

AGING WELL IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Moving Forward with the California Master Plan for Aging





More attention must be brought to the reality that our population is rapidly aging, that there will soon be as many people over 60 as under 19, and that groundbreaking solutions are needed to ensure that older Californians and persons with disabilities can remain in their communities and thrive.

— Master Plan for Aging
IMPACT Committee Report

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This is not a plan simply for today's older adults. Instead, it is a blueprint for aging across the lifespan. The Master Plan for Aging calls on all California communities to build a California for All Ages & Abilities: for older Californians currently living through the many different stages of the second half of life; for younger generations who can expect to live longer lives than their elders; for communities of all ages – family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and caregivers – surrounding older adults and people with disabilities. As Californians, we can create communities where people of all ages and abilities are engaged, valued, and afforded equitable opportunities to thrive as we age, how and where we choose.

— CA Master Plan for Aging

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Master Plan for Aging (MPA), launched in 2021, presents a unique once-in-a-generation opportunity to address long-standing systemic challenges that have hindered service providers, funders, and policymakers for decades.

Relying on a fragmented system of care driven by short-term funding cycles is no longer enough to meet the complex needs of California's rapidly growing, aging, and increasingly diverse population. By 2030, one in four Californians will be aged 60 or older, and Santa Barbara County is no exception. Projections indicate the county's elderly population will increase by more than 32% between 2020 and 2060.¹ Additionally, the older adult population will become more diverse, with a growing number identifying as living with a disability.

Now is the time to embrace a long-term, sustainable strategy that addresses the interconnected and often complex issues faced by older adults, families, and communities.

By this report, the Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network (AAN) calls on community leaders, city and county planners, as well as human service and health care providers to adopt a fundamentally different and more comprehensive approach through the California Master Plan for Aging.

The California Master Plan for Aging Opportunity

The Master Plan for Aging offers a paradigm shift from fragmented programs to a holistic approach that recognizes aging as a multi-faceted journey experienced by everyone. This new mindset places the needs of older adults and people with disabilities into every aspect of planning and policy-making, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for residents of all ages. It requires change from the past legacy of short term programs and opportunities to a more comprehensive and sustainable system of integrated services and supports.

The outcomes will benefit not only the growing aging population but also relieve the burden on younger family members and communities who are currently stretched thin, trying to fill the systemic gaps in care. Harnessing the MPA vision will support an age-and disability-friendly future for everyone in Santa Barbara County.

1. State of California Department of Finance Table: P-2B County Population by Age, (Accessed July 2024).

Santa Barbara County is well positioned to seize this opportunity and leverage state resources dedicated to achieving these ambitious, yet necessary, goals.

The county has a strong network of health and social service providers, and there is a growing recognition among government and public leaders of the need to adopt an age- and disability-friendly approach. Moreover, there is tremendous potential in the thousands of members within the county's aging and disability communities. Their voices and experiences will be invaluable in guiding and supporting this transformative process.

Local Implementation

In October 2021, AAN invited service providers, stakeholders and local leaders to come together in a countywide forum to launch local MPA planning and prioritization. Through extensive community discussions and input, two of the MPA's [Five Bold Goals](#) were selected as first priorities for local MPA implementation: *Housing for All Stages & Ages*, and *Caregiving That Works*. Additionally, *Health Reimagined*, another MPA goal, was explored during the forum and has since emerged as a third priority for local implementation.

Following the forum, an AAN MPA Ad Hoc Committee, in collaboration with [Caring Together Santa Barbara County \(CTSBC\)](#), a regional collaborative network of health and human service providers - conducted research and developed preliminary recommendations on these goals. The Committee and CTSBC gathered and reviewed data to gain a deeper understanding of the current aging experience in Santa Barbara County.

Data collection involved surveys of local caregivers, a community caregiving solutions pilot, and research using data from the 2020 United States census, the California Department of Finance, the California Master Plan for Aging, the Centers for Disease Control

& Prevention, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, and many other sources. Additionally, interviews and listening sessions were conducted with Committee members and select service providers from AAN in late 2022 and throughout 2023.

A Snapshot of Aging in Santa Barbara County

The data collection and review process offered a revealing snapshot of the current challenges facing older adults in Santa Barbara County. These challenges revolve around the affordability of aging, access to appropriate housing, and the availability of care that meets



the diverse needs at different stages of aging. Older adults and people with disabilities are increasingly living without basic necessities required for healthy aging due to a lack of affordable in-home care and a shortage of home care providers, long waiting lists for affordable housing and senior housing facilities, and increased rental evictions, often leading to homelessness. Behavioral health challenges and a lack of services for older and disabled adults with complex needs were repeatedly raised as concerns that require immediate attention.

Behind this list of issues are stories of countless individuals, families, and caregivers whose lives, safety, and well-being are at stake. Recent hard-hitting challenges — the pandemic and natural disasters, the economy and inflation, the housing crisis, an historic caregiver shortage, as well as the rise in cognitive disability and behavioral health issues — have created a vortex of vulnerability and distress for older adults and people with disabilities.

Fortunately, the MPA provides a framework and state support to help meet the challenge.



State resources have begun flowing into Santa Barbara County through several MPA-related grants to strengthen home and community-based aging related supports. These include:

- A grant from the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission to address unmet behavioral and mental health needs of seniors.
- Funding from the Modernization of the Older Americans Act to support home and community-based counseling and case management for seniors.
- Grants from the California Department of Aging to address isolation through digital connections and to improve infrastructure and financial support for the Senior Nutrition Program.

Moreover through CenCal Health, Santa Barbara County's Medi-Cal provider, the county is participating in [California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal \(CalAIM\)](#). This five-year systems change project aims to improve care and outcomes for Medi-Cal enrollees, particularly those with complex needs. CalAIM seeks to reduce hospital or short-term nursing home stays through integrated models of "whole person" care and coordinated health and social services.

The MPA vision to achieve a statewide network of [Aging and Disability Resource Centers](#) (ADRCs) is also taking root in Santa Barbara County. A new ADRC, led by the [Independent Living Resource Center \(ILRC\)](#) in partnership with the [Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens](#) (the local Area Agency on Aging), is providing equitable access to long-term services and supports for older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, veterans, and families, regardless of age or disability.

Preparing to leverage and coordinate future resources and initiatives will be important for the success of local MPA planning. This effort will require strong leadership across multiple sectors and active engagement with residents from diverse communities throughout the county. Support for this work comes from a [Local Aging & Disability Action Planning Grant](#) provided to ILRC and AAN by the California Department of Aging to facilitate the development of a comprehensive local MPA by June 2025. Another grant, awarded to CTSBC by the [California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative \(CACHI\)](#) and funded by the California Department of Public Health, will support engagement and progress toward one of the MPA goals, *Caregiving That Works*. With this support, Santa Barbara County has the potential to build a successful model of age- and disability-friendly living.

Aging is changing and it's changing California. California's over-60 population is projected to diversify and grow faster than any other age group. By 2030, 10.8 million Californians will be an older adult, making up one-quarter of the state's population.

