely continue to work as long as possible rather than choose to retire and no longer work for pay.
- Respondents did not feel the community had policies to ensure that older adults had equal opportunities to work for as long as they wanted or needed to, regardless of age.

“Many volunteer opportunities are available for those who are able; but opportunities for employment and job training for seniors are limited.”



GOAL: Support the ability of older adults to remain engaged in the community by promoting volunteer roles and expanding employment opportunities.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Expand and publicize opportunities for employment for older adults in the community.
 - a. Promote full- and part-time job opportunities in local publications; post in centralized locations for seniors.
 - b. Educate employers on the benefits of employing older adults, highlighting the valuable skills, experience, and contributions they can make.
 - c. Broaden and increase awareness of job search/training programs offered.
 - d. Consider business mentorship programs like SCORE, which celebrate older adults' ingenuity, wisdom, and accomplishments and give them opportunities to be recognized and appreciated.
 - e. Consider having an annual job/volunteer fair to increase awareness of available opportunities; partner with businesses, and nonprofit organizations in San Mateo County and Ravenswood School District.

<p>PARTNERS Businesses Senior Center, Inc. Library Ravenswood School District Non-Profit Organizations</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Support the ability of older adults to remain engaged in the community by promoting volunteer roles and expanding employment opportunities.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Promote available volunteer opportunities, allowing older adults to remain actively engaged within the community.
 - a. Increase awareness of volunteer opportunities with community organizations, local government, and schools.
 - i. Include a list of opportunities in both hard and soft copy newsletters and post it on bulletin boards at the Senior Center or the library.
 - ii. Utilize diverse communication channels, including flyers at the Senior Center, library, Faith-Based organizations, and local businesses frequented by seniors; post on the age-friendly webpage, using large fonts and offering in multiple languages.
 - b. Promote intergenerational volunteering.
 - i. Partner with the School District to have seniors mentor students or share their expertise.
 - ii. Older adults who have experience in STEM or building trades can participate as trainers in the Measure HH Pilot Workforce Development Program: <https://www.cityofepa.org/econdev/page/measure-hh-pilot-workforce-development-program>

<p>PARTNERS Businesses Council Members City Departments City Commissions School District</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF City Staff</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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Community Support and Health Services



An age-friendly community provides accessible and affordable healthcare and transportation services at convenient times for older adults. Health-related education and information are also offered to enhance the ability of older residents to make decisions that affect their health, well-being, and quality of life.

SURVEY RESULTS

The analysis of the survey responses is directional and needs to be more conclusive. The results reflected a trend in the following area:

- Respondents tended to feel that the community had conveniently located health and social services.

“We have only one health center and one dental center. We are the only medically underserved San Mateo County population.”





GOAL: Provide programs and resources that support the dignity and positive quality of life of older adults as they age in the community.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Identify ways to improve and facilitate access to healthcare resources and services.
 - a. Research the potential of establishing a drop-in clinic with adequate staff to handle walk-in patients and reduce wait times for urgent healthcare needs.
 - b. Strengthen coordination and communication between healthcare and pharmacies to minimize treatment and prescription processing delays.
 - c. Create and distribute a comprehensive bilingual healthcare services directory in English and Spanish. Ensure it is accessible at the Senior Center, nonprofits, and other community spaces.
 - d. Investigate options available to residents in medical emergencies and educate them on efficient and affordable ways to reach emergency departments.
 - e. Advocate for more government or private financial assistance programs to cover healthcare costs.
 - f. Explore transportation possibilities for healthcare appointments at medical facilities outside the city, such as Stanford and Kaiser Hospitals.

<p>PARTNERS City Departments Ravenswood Center Stanford Hospital Kaiser Hospital Local Pharmacies Senior Center, Inc. Library IT Department Non-Profit Organizations</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF City Council Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 2 Years/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Provide programs and resources that support the dignity and positive quality of life of older adults as they age in the community.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 2** Increase promotion of resources available in the County of San Mateo
 - a. Expand the Age-Friendly page on the City of East Palo Alto website to list significant resources for older adult residents.
 - b. Ensure dissemination of resource guides and information for older adults
 - i. Community Information Handbook | San Mateo County, CA: <https://www.smcgov.org/hsa/community-information-handbook>
 - ii. Help at the Home guide: https://www.smchealth.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/hh2024_english.pdf?1709940717
 - iii. <https://211bayarea.org/> (refer to the Seniors section): 2-1-1 is a free phone number that connects Bay Area residents with Health and Human Service Programs in their local community. It is available in multiple languages.
 - c. Senior Planet AARP: <https://seniorplanet.org>
 - d. Educate seniors about medical alert bracelets, necklaces, lifeline devices, and fall detection systems. Offer guidance on in-home medical care and caregiver services.
 - e. Increase awareness regarding available supportive services and advertise every quarter through newsletters; create flyers with older adult resources; what is available, how to access, e.g., Medical Equipment Loan Program (MELP): <https://www.freemedequip.org/>

<p>PARTNERS Senior Center, Inc. Library Non-Profit Organizations Aging and Adult Services Service Organizations AARP</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 6 Months/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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GOAL: Provide programs and resources that support the dignity and positive quality of life of older adults as they age in the community.

STRATEGIES (continued)

- 3** Expand programs and workshops for older adults, including the homebound.
- a. Offer financial education for older adults.
 - i. Social Security earning limits
 - ii. The AARP Foundation offers tax and other financial assistance support.
 - b. Promote existing classes being offered by local healthcare providers.
 - c. Partner with local clinics and hospitals to provide educational seminars on nutrition, preventive health, and managing chronic conditions, including CPR and first aid training.

<p>PARTNERS Senior Center, Inc. Library Non-Profit Organizations AARP Foundation Ravenswood Center Stanford Hospital Kaiser Hospital Local Pharmacies</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1 Year/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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- 4** Provide support for family members who are caring for a loved one.
- a. Promote valuable resources such as Area Agency on Aging: <https://www.smchealth.org/area-agency-aging>, Institute on Aging Friendship Line: 888-670-1360, and Family Caregiver Alliance: <https://www.caregiver.org/>
 - b. Leverage Faith-Based Organizations

<p>PARTNERS Senior Advisory Committee Senior Center, Inc. Library Fellowship of Faith Faith-Based Organizations (other) Family Caregiver Alliance Non-Profit Organizations</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Community Services</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 6 Months/ Ongoing</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
--	---	--	--

ADDITIONAL DOMAIN:
Emergency Services



East Palo Alto is committed to promptly preparing and responding to emergencies. Residents need to be educated and knowledgeable on how to be prepared for potential emergencies in their community. Whether it is an earthquake, flood, and/or power outage, you must know what to do, where to go, and what to bring. Given the community’s concern about emergencies, adding this category to the eight domains was essential. Older adults want to feel safe and know people are looking out for them.

