



Item No. 13

Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

FROM: ANTHONY SUBER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER/ CITY CLERK

DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF THE CENTER FOR AGE-FRIENDLY
EXCELLENCE FOCUS GROUP AND TASK FORCE RESULTS
AND CONSIDERATION OF AARP APPLICATION PROCESS.**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council review and discuss the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence Standing Committee recommendations, focus group results and provide direction regarding the AARP application process.

BACKGROUND

San Mateo County arranged for the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFE) to work with select cities in the County providing technical assistance through December 2023. City Council ratified the Age-Friendly Standing Committee at the June 21, 2023, meeting committing to forming a local Age-Friendly Task Force to assist in building collaborative partnerships within the County by sharing resources and coordinating activities. Vice Mayor Hawkins-Manuelian and Councilmember Lewis were assigned as the liaisons.

The Standing Committee, Town staff and CAFE, Deputy Director Cynthia Nakayama developed outreach material to begin to recruit for resident volunteers to participate in one-time focus groups and a fixed term task force that would assist the Standing Committee in analyzing and prioritizing focus group results and recommendations.

The goal of the project was to identify the unmet needs of older adults and recommend programs or initiatives that can be implemented to assist older people in the Town. The focus groups were designed to help uncover the needs of the 55 + community and solicit resident input on potential solutions. A component of the Task Force and focus groups identified the evolving needs that develop for sub-groups within the older adult population. As an example, someone who is aged 55 – 64 will have different needs from an older adult that is 80+.

Town Obligations

The Town is under no obligation to take any further action once certified through the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP the United States affiliate of WHO. If Council move forward with an application to AARP. The commitment made at the June Council meeting was to convene the standing committee and should the Council opt not to move forward with an application to become a certified age-friendly city recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) the Council has full authority to consider any recommendations of the standing committee and task force independent of an age-friendly application.

ANALYSIS

The Standing Committee and Task Force members reviewed the results from the focus groups held that were made up exclusively of residents of the Town's 55+ community. Atherton Police Department staff and Menlo Park Fire Protection District staff provided commentary identifying needs related to health & safety and emergency preparedness. The focus group results identified 7 major categories within the WHO/AARP eight domains of livability. The focus group comments and outcomes were grouped within these categories. Below is a list of the categories identified and standing committee and task force proposed programs or initiatives that aimed at addressing varying unmet needs. For a complete review of the focus group summary refer to Attachment 1.

Transportation & Mobility

Potential Initiatives / Projects:

- Communicate to residents existing services for transportation, such as Ride PVI – www.lpvi.org. The service is available for medical and pharmacy appointments, grocery shopping, senior center visits, and religious centers.

Social Participation & Inclusion, Community Connectivity

Potential Initiatives / Projects:

- Foster physical spaces where people can naturally gather.
- Potential collaboration with the library or local schools to provide programs to assist with online access/resources for seniors, including those with visual impairments and training workshops or programs.
- The Town has upgraded its current website to ensure that it is Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliant. This compliance applies to visual, auditory, speech, cognitive, language, and other disabilities.

General Communication & Information

Potential Initiatives / Projects:

- Incorporating localized communication channels such as the local newspapers to a greater degree.
- Develop a reoccurring section within the quarterly Athertonian newsletter to share news, information, and resources specifically for older adults.
- Develop resource center display at the Atherton Library

- Peninsula Volunteers, Inc (Little House, Rosener House, Meals of Wheels, Ride PVI) | Sequoia Healthcare District – Sequoia Strong: Adults 50+ www.seqhd.org/sequoia-strong-adults-50 (Health Services, Community Support, Fitness & Sport, Social Engagement, and Independent Living)
- Develop a quarterly or bi-annual Senior day hosted at Town center to engage residents and connect them with service providers and programs specifically meeting their needs.
- Staff has enhanced our use of physical message boards located at Town Center and will increase that presence.

Housing

Current / Ongoing Projects:

- The 6th Cycle Housing Element Update process is underway and will include analysis and assessments across varying income levels and within the Housing Needs Data Report includes a section dedicated to assessing the needs of seniors. The Housing Element Update is a working document that is undergoing a variety of revisions.
- The Town has prepared a variety of resources related to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and will be revising Town Ordinances related to these structures in late 2023. The Planning and Building Departments have FAQ's available to discuss the process of planning and building ADU's.