—CA Master Plan for Aging



NEXT STEP RECOMMENDATIONS

Data Gathering & Community Listening

While the data review in the first phase of MPA planning provides a snapshot of the status of older adults and people with disabilities, it also points to knowledge gaps. Additional quantitative and qualitative research and analysis is needed to better understand and interpret the complex array of challenges relayed in interviews and discussions with service providers across the spectrum of adult, aging, and disability services and programs. Most importantly, older adults and people living with disabilities need to be given opportunities to speak about their direct experiences and needs in a changed, post-pandemic environment. Special attention should be given to engaging communities of color, minority groups, and those who have historically been underrepresented and marginalized.

Housing For All Stages & Ages

Older adults have complex and changing needs throughout the stages of aging related to income, mobility, increased disability, transportation, caregiving needs, and healthcare access. To address these evolving needs, the age-related system of care requires a continuum of integrated

housing and care options that align with each stage of aging, including affordable in-home and community supports that prevent premature institutionalization or homelessness.

Santa Barbara County already has exemplary models of affordable integrated housing programs such as Garden Court, the Golden Inn and Village, and the new Harry's House that can help inform a plan for expanded housing options throughout the county.

A local MPA must include strategies for expanding some of the region's successful housing resources to meet the growing need for affordable housing with age-related supports and to meet the rising need for cognitive and memory care.

The next phase of MPA planning should include engagement with city and county housing planners, developers, realtors, disability advocates, and health care providers to ensure integrated planning and policies that align with these goals.

"Housing that works is housing that takes into account the needs of aging."

— Margot Kushel, MD,
Director, Benioff Homelessness
& Housing Initiative



Caregiving That Works

Santa Barbara County faces a caregiver shortage, resulting in limited access to essential caregiving support across all income levels. This shortage is driven by several factors, including an undervalued and underpaid caregiving workforce, which earns less than half of California's median annual income, and a service delivery gap for middle-income seniors who struggle to afford the high costs of care. Even seniors who are well resourced and prepared for aging's challenges face obstacles to receiving care, including shortages in available private caregivers and a lack of access to assisted living and memory care when needed.

The lack of affordable housing also impacts the shortage in the caregiving workforce. Many caregivers and family members cannot

afford to live within a reasonable commuting distance from those who need their care.

Addressing this caregiving shortage requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach. **An effective local MPA will integrate housing and caregiving strategies and prioritize the development of career pathways for caregivers while providing robust support for family caregivers.** Specific strategies must address ways to increase support for unpaid family caregivers, ensure livable wages and career path opportunities for the caregiving workforce, connect families and caregivers to respite and other resources in the community, and address inequities in access to care across income levels.

40% of the requests for private pay caregivers are not fulfilled due to staffing shortages, scheduling, and lack of affordability for private pay care.

— *Caring Together Santa Barbara County 2022 Survey*



Health Reimagined

The vast majority of adults wish to “age in place” — in the comfort of their own homes while remaining connected to their communities.² Yet many older adults and people with disabilities experience premature entry into long-term care facilities due to increasing disabilities, a lack of affordable in-home care, and insufficient accessible home modifications that would allow them to safely live at home.

Health Reimagined aims to ensure that older adults have affordable access to the services they need that allow them to live in a home setting of their choice throughout the different stages of aging. The MPA redefines traditional supports for older adult health and wellness

which were traditionally focused on healthcare and managed care systems, by advocating for integrated home and community-based services (HCBS).

The snapshot of aging presented in this report underscores the urgent need for a robust HCBS system across Santa Barbara County.

The next step in MPA planning should include a thorough mapping of existing HCBS, alongside an identification of gaps in service delivery. Model HCBS programs and funding structures from other counties and jurisdictions should be reviewed and considered for implementation with the aim of designing a comprehensive system of health and social services that fully meet the needs of Santa Barbara County residents and their caregivers.

Community Supports That Work

Cost Savings Through Home Assistance

CommUnify’s Senior Safe at Home program helps to prevent low-income seniors from hospitalization or ending up in a long-term care facility that, according to Medicaid health providers, can cost taxpayers up to \$7,000 per month. Providing preventative safety measures can realize significant cost savings to our public health system. Senior Safe provides energy assistance and home modification that helps older adults and people with disabilities age safely at home by providing minor home repairs as well as installing slip-and-fall prevention devices, energy-efficient appliances and new windows, at no cost to income eligible clients. Services are offered to homeowners and renters alike. Most clients live on an average fixed income of \$1,285 per month, and many live in mobile homes. Close to 70% of Senior Safe clients are female and live alone, 48% are 75 years of age or older, and 51% are disabled.



CommUnify recipient Mary Morales (right)

2. Binette, Joanne, and Fanni Farago. “2021 Home and Community Preference Survey: A National Survey of Adults Age 18-Plus,” Washington, DC: AARP Research, (November 2021).

CONSIDERATIONS

The MPA challenges communities to embrace the goal of successful aging for all. It establishes a framework for civic leaders, government officials, agency directors, philanthropists, policymakers, and communities to collaborate in helping residents thrive at every stage of life. The next phase of the MPA in Santa Barbara County involves working together to define the vision, strategies, and sustainability of a comprehensive local MPA, with a clear timeline for implementation. AAN invites countywide participation and support to seize this unique opportunity and explore these core questions:

- How can Santa Barbara County best prepare to meet the needs of its rapidly aging population?
- What services and systems are currently in place, and what additional resources will be needed by 2030?
- Are there best practices and successful programs we can adopt, and who will be responsible for their implementation and management?
- What county investments can ensure adequate access to housing and caregiving for older and disabled adults in the short term?
- What kind of leadership and infrastructure are necessary to build a fully integrated, well-functioning system of care across all sectors?
- What resources are needed, and how can we leverage state and federal opportunities to meet these needs?
- How can the county mitigate ageism and celebrate the strengths, contributions, and vibrancy that older adults and people with disabilities bring to the community?

In essence, what would a successful local MPA and its implementation look like in Santa Barbara County?

Answering these questions will require bold commitments of time and focus. It will also necessitate new approaches to collaboration, fostering multi-disciplinary partnerships across government departments and community sectors.

AAN looks forward to partnering with a wide range of stakeholders, leaders, and community members to create an age-friendly county that secures a dignified, supported, and thriving personal and community life for all residents.

SECTION I: Introduction



By 2030, adults aged 60 and older will comprise more than 25% of the total population in Santa Barbara County, will be more diverse, and have more age-related disabilities.¹

The impact of this demographic shift is already evident, as older adults, families, caregivers, and the network of social service and healthcare providers across the county report capacity-filled programs and long waitlists for senior housing, programs, and services. As this report describes, older adults and people with disabilities are grappling with serious challenges related to economic instability, access to housing and adequate levels of care, and equity disparities, particularly within communities of color.