“I’m concerned that I’m not ready for an emergency. What am I going to do?”





GOAL: Ensure older adults are educated, aware, and included in emergency preparedness operations.

STRATEGIES

- 1** Provide emergency preparedness training to older adults in the community.
 - a. Encourage residents to sign up for CERT training programs. These programs help educate residents on disaster preparedness, fire safety, and rescue. This is also an example of how to empower people to assist others. Continue BEAT meetings throughout the community in person. [Menlo Fire CERT](#)
 - b. Continue the Resilient East Palo Alto Community Team and involve older adults in training sessions and community-building events. Make sure all geographical areas in East Palo Alto are represented.
 - c. Collaborate with the Police and Fire Departments to host a Public Safety Fair. This is an opportunity to encourage older adults to sign up for SMC Alert: <https://www.smcgov.org/dem/smc-alert>. Develop a Youth Commission to help them sign up for SMC Alert and Genasys (formerly Zonehaven: <https://protect.genasys.com>). Use this opportunity to distribute emergency backpacks and hold training sessions for attendees.
 - d. Remind residents to refer to the sample Three-Day Survival Kit when developing an emergency kit. Please refer to: https://www.cityofepa.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community_amp_economic_development/page/2621/3_day_sample_kit_201401271747026475.pdf.
 - e. Develop emergency resource flyers for dissemination in multiple locations and various languages. Include this information in the City’s e-newsletter and at the Senior Center.
 - f. Encourage businesses to donate materials needed to assemble emergency-to-go bags once a year.
 - g. Research additional evacuation education. Look into Hi-Lo evacuation sirens. It may only be used to notify the public of an immediate evacuation in an emergency. Hi-Lo Time to Go: https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/CSTI/Hi-Lo-Training-Alert_5.24.2024.ADA.pdf
 - h. Distribute the Red Cross Ready curriculum on Emergency Preparedness: [How to Prepare For Emergencies | Be Red Cross Ready](#).
 - i. Increase awareness of AlertTheBay.org. This connects residents to specific localized events, such as road closures and power outages, and widespread events, such as poor air quality due to wildfires. <https://www.alertthebay.org/sign-up/>



GOAL: Ensure older adults are educated, aware, and included in emergency preparedness operations.

STRATEGIES

<p>PARTNERS Menlo Park Fire Department County EMS Red Cross Community Volunteers PG&E</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Police and Fire Departments</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1-2 Years</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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2 Maintain and promote emergency-related programs and activities.

- a. Encourage residents who rely on electric medical equipment to sign up with the PG&E: [Medical Baseline](#)
- b. Research the possibility of partnering with Menlo Fire and Resilient East Palo Alto to develop a centralized list of homebound older adults and residents with disabilities.
- c. Encourage the Police Department to offer quarterly or semi-annual training at the Senior Center on identifying and avoiding potential scams.
- d. Research **At-Risk/Dependent Person Services** program, which offers families the opportunity to register their loved ones who may be suffering from dementia, Alzheimer and various disabilities. Refer to **At-Risk/Dependent Person Services**: [At-Risk/Dependent Person Services](#)

<p>PARTNERS City Clerk Community Volunteers Fire and Police Departments Public Information Officer Resilient EPA</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE STAFF Police Department</p>	<p>TIME FRAME 1-3 Years</p>	<p>METRIC YES/NO (I/P)</p>
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Appendix A: AGE-FRIENDLY PROJECTS TO CONSIDER

“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive, and to do so with passion, compassion, humor, and style.” — Maya Angelou

East Palo Alto Age-Friendly Projects: City of EPA Project Spreadsheet



Appendix B: CURRENT AGE-FRIENDLY PRACTICES



Age-Friendly Community Services

The Community Services Division promotes wellness, social engagement, and independence for East Palo Alto's older adults. Existing programs include senior meal services, transportation assistance, and wellness programs offered through the Senior Center. These initiatives provide critical support for older residents, helping them maintain physical and emotional well-being while fostering a sense of community.

The Division plans to expand its programming to address evolving needs, focusing on digital literacy classes that help seniors access online services and resources. Additional initiatives include wellness programs in partnership with local health organizations and cultural events that promote social participation. The Division is also working to develop a contact database for homebound seniors to enhance outreach and improve emergency response efforts.

The Division's ongoing efforts reflect its commitment to ensuring that East Palo Alto's older adults remain active, healthy, and connected to the community.



Age-Friendly Police and Fire

The City of East Palo Alto believes that ensuring the safety and preparedness of older adults is essential for enhancing community resilience during emergencies. Residents are encouraged to be prepared for any emergency, small or big. This area provides accessible training, resources, and support to help older adults and vulnerable populations effectively prepare for and respond to disasters. Through partnerships between City departments, the Menlo Park Fire District, and community organizations, this multi-agency effort will seek to address communication barriers, digital access challenges, and emergency readiness. Key points stressed during the interview with key partners such as East Palo Alto's Police Department and Menlo Park Fire District included better communication of emergency information, particularly in multiple languages, and the importance of in-person outreach. The police department emphasized using 911 for emergencies and suggested collaborative presentations with the fire department to educate the community. The fire department highlighted the importance of senior programs and emergency kits. The group agreed to collaborate on educational campaigns and regular presentations at the Senior Center.

Age-Friendly Police and Fire (continued)

Some of the existing programs and initiatives include:

- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):** Trains residents in disaster preparedness, first aid, and search and rescue.
- **Emergency Preparedness Workshops:** Offered Red Cross Ready sessions at the Senior Center on storm preparedness, emergency kit assembly, and evacuation planning.
- **Fire Safety and Home Checks:** Partners with the Menlo Park Fire District to provide home safety checks and distribute Red Cross materials.
- **SMC Alert Outreach:** Community Service Officers help seniors register for emergency alerts in their preferred languages.