Infrastructure & Facilities

Current / Ongoing Projects:

There are several capital projects in the works related to pedestrian and bicycle safety including:

- Selby Lane Bicycle Lane Improvement Project Bike Lane
- Traffic Safety Improvement Project & Maintenance (street striping and signage installation)
- El Camino Real Complete Streets Gap Project
- Class III Pavement Markings
- Watkins Avenue Pedestrian Improvements/ Middlefield

Community Support | Health Services

Potential Initiatives / Projects:

- The Atheron Task Force discussed developing bi-annual or quarterly resource workshops hosted at Town Center. This would be a staff lead initiative inviting local service providers to educate the 55 + community and address needs across several categories including enhanced and alternative communication activities, increase in community gatherings, and education related to senior rights. Designing re-occurring events will address the unmet needs that address community-building.
- Focus Group results and assessments indicated that partnering with neighboring agencies to collaborate on existing services could aid in addressing needs beyond the Towns resources.
- The Task Force concurred with the 55+ community desire for health and wellness access that includes physical activity. The activity could be in individual or group settings furthering the community-building component and enhancing quality of life goals. Task

Force members proposed exercise equipment specifically for seniors at Holbrook-Palmer Park.

- Task Force members suggested a resident led committee focused entirely on addressing unmet needs of the 55+ community and identifying the varying needs that exist within each sub age category, ages 55-64, 65-74, 75-79, and 80+.

Emergency Preparedness & Safety

Current / Ongoing Projects:

- ADAPT has begun the process of connecting with community members via parties / gatherings and will continue those efforts in the Summer of 2024. ADAPT has been active in connecting with residents during regular meetings and have polled participants on their interest in home checks in case of emergency. That information will be maintained at the assembly points for ADAPT members to conduct those home checks during emergencies.

Potential Initiatives / Projects:

- The Atherton Police Department prepares monthly reports related to criminal activity, calls for service, response times for low, medium and high priority calls and other police related activities. APD reports on home/vacation checks, Holbrook-Palmer Park patrols, and School incidents.
- MPFPD and APD have discussed collaborative initiatives to gather access to resident homes quickly, such as getting gate codes or access to lock boxes.
- The Police Department hosts community meetings to inform and educate residents on things related to car and home protection. The latest meeting took place on November 2, 2023. These community forums are also prime opportunities to educate and inform residents and best practices related to theft deterred measures, cyber-crime awareness, and collaborative conversations with A.D.A.P.T. related to emergency preparedness activities and efforts.
- To address the preparedness of older adults in an emergency distributing 72-hour emergency

Next Steps

The Council may consider directing staff to move forward with the WHO/AARP application for inclusion in the WHO Network of Age-friendly Cities or receive the report and recommendations for future discussions related to possible projects and initiatives without applying for certification. If the Council opts to move forward with the application, the letter of intent prepared in May 2023 will be provided as supportive documentation. By establishing the Age-Friendly Community Task Force the Town committed to:

- Conducting a baseline community assessment on the needs of older adults, which was completed with the focus group results.
- Establish a three-year action plan to address the identified needs, which may be considered for completion following an application; and
- Develop tools to measure the progress of the action plan, which may be considered by the standing committee, task force and staff

With the submission of the application, the Town will be committing to providing annual progress reports to AARP regarding implementation of the Action Plan. The Town will have the option to contract with an outside consultant to support staff in the efforts to develop an Action Plan or work to develop the plan in-house.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact as a result of this report, however if the Town moves forward with the AARP application there may be costs related to contracting with an outside consultant to develop the Action Plan and costs to implement any significant programs.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal Area E – Strengthen Community Engagement and Transparency
- Goal Area F – Be Forward-Thinking, Well-Managed, and Well-Planned

POLICY FOCUS

The creation of the age-friendly standing committee is part of developing a diverse and inclusive community. The information collected can contribute to a variety of priority projects for the Town within each of the Town's service areas.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders –to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item has been reviewed in part by the Age-Friendly Standing Committee

ATTACHMENTS

1. Focus Group Results
2. Standing Committee Recommendations