Many of these issues were both exposed and exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, which shed a light on long-standing gaps in the system of long-term services and supports (LTSS), as well as the inequities and health disparities that disproportionately affect communities of color. The pandemic-related death rates among older adults were notably higher—especially within Latino, Black, and Asian Pacific Islander communities and among those living in nursing homes.² Additionally, the caregiving workforce, predominantly composed of women of color, remains undervalued and underpaid, while people living with disabilities continue to experience disproportionately negative impacts on health and access to care.³

The pandemic underscored the critical importance of a robust infrastructure of home and community-based services (HCBS) for the health and safety of older adults and people with disabilities. The heightened vulnerability of older adults and people with disabilities during the COVID emergency inspired a rapid and dedicated response across Santa Barbara County. Care providers, government agencies, philanthropic organizations, and businesses came together in unprecedented ways, collaborating across sectors to deliver essential health, nutrition, and home supports during the

period of isolation. In the process, the community enhanced its ability to identify and connect isolated seniors to vital services, revealing both gaps in care and the transformative potential of a coordinated system of community-based support. For instance, the Isolated Seniors Project, established during the pandemic to deliver in-home meals, uncovered that food insecurity among older and disabled adults is more widespread and complex than previously understood.⁴

These pandemic-related experiences have inspired stakeholders and policymakers to envision new possibilities and commit to building an integrated and sustainable network of community and home-based services that can meet the needs of vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities in every community.

The California Master Plan for Aging (MPA), released in January 2021, reflects and encourages this optimism offering a bold vision backed by resources and strategies, to integrate services and supports across the continuum of age- and disability-related care.

The MPA is already yielding significant results. The [California Department of Aging \(CDA\)](#) has launched over 200 statewide initiatives, backed by \$9.5 billion in funding.⁵ Among these initiatives, 100 specifically address issues that emerged during the pandemic, such as staffing shortages in skilled nursing facilities and the lack of broadband access in rural communities.⁶

Local MPA planning and implementation efforts are underway in counties throughout California, including Santa Barbara. Understanding the status of Santa Barbara County's older adults and people with disabilities, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, is foundational for furthering



"As we came together to help isolated seniors through the emergency, we developed new ways to partner and reach into the community; in the process we discovered the extent of the vulnerability and need for connection and support that existed before the pandemic and that still demands an urgent and collaborative response."

— Barbara Finch, Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services

the development of a local plan that can effectively leverage and coordinate these resources. [The Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network \(AAN\)](#) - comprising 30 diverse organizations serving older adults and people with disabilities - offers this report to highlight the current issues related to aging in Santa Barbara County and to guide the local MPA planning process.

The report provides a snapshot of preliminary quantitative and qualitative data, including insights from extensive discussions and interviews with local service and housing [providers](#). It summarizes the first phase of MPA planning and presents preliminary recommendations developed by the AAN MPA Ad Hoc Committee) in partnership with [Caring Together Santa Barbara County \(CTSBC\)](#) for three of the MPA's Five Bold Goals - *Housing for All Ages & Stages*, *Caregiving That Works*, and *Health Reimagined*.

These findings and recommendations are offered as a starting point for integrated action planning leading to the development of a local MPA by June 2025. AAN invites further commitment, collaboration, and strategic coordination to advance the MPA throughout the region.

Footnotes - Section I

1. [State of California Department of Finance. Table P-3. "County by Age," \(Accessed July 2024\).](#)
2. [Santa Barbara County Public Health Department. "Santa Barbara County Public Health Department. Quarterly Report on Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) 2nd Quarter of 2022," \(July 11, 2022\).](#)
3. [National Council on Disability. "The Impact of COVID-19 on People with Disabilities," \(October 29, 2021\).](#)
4. [FSA Main Blog. "Nonprofits Collaborate to Meet Critical Needs of Isolated Seniors During COVID-19," \(April 28, 2020\).](#)
5. [CA Department of Aging. "Chaptered Legislative Report," \(October 3, 2022\).](#)
6. [Justice in Aging. "2023 Legislative Bills Related to the Master Plan for Aging," \(October 2023\).](#)



Supervisor Joan Hartmann, District 3 (L) and Barbara Finch, Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services (R) at the Transforming the Experience of Aging Convening, October 12, 2023.

SECTION II: A Snapshot of Aging in Santa Barbara County



Santa Barbara County offers a beautiful place to live with the promise of an excellent quality of life for its residents, including many older adults and people living with disabilities.

The county boasts a robust network of nonprofit and government service providers, as well as philanthropic organizations, all of which have long been committed to supporting seniors and individuals with disabilities. Since 1999, these providers have united under the banner of the [Adult & Aging Network \(AAN\)](#), an organization dedicated to fostering connection, collaboration, education, and advocacy. AAN also advises the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors on issues and priorities affecting older adults and people with disabilities.

For the past three years, AAN has led local MPA planning efforts, which have garnered broad countywide support and involvement. Stakeholders, service providers, public and private agencies, and local leaders have worked together on behalf of older adults and people with disabilities to prioritize and develop MPA recommendations, the first of which are reflected in this report.

State MPA initiatives are already bolstering essential community-based services in Santa Barbara County, including vital community programs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A **Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission Grant** is providing resources to meet some of the behavioral and mental health needs of local seniors, a **California Department of Aging Access to Technology Grant** will provide digital resources to build connections and help overcome isolation, and a **Senior Nutrition Infrastructure Grant** to the [Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens Area Agency on Aging \(AAA\)](#) promises funding for four years and will help offset the loss of emergency pandemic support for food and nutrition.

With new MPA investments that support home-based independent living, local community organizations and service providers are now restoring adult day centers and congregate meal settings, as well as physical and mental health programs — all essential for reconnecting and supporting older and disabled adults isolated by the pandemic. These include the supportive nutrition, health promotion, and specialized information and referral services for senior individuals and caregivers carried out by the AAA. Additional case management and mental health services for older adults and people with disabilities are being offered through the new **PEARLS and Wellness Promotion for Seniors Prevention Programs** carried out by [Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County \(FSA\)](#) in partnership with the City and County of Santa Barbara housing authorities.

Housing

New housing developments throughout the county are now complementing the existing pillars of older adult housing in the community such as Garden Court and Gardens on Hope in the City of Santa Barbara and the Rona Barrett Foundation's Golden Inn & Village in Santa Ynez.



Many of these are expanding much needed housing options with on-site supportive services for older adults and people with disabilities.

- **West Cox Apartment Cottages** in Santa Maria opened in 2021 and received its first residents in 2022 with 30 units for formerly homeless seniors and people with disabilities. These units include support services and on-site case management through Good Samaritan Shelters.
- **The Residences at Depot Street** provide permanent supportive housing in Santa Maria with 80 units, two of which are for employees. The facility began operations in 2021, serving seniors and people with disabilities who were formerly unhoused. Residents receive supportive services from Northern Santa Barbara County United Way and Good Samaritan Shelters.
- **The Harry's House** project in Santa Ynez opened in September 2023 with 59 units for seniors (62 and older), a resident manager, and extensive supportive services provided by Parsons Family Management.
- **Heritage Ridge Residential Project** in Goleta is scheduled to open in 2025 with 70% of its residences for seniors who are unhoused or at risk of becoming so.
- **Vera Cruz Village** apartments in the City of Santa Barbara opened in the fall of 2023 with 28 new studio apartments for the homeless, including unhoused seniors with

disabilities. Case management is provided by New Beginnings Counseling Center. Vera Cruz Village and other permanent supportive housing sites will benefit from the CalAIM initiative which will make additional supportive services available for vulnerable residents.