Future goals articulated include:

- **Homebound Senior Contact System:** Develop a database to ensure emergency support for vulnerable residents.
- **Multilingual Preparedness Materials:** Expand materials to Spanish, Chinese, and Tongan.
- **Cybersecurity Workshops:** Educate seniors on scams, financial fraud, and online safety.





Age-Friendly Planning and Building

Creating accessible, safe, and inclusive outdoor spaces and buildings is crucial to making East Palo Alto age-friendly. This initiative focuses on improving parks, pedestrian infrastructure, and public buildings to accommodate the needs of older adults. The City aims to leverage its General Plan and Parks Master Plan to identify opportunities for enhancements while incorporating senior-specific designs into new projects.

Affordable housing remains a key priority, exemplified by the development of a senior housing project that was expedited under SB 35. This project incorporates aging-in-place design features, including accessible bathrooms, fall prevention measures, and zero-step entries. A notable accomplishment and significant progress for the city was related to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for very low-income units during the immediate past Housing Element ending in 2022, when it exceeded its target RHNA by 65 units.

The Community and Economic Development Department's work is guided by the General Plan and Parks Master Plan, which emphasizes accessibility in parks, outdoor spaces, and pedestrian infrastructure. Plans emphasize incorporating senior input into zoning policies and infrastructure planning to improve walkability, connectivity, and accessibility. The City also addresses land constraints by maximizing the usability of existing parks and public spaces to create more opportunities for senior recreation and engagement.

Age-Friendly Planning and Building *(continued)*

Some of the existing programs and initiatives include:

- **Affordable Senior Housing Projects, such as Serenity Senior Housing and Runnymede Gardens.**
- **General and Parks Master Plans: Guides enhancements for pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and accessibility in parks and public spaces.**
- **Pedestrian and Outdoor Improvements: Sidewalk repairs, benches, and shaded pathways promote accessibility.**



Some of the future goals include:

- **Senior input in policies for walkability and connectivity.**
- **Expand accessibility through safer crosswalks and shaded pathways.**
- **Maximize public spaces for senior-friendly recreation.**

The Community and Economic Development Department ensures that East Palo Alto's housing stock supports the safety, accessibility, and independence of older adults. It achieves this by enforcing ADA compliance in all residential and commercial developments and encouraging the integration of aging-in-place design features such as grab bars, slip-resistant flooring, and wider doorways. The Department also collaborates with developers to fast-track affordable housing projects for seniors.

Looking ahead, the Department plans to increase public awareness about home safety modifications that can improve accessibility and prevent falls. Through collaboration with Code Enforcement teams, efforts will address safety concerns in the City's aging housing stock.

The Community and Economic Development Department ensures East Palo Alto's housing stock supports accessibility and safety for older adults through compliance and senior-friendly designs through some of the current initiatives, such as ADA Compliance, Aging in Place Design, and Senior Housing Collaboration. Some of their future goals include promoting safety modifications for senior homes and addressing issues in the aging housing stock.



Age-Friendly Housing and Economic Development

Affordable, accessible, and well-maintained housing is fundamental to ensuring the well-being of East Palo Alto's older adults. The City's housing and economic development initiatives prioritize affordable senior housing, workforce development opportunities, and essential repair services for older residents. By collaborating with other City departments, nonprofits, and funding programs, these efforts address immediate housing needs and long-term economic stability for seniors.

HOUSING

GOAL: To provide, educate, and disseminate information to increase awareness of available, affordable housing options and promote a mix of diverse housing options through: City's weekly newsletter, cityofepa.org/housing webpage, and flyers available at the Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD) office.

Educate residents about available housing resources such as:

- Serenity Senior Housing Apartments: 36 one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom apartments for seniors. See open waitlists: housingbayarea.mtc.ca.gov.
- Samaritan House is a core service agency that provides emergency services (e.g. food, health, housing & shelter, financial assistance, case management). Call 650-294-4312 or visit samaritanhousesanmateo.org.
- hiphousing.org or call 650-348-6660.
- See additional resources in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) at cityofepa.org/housing.

Age-Friendly Housing and Economic Development (continued)

Target proactive public outreach, providing fair housing, and support service information through the Measure O/Measure L Anti-Displacement Program. [reach out to Program Administrator, Natasha Raiburn, nraiburn@cityofepa.org for more information]

GOAL: To provide resources to residents to age in place and incorporate policies and projects offering affordable and safe housing.

Provide a home repair program to assist low-income homeowners and seniors with minor or major repairs and rehabilitation to address acute safety and livability issues. Assist seniors to age in place and install necessary accessibility improvements. Develop a public outreach plan and inform homeowners of financial assistance from other agencies, such as energy conservation and electrification incentives. For example:

- epacando.org/cando-adu/ or 650-473-9838
- rebuildingtogetherpeninsula.org or 650-366-6597
- crcommunities.org or 650-931-6019
- habitatebsv.org/blog/home-repair-program or 510-803-3388

East Palo Alto offers many housing services and programs that benefit older adults.

The City has a contract with EPACANDO to provide ADU resources to help senior residents age in place. Visit <https://epacando.org/cando-adu/>.

Seniors at risk of homelessness or in need of emergency services can contact Samaritan House and request an assessment. Call (650) 294-4312 or visit samaritanhousesanmateo.org. The City of East Palo Alto has invested over \$100,000 in emergency rental assistance for anyone in the City. Reach out to Program Administrator, Natasha Raiburn, (nraiburn@cityofepa.org) for more information.

East Palo Alto residents can benefit from the County of San Mateo's investment in minor home repair resources (see February 29, 2024, a public hearing where awardees were announced). Residents can reach out to:

- **Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities for Housing Accessibility Modifications (HAM)**
- **Climate Resilient Communities for Resident Homes Minor Home Repairs Program**



Age-Friendly Housing and Economic Development (continued)

- Rebuilding Together for Safe at Home and National Rebuilding Day-Home Rehab

HIP Housing provides home-sharing opportunities for seniors who are aging in place. Call (650) 348-6660 or visit www.hiphousing.org. City staff is currently planning for a similar program, for which the City Council has already budgeted funds.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

East Palo Alto has invested in a long list of affordable housing units, available at: <https://epacando.org/housing/>.