- Four significant developments are under construction or in development in North County: 378 studio apartments for seniors with limited supportive services in the **Santa Maria Studios** project, 80 independent living senior apartments in the **Barcellus Avenue** project, 52 new units of independent living at the existing **Vandenberg Senior Residence** development, and 142 senior ownership single family homes in the **Bellecrest Residents** development.
- A 50-unit project in Buellton (**Village Senior Apartments**), which offers low income independent living with services, is ready for construction. It is planned to serve up to 12 formerly homeless veterans, 12 formerly homeless frequent medical system users, 25 other low income seniors and house the resident manager.

The building activity in Santa Ynez (50), Buellton (50), and Santa Maria (652) represents a significant increase in seniors-only housing opportunities (752 units) in both Mid- and North-County, a high point of production in the past 30 years.

In September 2023, the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara (HACSB) opened a new affordable housing complex called Vera Cruz Village in downtown Santa Barbara. At the time of opening, approximately a third of its occupants were over the age of 62 and the average age of residents was approximately 57 years. The HACSB received 714 total applications for the 28-unit village, indicating that the city would need 686 more units to satisfy the need and demand.

Caregiving

The county is also addressing the growing caregiver shortage. [Caring Together Santa Barbara County \(CTSBC\)](#), a regional collaborative network of health and human service providers, is building upon the important work of the Santa Barbara Foundation's [Community Caregiving Initiative \(CCI\)](#), launched in 2016 to improve services and quality of life for caregivers and their recipients. CTSBC is also conducting research to better understand caregivers needs and has compiled [data](#) through a caregiver pilot study and surveys among local caregivers. This work has informed the MPA planning process as well as data and recommendations in this report. It will contribute to MPA planning going forward.

Additional support for caregivers in Santa Barbara County includes recent county approved pay increases and the introduction

of paid training opportunities for [In-Home Supportive Services Program \(IHSS\)](#) caregivers through [California's IHSS Career Pathways Program](#), which ran from September 2022 to September 2024. The county is also home to one of the 11 regional non-profit [California Caregiving Resource Centers \(CRCs\)](#), which serve the estimated 5.5 million unpaid family and friend caregivers across the state. [The Coast Caregiver Resource Center](#), established in 1984, supports approximately 300 caregivers annually in Santa Barbara County.

[The Aging and Disability Resource Center's \(ADRCs\)](#) have expanded under the MPA, fostering new collaborations between Independent Living Centers and Area Agencies on Aging. Santa Barbara County is now home to one of 21 established ADRCs in California, bringing together the Independent Living Resource Center and the Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT WORK

Caregivers

It has been an honor to run an ongoing support group for Spanish speaking caregivers...The very first step is connectedness. Building rapport is important to the group in order to begin healing. The connectedness and validation that they give one another lets the group become its own healing source. They help each other out of ruts, give each other the space to vent, and provide food during hardships. This has been an essential ritual for our group. They feed the groups' need to heal others by bringing fruits & vegetables grown in their gardens, food they've made, as well as teas and/or plants. Bringing in these offerings to share amongst each other is nurturing the cultural understanding of being a caregiver.



— Family Service Agency staff member



In 2023, the median annual cost of a full-time home care provider in Santa Barbara County was \$84,656, while a semi-private room in a nursing home was nearly \$182,500, up from \$80,080 and \$128,845 in 2021.¹

This partnership aims to overcome historical barriers to service access by streamlining and making services more accessible to older adults, individuals with disabilities, caregivers, veterans, and families, regardless of age or disability.

The MPA goal of *Health Reimagined* is advancing through local implementation of [California's Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal \(CalAIM\)](#) initiative with Santa Barbara County's managed care provider, [CenCal Health](#). CalAIM is a major systems change initiative focusing on whole-person care, offering comprehensive services beyond traditional healthcare settings through Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports (CS). ECM provides coordinated healthcare and social services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries with complex needs, while Community Supports help managed care members access essential services provided by community-based organizations. These

flexible, wrap-around services aim to prevent unnecessary hospital or skilled nursing facility admissions and reduce delays in discharge.

Important - and innovative - work is underway. Yet, much of this good work is being outpaced by the magnitude of exponential growth in the elderly population and their emerging needs.

According to the Administration for Community Living, individuals turning 65 in 2023 have a 70% chance of needing long-term care at some point, with one-in-five requiring it for more than five years.² Additionally, Californians aged 65 or older have a one-in-six chance of developing Alzheimer's disease and a one-in-five chance of developing any form of dementia. The California Department of Public Health projects that the number of people living with Alzheimer's Disease in California will nearly double by 2040, with a 97% increase expected among those over 55 in Santa Barbara County.³



"The Missing or Forgotten Middle refers to older adults whose incomes are too high to qualify for Medicaid/Medi-Cal benefits and too low to purchase in-home care or cover assisted living costs."

—Village Movement California

The demand for long-term care is clearly on the rise. Yet, long-term care remains largely inaccessible as costs are unaffordable across the economic spectrum. Lower-income individuals may qualify for long-term care under Medicare only if they have minimal assets, while middle-income individuals, often referred to as “the missing middle,” face a lack of affordable options and no coverage under Medicare. Even those with assets find themselves burdened by the growing costs of care, often outliving their savings.

The network of services and supports for older adults and people with disabilities, as well as families and communities, is stretched thin as they try to meet the gaps in access to care. For example, unpaid caregivers provided 36 billion hours of care worth \$600 billion nationwide in 2021. Family caregivers face lost income, reduced career opportunities, and challenges balancing children, work, and caregiving. The economic cost to businesses in the U.S. for lost productivity due to caregiver responsibilities is estimated to be between \$17.1 and \$33.6 billion.⁴

Many older adults and people with disabilities, especially those without family support, are left without access to any care. Because older adults can experience sudden changes or declines in functioning, their health and housing status similarly become precarious. Left unattended, many eventually require crisis or emergency response.

Understanding the individual, family, and societal costs associated with the lack of access to long-term care is essential for developing a local MPA. AAN initiated this work through a review of local data and conversations with service providers within the AAN network, conducted between the fall of 2022 and throughout 2023. The review identified several critical pressure points affecting older adults and people with disabilities in Santa Barbara County:

- **The population is aging and diversifying at a rapid pace**, which means increased demand for aging, disability, and culturally relevant services and supports.
- **Housing is unaffordable and unavailable**, and concerns about housing among older adults are rising.
- **Growth in homelessness is higher** than in any other demographic group.
- **Crises and emergencies related to behavioral health and other complex needs are on the rise**, taxing Adult Protective Services, Behavioral Health Services, emergency rooms, and law enforcement.
- **Hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation centers report discharge challenges** due to lack of housing and support systems.
- **The growing caregiver shortage impacts access to care across the economic spectrum** leaving many older adults alone without support and/or adding extra burden on family members (especially women).
- **Isolation has increased post-pandemic** along with the need for help with daily activities, home maintenance, and transportation.

“We are dealing today with the population who sold their homes five years ago or so to pay for their assisted living. And now they have outlived their money and have nowhere to go.”

— Marco Quintanar, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Supervisor, Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Jane and her two sons moved in with her father who has Alzheimer's to care for him. Six months later she realized he could not be left home alone while she worked and the boys went to school. Jane hired an in-home caregiver six hours a day, seven days a week to cook and care for him. After about 14 months, Jane's father had declined so much that he needed the support of a full-time care facility. After a while, he needed a higher level of care due to medical needs and increasingly aggressive and wandering behaviors. Unfortunately, there was no other facility available with the round-the-clock memory care he needed.

Jane ultimately quit her job to stay home and care for her Dad. She built a fence around the house with locked gates to keep him from wandering and took classes to learn to safely restrain him when he became violent. This took an emotional and financial toll on Jane and her two children who began to struggle in school and stay away from home.

Service providers are increasingly concerned about new levels of crisis and emergency responses related to behavioral health issues, substance abuse, trauma, self-neglect, financial exploitation, severe mental health conditions, and cognitive decline. Many providers report spending more time advocating for critical mental health support, particularly because there is no county mandate to accept Medicare as there is with Medicaid.

These challenges are also affecting senior housing facilities, where congregate care providers report a growing demand for care that exceeds their current service mandates. This is especially true for individuals with complex needs, such as those experiencing cognitive and memory challenges.

Additionally, housing and social service providers are fielding a growing number of requests from seniors and individuals with disabilities who are unable to afford or find housing and lack critical caregiving support. City and county housing authorities report a rise in desperate calls for rental assistance and extended waitlists for Section 8 housing and congregate care, particularly memory care. The [AAA 2022 Needs Assessment](#) (Needs Assessment) found that concerns



"We don't have memory care authorization resources, so as residents become mentally challenged, they have to be released from our care and too often, there is no place for them to go."

— South Coast Housing Provider



about housing among older adults rank higher today than in the previous 2017 Needs Assessment. Of the 4,700 calls received by the AAA Information and Referral program between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, 440 (or 9%) were related to housing issues.⁵

Structural issues in service delivery may also inhibit access to affordable care, even for those who qualify for assistance. Providers reported that some low-income residents demonstrate a greater need for services than their medical necessity assessments reflect, leading to insufficient caregiving hours under programs such as the In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS).

Aging affordability also surfaced in the Needs Assessment, in which nearly one fourth of responding seniors cited limited income and rising costs, including meals and food, as current concerns. Legal planning, emotional support and counseling, as well as Medicare coverage are high on seniors' lists of priority issues. Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, dependence upon others, and nursing home placement were reported as the biggest concerns for the future.⁶

"Affordable housing is hard to find and resources are stretched thin. We receive calls daily asking for assistance from seniors who are in need of low income or subsidized housing. Unfortunately low income or subsidized housing is hard to come by on the central coast, with wait lists being years long. Many times we have to give people the hard reality that they may have to try family or friends, and if that is not an option to look outside the central coast".

*— Gary Suter,
Former Executive Director
Area Agency on Aging*

"The need to prepare for our aging population is urgent. Every day we do our best to help older adults who are vulnerable and struggling to stay safe and healthy. The needs are growing and it may take a decade to address the realities we face today. We need to be proactive in planning for an age-friendly future where older adults can age in place."

*—DeAnn Rosenberry,
Senior & Caregiver Services,
Program Director II, Family Service
Agency of Santa Barbara County*

Footnotes - Section II

1. Genworth Financial Co. "Cost of Long Term Care by State: Cost of Care Report," (December 2023).
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, "How Much Care Will You Need?" (February 2020), Webpage.
3. Alzheimer's Association. "Number of Californians Living with Alzheimer's Projected to Double by 2040," CA Facts and Figures Statewide Release, (October, 12, 2021).
4. Reinhard, S., Caldera, S., Houser, A., Choula, R. "Valuing the Invaluable 2023 Update: Strengthening Supports for Family Caregivers," AARP Public Policy Institute, (March 8, 2023).
5. Suter, G. Area Agency on Aging for San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. "2022 Elder Needs Assessment Report," (2022).
6. Ibid.



SECTION III: Data Snapshot



Data Overview

This section provides a data snapshot of the status of older and disabled adults. Drawn from many different sources, the data provide a general picture of the challenges facing older adults and people with disabilities along with the significant growth and diversification in the population. While these data alone suggest profound considerations for public policy and services, policymakers should

anticipate a growing need for data that is both more granular and comprehensive to drive better policy formation. A more complete understanding of the status of older adults and people with disabilities in Santa Barbara County will also require community engagement to assess the reach and impact of current services as well as gaps and inequities in service delivery.

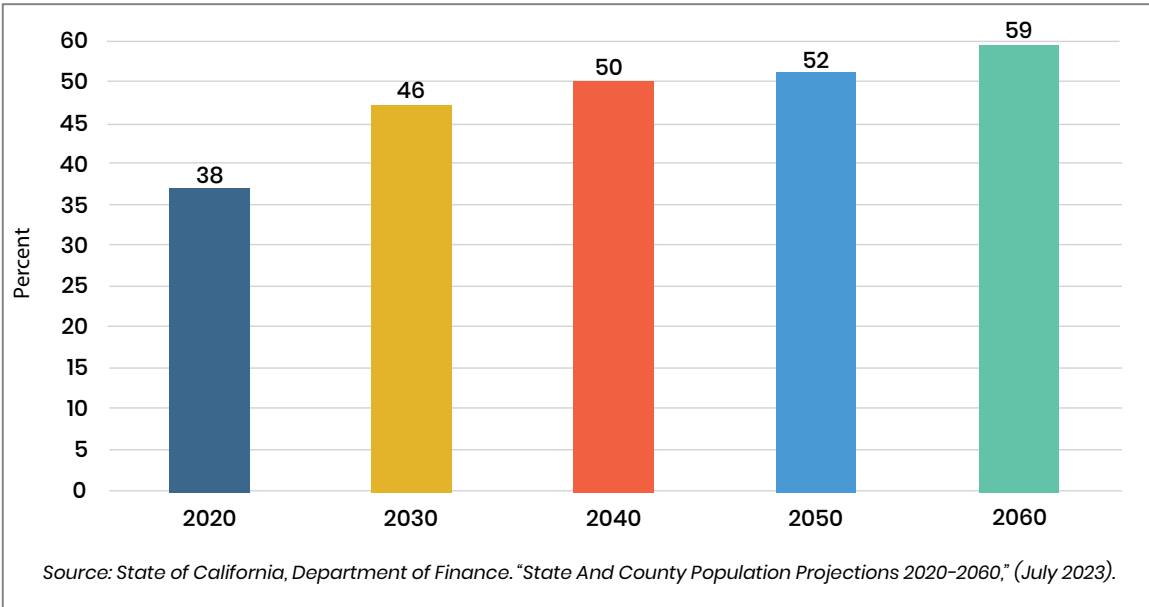
California’s Population is Rapidly Aging and Changing

California is home to the largest total population of older adults age 60 or older in the U.S. (over 9 million) which is rapidly growing and diversifying.¹

By the end of 2025, every last member of the California Baby Boomer cohort will have turned 60 years old.