- There is an affordable senior property in the City of East Palo Alto: Serenity Senior Housing Apartments, owned by MidPen Housing, with 36 one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom apartments.
- LightTree Apartments, owned by Eden Housing, has 185 units of affordable extremely low-income and very low-income units, with a set aside of 41 units for households with special needs: formerly homeless residents, youth aging out of foster care, and households with a family member who has a disability, which may include seniors.
- East Palo Alto invests in new affordable housing developments as funding permits. In addition, the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires that 20% of new rental units be set aside at affordable rents for households, with the following income breakdown: 5% at or below 35% AMI, 10% at or below 50% AMI, and 5% at or below 60% AMI. It also requires that 20% of new ownership/for-sale units be set aside at affordable rents for households with the following income breakdown: 10% median income or 80% AMI and 10% moderate income or 110% AMI. Seniors are eligible and welcome at all affordable housing developments funded or required by the City regardless of whether the units are age-restricted.



Age-Friendly Housing and Economic Development (continued)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: To provide workforce development opportunities to seniors in the STEM and Building Trades fields through the Measure HH Workforce Development Program.

Educate residents about available workforce development resources such as: <https://www.cityofepa.org/econdev/page/measure-hh-pilot-workforce-development-program>

The Community and Economic Development Department partners with developers to prioritize affordable housing projects that integrate accessible design and are located near essential services. Programs like the Measure HH Workforce Development Program, which provides residents with opportunities in STEM and building trades fields can empower older residents to participate in the City's growing economy.

Future goals include expanding affordable options for senior housing, facilitating home repairs and maintenance, enhancing economic opportunities through workforce development programs and small business initiatives, and improve communication and outreach to our aging residents to bring awareness of housing programs, resources, and services.

Additionally, this Department seeks to expand senior-friendly commercial spaces and grant opportunities for senior infrastructure development.





Age-Friendly Library

The library serves as a learning, socialization, and engagement hub for East Palo Alto's older adult community. Existing programs include technology workshops that improve digital literacy, book clubs, and homebound services for seniors who face mobility challenges. These initiatives allow older adults to stay connected, informed, and engaged.

A significant project underway is the development of East Palo Alto's new library, incorporating senior-friendly features such as accessible seating, large-print materials, and a dedicated senior lounge. The new library will also expand its programming to include multilingual resources and outreach activities that reflect the City's diverse senior population.

Plans focus on enhancing partnerships with community organizations to offer additional educational, wellness, and cultural programs tailored for older adults. The library remains committed to creating an inclusive, welcoming space that supports East Palo Alto's seniors' lifelong learning and social needs.



Age-Friendly Public Works

The Public Works Department focuses on maintaining safe, clean, and accessible public spaces to meet the needs of East Palo Alto's senior population. Current initiatives include installing ADA-compliant park amenities such as outdoor fitness equipment, drinking fountains, and shaded seating areas. Additionally, sidewalk repairs and lighting upgrades will improve walkability and nighttime safety across the City.

The Department will explore opportunities to enhance parks and public spaces to serve older adults better. Plans include expanding shaded seating areas, improving pathway accessibility, and adding more senior-friendly recreational features to local parks. Public Works also aim to strengthen partnerships with community organizations to identify additional infrastructure needs and prioritize projects that enhance livability for seniors. The Department remains committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for East Palo Alto's aging population through proactive maintenance and strategic improvements.



Age-Friendly Engineering

The Engineering Division of the Public Works Department is dedicated to enhancing East Palo Alto's infrastructure supports mobility, safety, and quality of life for older adults. Recent accomplishments include installing ADA-compliant outdoor fitness equipment in local parks and upgrading bus shelters funded through affordable housing grants. These improvements aim to provide accessible recreational opportunities and safer transit options for seniors.

Key priorities moving forward include expanding pedestrian safety measures across the City. Planned projects include increasing crosswalk signal times at high-traffic intersections, implementing additional traffic calming measures such as bulb-outs and speed humps, and enhancing street lighting to improve visibility at night. The Division also plans to address sidewalk repairs and develop safer, more walkable pathways throughout the City to encourage active aging.

Looking ahead, the Division will work on integrating senior-friendly infrastructure into significant projects, including the East Bay Shore project and capital improvement plans. Collaboration with community groups will ensure these efforts align with the needs of East Palo Alto's older residents.

Appendix C:

THE CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO



Swearing in East Palo Alto's first City Council shortly after incorporation in 1983

East Palo Alto is a small city covering only 2.5 square miles and has roughly 28,000 residents. It is located on the [San Francisco Peninsula](#), about halfway between [San Francisco](#) and [San Jose](#). To the north and east is the [San Francisco Bay](#), to the west is the City of [Menlo Park](#), and to the south is the City of [Palo Alto](#). It is ideally situated between the Facebook headquarters and the rest of Menlo Park, where the venture firms of Sand Hill Road are based and where the technology industry first grew around Stanford University more than sixty years ago. East Palo Alto's history is richly rooted in social justice and it is one of the Bay Area's most diverse cities. It is also one of the youngest cities in San Mateo County.

The City began with the Ohlone Nation, also known as Costanoan Native Americans. This was the Bay Area's primary indigenous group and comprised various tribes, including the Ramaytush Ohlone, who lived in the area now known as East Palo Alto. In the late 1700s, the Spaniards threatened the Ohlone Nation by establishing large economic and agricultural estates such as Rancho de las Pulgas, where East Palo Alto is now located. Then, during the mid-to-late 1800s, entrepreneur Isaiah Woods turned the area into a shipping town. Lester Cooley later turned the town into a manufacturing region.

The City was established as an unincorporated city in the County of San Francisco in 1856, and it maintained this status in 1857 under the newly established County of San Mateo. For a century afterward, the unincorporated city had no formal boundaries.