By 2030, 10.4 million Californians will be age 60 or older, representing one quarter of the state’s population.²

Senior Dependency Ratio: 2020–2060 Projected³



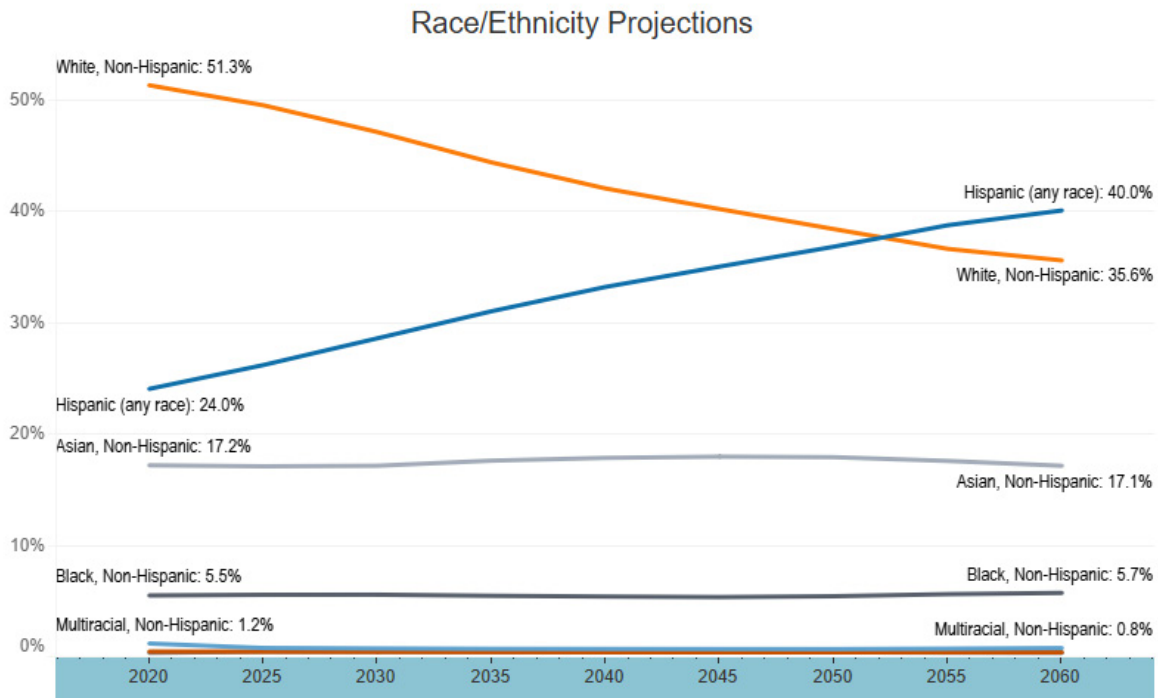
1. See Appendix C for background on older adult population and for information about the difference between population estimates and projections.

2. State of California, Department of Finance. "State And County Population Projections 2020–2060," (July 2023).

3. The Senior Dependency Ratio, also known as the Old Age Dependency Ratio, is the number of older adults (age 60+) in a population divided by the number of younger individuals (age 15–59), multiplied by 100 for clarity. Demographers employ the concept to describe the relative burden of care at the population level. For further details, see Appendix C.

Population Diversity

California's older adult population will continue to diversify between 2020 and 2060. The population of Latinos/Hispanics aged 60 and over is projected to grow faster than all other race/ethnic groups, increasing by 139% between 2020 and 2060.⁴



Source: CA Department of Aging. Master Plan for Aging Data Dashboard.

Disability

The population of older adults with disabilities is projected to grow faster than the overall California senior population.

The number of seniors in California with disabilities (as defined by limitations in routine activities of daily living) will increase by 170%, from 1 million in 2015 to 2.7 million in 2060, while the senior population overall is projected to grow by 135% over the same period.⁵



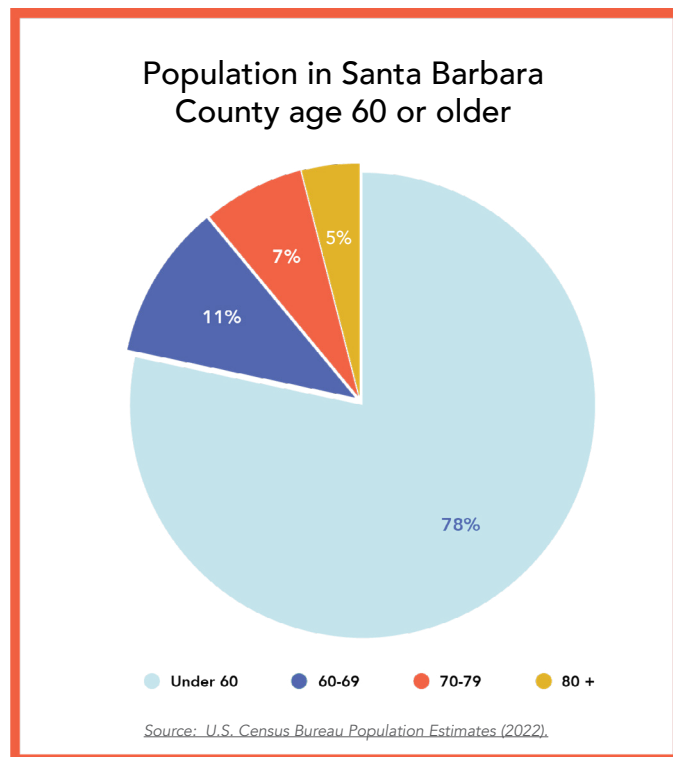
4. California Department of Finance. "County Population Projections, (2020-2060).

5. California Legislative Analyst's Office. "A Long-Term Outlook: Disability Among California's Seniors," (November 28, 2016).

Aging in Santa Barbara County

Population

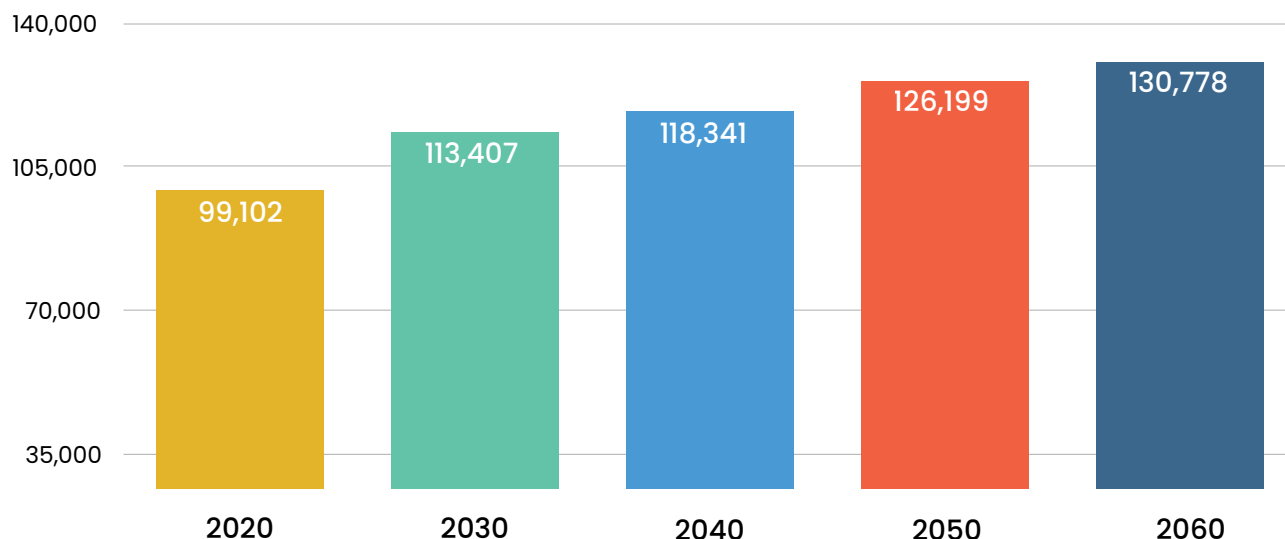
The population age 60 or older in Santa Barbara County in 2022 was 23% of the total population (101,884 out of 443,210).



The workforce faces a dual challenge as the large senior population moves out of the workforce ("the senior dependency ratio") while the number of younger residents entering the workforce is decreasing due to lower birth rates. This trend suggests that there might be relatively fewer workers to support both retirees and young dependents.

Population Growth

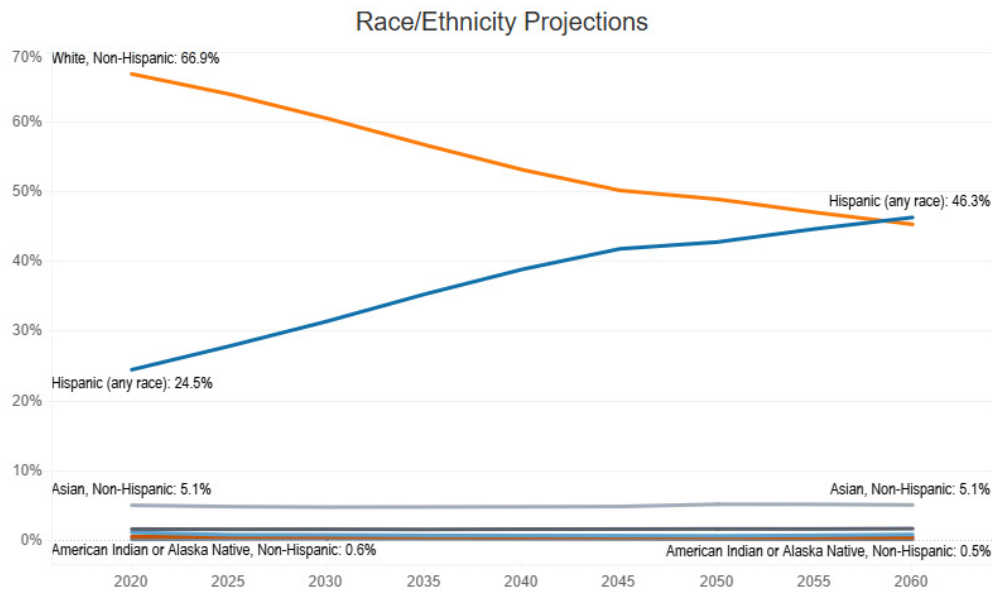
Santa Barbara County's older adult population will grow by 32% between 2020 and 2060.



Source: State of California Department of Finance. "P-2B County Population by Age," (Accessed July 2024).

Population Diversity

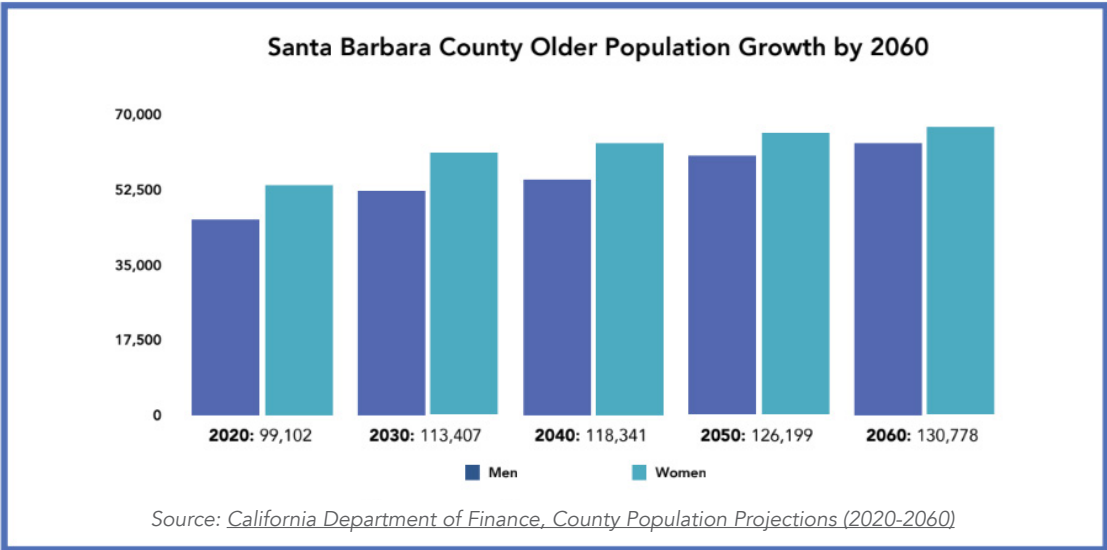
Santa Barbara County’s older adult population is shifting from a majority White (non-Hispanic) population to a diversified population in which no single race/ethnic group represents more than 50%. Between 2020 and 2060, the Latino/Hispanic (any race) population of older adults age 60+ will grow 150% and represent the largest proportion of older adults. The number of non-Hispanic White individuals age 60+ is projected to decrease 10.6% while other race/ethnic groups will grow. The Native American senior population increases by a projected 6.1%, Asians by 33.2%, Blacks by 36.9%, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders by 73.0%.



Source: CA Department of Aging. Master Plan for Aging Data Dashboard.

Age by Gender

Women over age 60 will continue to represent a larger percentage of the population than men over age 60.



Source: California Department of Finance, County Population Projections (2020-2060)

Disability

1 in 3
people over the age of 60 in
Santa Barbara County live with a disability

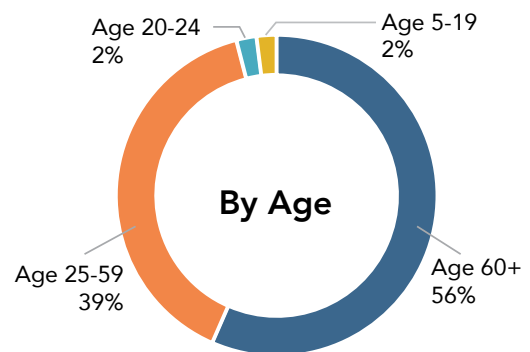
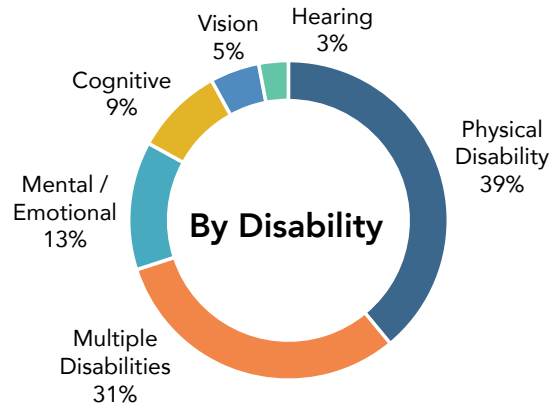
Source: United States Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County by Age, Sex, and Disability Status," (2022).