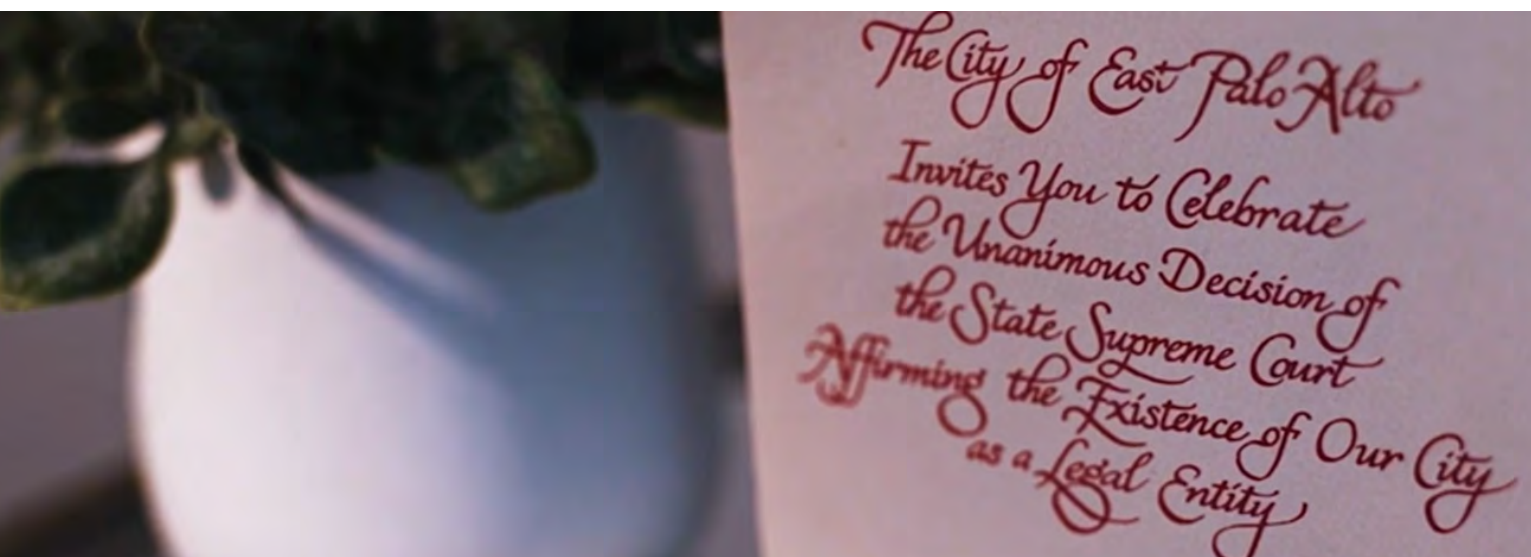
The City of East Palo Alto *(continued)*

By the 1930s, the area had become a farming community with many Japanese and Italian flower growers and farmers. Homes at the time often had deed restrictions written into their contracts that explicitly prohibited their sale to African Americans. President Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969) signed the [Immigration and Nationality Act](#) and the [Voting Rights Act](#); however, implementation was complex.

Three attempts were made to incorporate East Palo Alto from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s. Incorporation in 1983 was only possible with efforts from Frank J. Omowale Satterwhite, Robert Hoover, and Ruben Abrica as it was legally challenged and faced strong opposition. Voters were heavily divided on the issue, but with a 15-vote margin, East Palo Alto officially became a city on July 1, 1983. Barbara Mouton became its first Mayor; other first City Council members were Ruben Abrica, James E. Blakey Jr., Frank J. Omowale Satterwhite, and Gertrude Wilks. [Ruben Abrica](#) would become East Palo Alto's first Latino Mayor in 2006.

The efforts and labor in the City were based on the belief that a “new life made from many lives is a new will made of many hopes.”

Post-incorporation East Palo Alto was initially dependent upon County resources, including the Sheriff's Office, to combat crime. It then became a ‘City on the Move’ as a movement forward had become critical. The residents worked to develop the City's police department and the County Department of Housing Sheriff's Department also existed. At the time, Ravenswood High School was the only property that the City owned. To grow economically and financially, the City's goal was to create a Ravenswood shopping center. Governor Wilson created a Task Force to work with East Palo Alto to tackle the crime rate the City was experiencing. Although assistance was welcome, Mayor Sharifa Wilson clarified that economic development was needed to address the City's issues, not a focus on crime alone. She showed that although the area



The City of East Palo Alto (continued)

was an excellent location for growth, capital and resources had not been available to East Palo Alto until then.

The State of California then moved East Palo Alto to the number one priority project and allocated \$2M to the City. Ravenswood 101 Center was built and was designed as a home decor and improvement center. It was strongly promoted, and major retailers were encouraged to join this new power center. For the redevelopment to work for the community, it would need to lift everyone in the City. Businesses were required to make a good-faith effort to hire people from the East Palo Alto community. The money received would allow for the maintenance of parks and streets and the hiring of police.

Although the City was financially struggling in 1998, by 2002, it had a \$13M operating and capital budget, which allowed for continued infrastructure and economic development.

By 2017, there was only one homicide (a 97% decrease), and violent crime dropped over 60%. In 2023, there were zero homicides (100%). This was the compound effect of economic assistance, a shift toward community policing that led to increased trust, a series of federal assistance focused on gangs, and the role of faith-based groups that helped the community come together to solve problems.

Since the early 2000s, revitalization efforts have begun to narrow the cultural and economic divides between East Palo Alto and its neighboring cities. High-income professionals have moved into new developments. Facebook, for example, built a Frank Gehry-designed office complex capable of housing around 7,000 workers. The City has seen the construction of expansive shopping centers to drive revenue and create jobs, as well as efforts to clean up hazardous sites. Dozens of new homes have been built, and the once toxic County landfill has been transformed into a scenic park along the San Francisco Bay.

As these changes evolved, East Palo Alto faced a new challenge: the rapid growth of the world's leading tech companies and the influx of their employees. Over 25% of East Palo Alto, including over 400 acres, has been redeveloped since around 1997, bringing in new housing and brand-name retail and maintaining the community's cultural diversity. The University Square neighborhood has become home to a new demographic of young tech professionals, affluent couples, and



Former East Palo Alto Mayor Sharifa Wilson

Wilson: Exactly. One of the frustrating things for me, sitting on the Council for two years, was that people didn't have a sense that anything was ever going to change in East Palo Alto. It was always going to be the same in East Palo Alto.

What I really want to show is that something can change. That's why it's important that we deal with this whole issue of the appearance of the community. If they can see something that's different, it will generate some sense that things can change.

The City of East Palo Alto *(continued)*

employees from major companies such as Google, Facebook, Sun Microsystems, Yahoo!, and various startups. In 2006, the opening of the Four Seasons hotel in University Circle further signaled the area's transformation.

The City implemented some of the State's most demanding rent control regulations to address gentrification and allocated significant housing to low-income residents. Moreover, it has worked to generate more local job opportunities for its residents.

East Palo Alto continues to be an active community focused on self-determination. "The younger population of community leaders is emerging, and the community is imagining and re-imagining the future it wants for itself." Economic empowerment is a part of continuing that legacy.

The community needs to teach the skills required to get hired for jobs. Many tech businesses are already here and being built here. StreetCode Academy was created in 2017 to bridge the digital divide, embrace technology, and help empower all ages. In 2021, they were named Nonprofit of the Year for California's 13th Senate District. They have a four-star rating from Charity Navigator based on their financial health and commitment to governance practices and policies.

With business expansion and new housing projects coming to the multicultural and multilingual city, the City is now a strategically well-positioned location. To ensure East Palo Alto's history is not forgotten, the East Palo Alto Community Archive was created and, in 2023, became a 501(c)(3) organization. There are plans to build a permanent space to showcase its collection of artifacts and interviews. It produced a documentary, [Small but Mighty: The Story of East Palo Alto](#). Although a small city in square mileage, East Palo Alto is rich in social capital and cultural history. The City's strength has been seen in the perseverance, determination, and resilience in the community's character, demonstrated by its continuing economic progress and quality of life.



Photo by Christopher Kao, courtesy of Droneshot

The City of East Palo Alto Historical Population

YEAR	POPULATION	GROWTH	GROWTH RATE
2024*	27,638	-578	-2.05%
2023*	28,216	-184	-0.65%
2022	28,400	-513	-1.77%
2021	28,913	-1,035	-3.46%
2020	29,948	562	1.91%
2019	29,386	-239	-0.81%
2018	29,625	-34	-0.11%
2017	29,659	23	0.08%
2016	29,636	43	0.15%
2015	29,593	197	0.67%
2014	29,396	228	0.78%
2013	29,168	293	1.01%
2012	28,875	377	1.32%
2011	28,498	278	0.99%
2010	28,220	0	0%
2000	29,506	6,055	25.82%
1990	23,451	5,260	28.92%
1980	18,191	-536	-2.86%
1970	18,727	-6,025	-24.34%



Appendix D:

CITY GOVERNMENT

East Palo Alto is a general law city. Our municipality is governed by a Council-Manager Structure. The City Council comprises five members elected at large who serve four-year terms, with elections staggered to ensure continuity. The Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another as Vice Mayor, each for a one-year term. The Council is responsible for setting policy. The Council also recruits and manages two employees, the City Manager and City Attorney, who are responsible for recruiting and managing the rest of the employees and overseeing the daily functions of our city government.

Multiple commissions oversee specific areas like Rent Stabilization, Planning, and Public Works and Transportation. The City also maintains a Senior Advisory Committee responsible for advocating for the senior community and reporting to the Council on solutions specific to one of our most vulnerable populations.

East Palo Alto's government structure and layout reflect its commitment to maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. The City's emphasis on local control, strong communication with the residents, an inclusive multicultural government, and efficient public services have led to a higher quality of life for our residents. The City's mission statement is: "The City of East Palo Alto provides responsive, respectful, and efficient public services to enhance the quality of life and safety for its multi-cultural community."

City Government (continued)

As of the writing of this Action Plan in January 2025, the City Council's Strategic Priorities are:

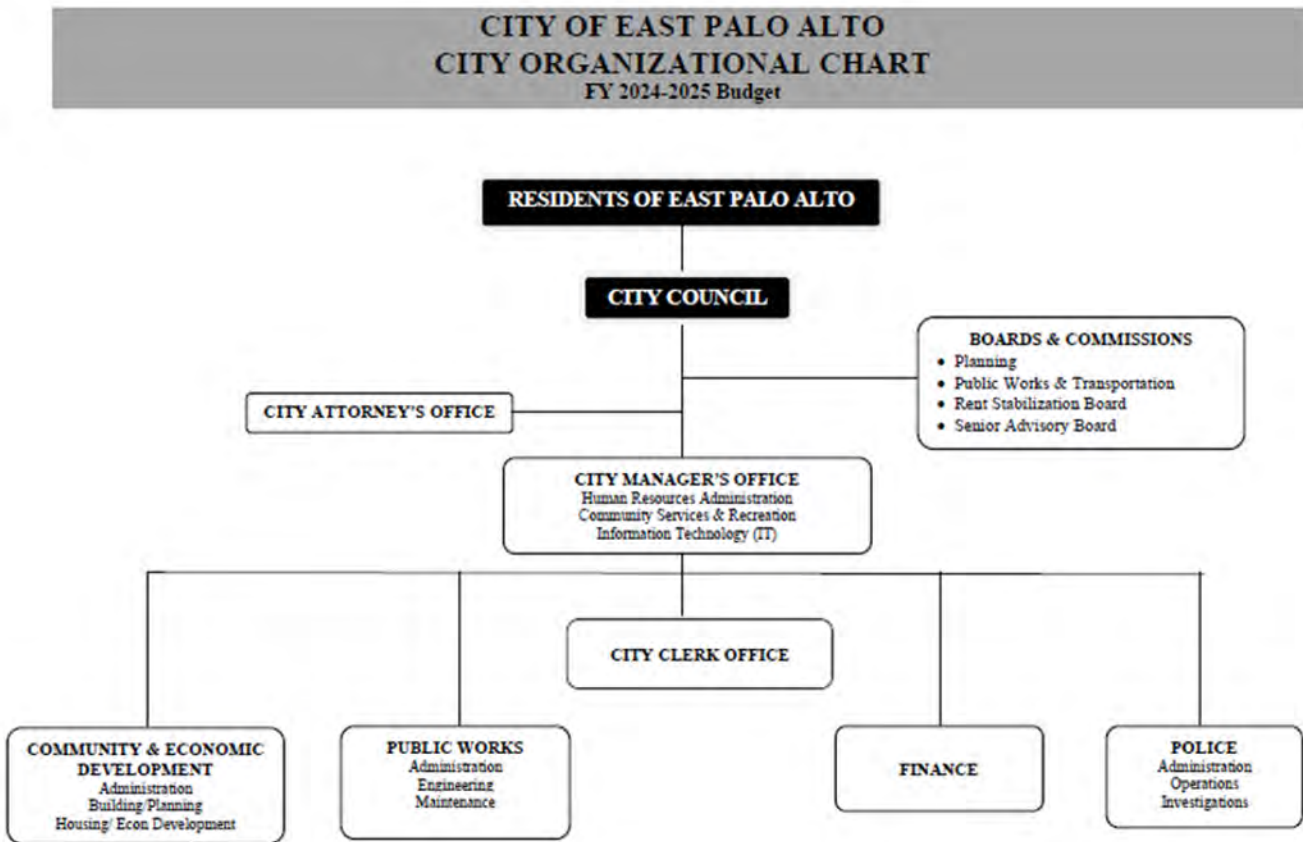
- Promoting housing, economic, and workforce development
- Implementing the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan
- Promoting health and public safety
- Ensuring our financial and organizational health
- Improving the City's water infrastructure
- Developing and implementing a Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan
- Enhancing community services and parks for residents

Mission Statement

The City of East Palo Alto provides responsive, respectful, and efficient public services to enhance its multicultural community's quality of life and safety.



City of East Palo Alto Organizational Chart



Appendix E:

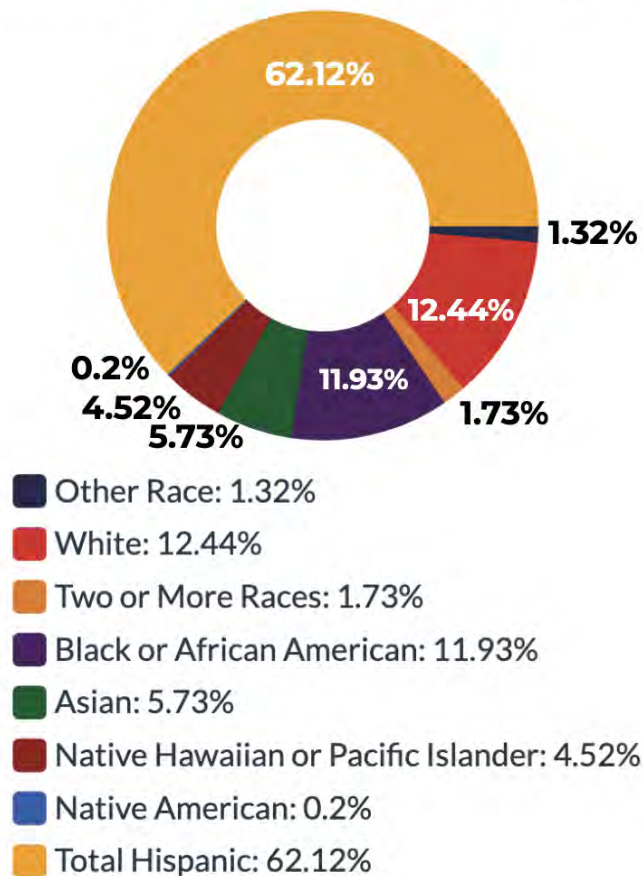
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The City of East Palo Alto is located in San Mateo County, California, and has a population of 27,638 (2024). The median age in East Palo Alto is 34.2 years, 32.8 years for males, and 36.9 years for females.

Race: The City of East Palo Alto's population is 12.44% white, 62.12% Hispanic/Latino, 1.32% Other race, 11.93% African American, 1.73% two or more races, 10.25% Asian and Pacific Islander, and .20 % Native American.

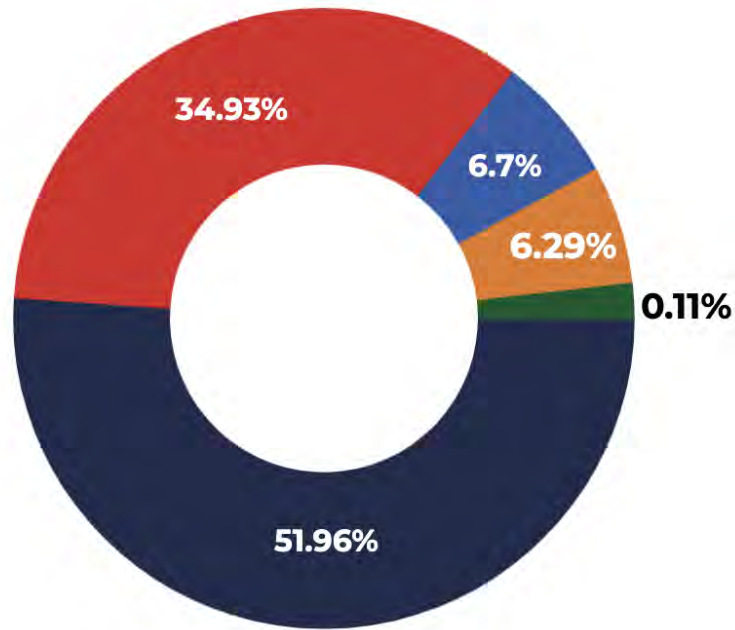
Language: Of the City of East Palo Alto residents, 34.93% speak only English, while 65.07% speak other languages. The largest non-English language the most significant group speaks is Spanish, which is spoken by 51.96% of the population.

EAST PALO ALTO RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS



<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/california/east-palo-alto> (select Non-Hispanic)

EAST PALO ALTO LANGUAGES

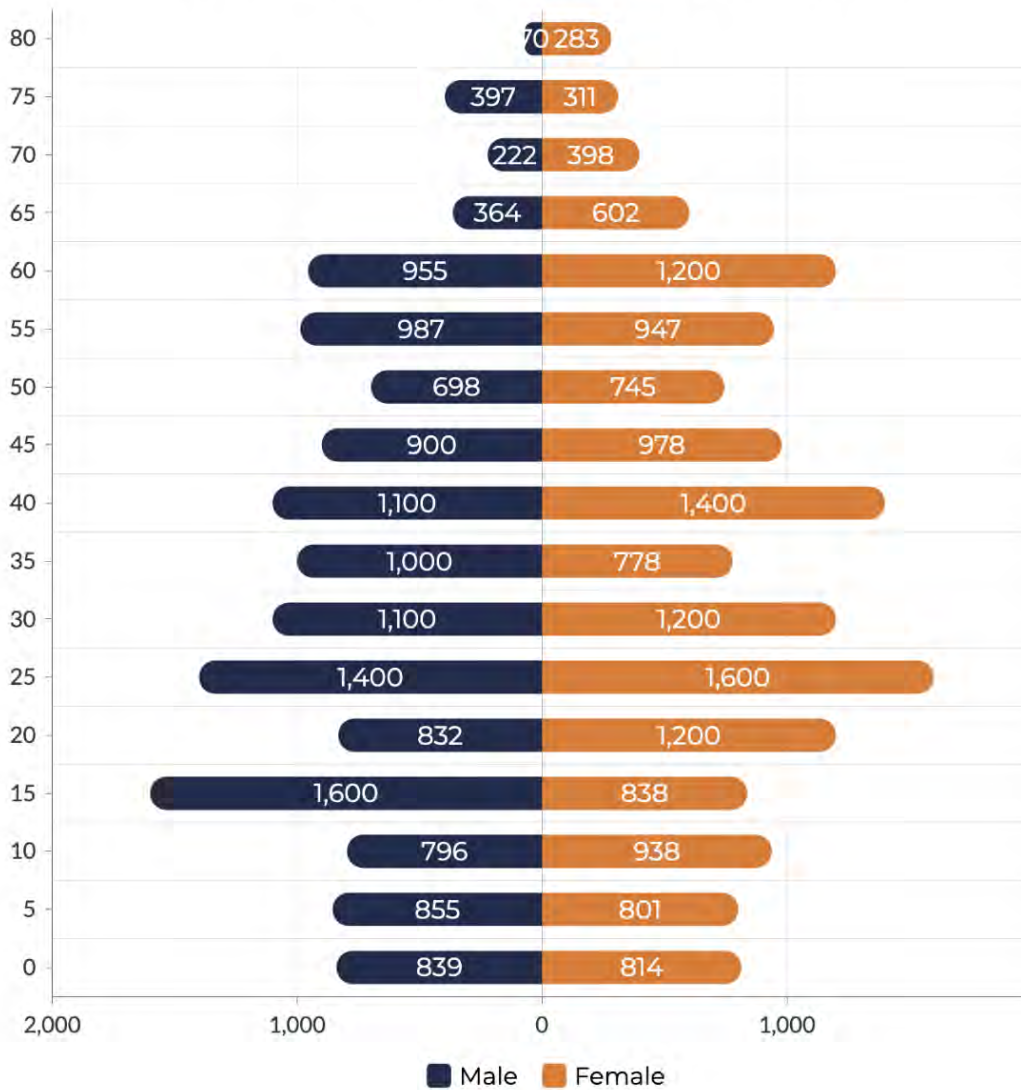


- Spanish
- Only English
- Pacific Islander Languages
- Other Indo-European Languages
- Other Languages

For All Age Groups Combined

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

East Palo Alto Population Pyramid 2024



There are 22,520 adults (2,806 of whom are seniors) in East Palo Alto.

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/california/east-palo-alto>

Appendix F:

LIVABILITY INDEX

AARP's Public Policy Institute (PPI) has designed criteria to assess the characteristics that would provide a high quality of life for diverse community populations covering all generations. Their scoring includes complex livability factors in metric values and policies. The AARP Livability Index is created from over 50 unique data sources across the seven livability categories. By using these metrics and policies, the AARP Livability Index scores communities by looking at how livable each neighborhood is within the community. An overall score is assigned to each city. The total score is an accumulation of the seven various categories.



The overall livability index score for **East Palo Alto, California** is **57**.

This is in the **top half** of **communities** in the U.S.

Scores are applied to the following 7 categories of livability. Examples of indicators follow:



HOUSING: Housing costs, availability of multi-family housing, state accessory dwelling unit support



NEIGHBORHOOD: Access to parks and libraries, crime rate, state and local transit-oriented development



TRANSPORTATION: Frequency of local transit service, walkability, state and local complete street policies



ENVIRONMENT: Quality of drinking water/air, state utility disconnection policies, pollution level



HEALTH: Preventable hospitalization rate, access to exercise opportunities, state/local smoke-free laws



ENGAGEMENT: Social involvement index, voting rate, state barriers to community broadband



OPPORTUNITY: Income inequality, jobs per worker, age diversity, local government credit-worthiness

Livability Index (continued)

	East Palo Alto, California	2024 Median US City
Overall Score	57	50
 Housing	51	56
 Neighborhood	66	36
 Transportation	44	44
 Environment	52	59
 Health	71	43
 Engagement	60	47
 Opportunity	52	52

For interpretation of scores, please refer to the following link:

<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/search/East%20Palo%20Alto,%20California,%20United%20States#compare>

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RESOURCE PAGE

About the Global Network for Age-Friendly Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Age-Friendly World. Retrieved May 2024, from <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/who-network/#:~:text=cities%20and%20communities.-,The%20WHO%20Global%20Network%20for%20Age%2Dfriendly%20Cities%20and%20Communities,over%20320%20million%20people%20worldwide>

City of East Palo Alto: <https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/>

City of East Palo Alto Police: <https://www.cityofepa.org/police>

City of East Palo Alto Fire: <https://www.menlofire.gov/>

City of East Palo Alto: Library:
<https://www.cityofepa.org/publicworks/project/east-palo-alto-library>

City of East Palo Alto Community Services:
<https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/communityprograms>

City of East Palo Alto Community and Economic Development:
<https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/econdev>

City of East Palo Alto Planning and Building:
<https://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/planning>

City of East Palo Alto Public Works: <https://www.cityofepa.org/publicworks>

East Palo Alto Community Archive: <https://epacommunityarchive.org/>

World Health Organization. (2007). *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*. Retrieved from: https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/43755/9789241547307_eng.pdf?sequence=1

World Population Review:
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/california/east-palo-alto>

AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Communities: www.AARP.org/livable

Elder Index: <https://elderindex.org/>

California Elder Index: <https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/our-work/elder-index>

World Health Organization. (2023) *New Guide on developing national programs for age-friendly cities and communities*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/19-04-2023-who-releases-new-guide-on-developing-national-programmes-for-age-friendly-cities-and-communities>

Data Dashboard for Aging: <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/DashBoard/>