Individuals with disabilities
account for 10.2% of the Santa Barbara
County population

Source: United States Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County by Disability Characteristics," (2017–2021).

Individuals served in Santa Barbara County by the Independent Living Resource Center



Source: Independent Living Resource Center, FY 2022-2023 Data.

For adults aged 75 and over in Santa Barbara County, 40% of men live with a disability, while 51% of women live with a disability.⁶

Older and Disabled Veterans⁷

- 62% of all veterans in Santa Barbara County are over 65.
- 41% of veterans age 65 or older live with a disability.
- 30% of all veterans in Santa Barbara County live with disability, about 2.35 times higher than non-veteran adults in the county.

6. U.S. Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County Sex by Age by Disability Characteristics," (2022).

7. U.S. Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County by Veteran Status by Age," American Community Survey, (2022).



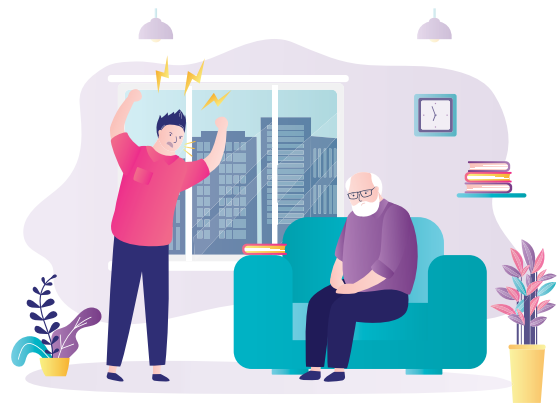
Elder Abuse

Elder Abuse is on the rise

- Total reports to the Santa Barbara County Adult Protective Services (APS) increased 17% from 3,662 reports in FY 2022-23 to 4,285 reports in FY 2023-24.
- APS reports in June 2024 were composed of 87% older adults and 13% dependent adults.

Confirmed allegations of elder abuse and neglect in FY23-24 included the following:

- 24% financial exploitation, including scams, improper use of assets by another, and theft.
- 36% self-neglect health and safety concerns, including cognitive decline, decision making abilities, and concerns about financial management, nutrition, and physical care.
- 17% self-neglect and residential safety issues such as cleanliness, hoarding,



unsafe use of appliances, and threat of eviction due to complex issues like substance use that are typically ongoing and long-term.

Adult Protective Services (APS) responds to reports of abuse or neglect of elderly and/or disabled adults. Abuse or neglect includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, self-neglect, financial exploitation, abandonment, isolation, abduction, and psychological abuse. APS social workers are on call 24 hours a day to assist those suffering from neglect or abuse.

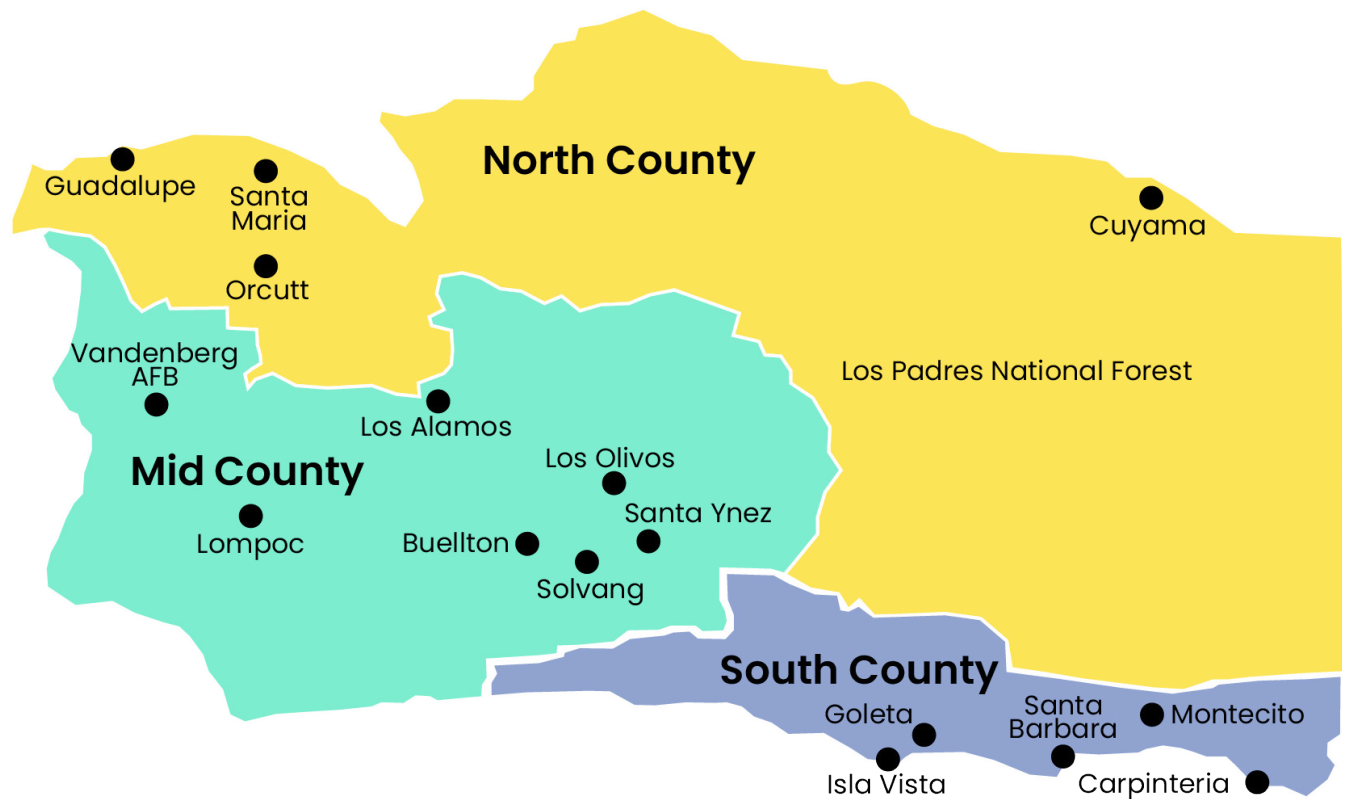
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT WORK

SCAM PROTECTION

Daisy, a senior with disabilities, was the victim of illegal debt collection practices. Daisy had attempted to pay off her credit card balance and close her account, but the bank continued to charge her interest and fees, increasing her balance until she couldn't pay it off with her limited social security income. The Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County was able to assist her by filing a regulatory complaint against the bank and serving notices of improper billing practices. The bank ultimately agreed to waive all interest and fees as well as close her account with a zero balance. Daisy was then able to get on firmer financial footing and stabilize her life.



Where Older Adults Live in Santa Barbara County



5 Year Estimate	60+	% of total
County of Santa Barbara	98,323	22.15% ACS S0101 (2022)
City of Santa Barbara	25,013	25.58% ACS S0101 (2022)
Santa Maria	16,780	15.24% ACS S0101 (2022)
Goleta	6,699	20.50% ACS DP05 (2021)
Carpinteria	3,820	28.75% ACS S0101 (2021)
Guadalupe	997	12.25% ACS S0101 (2021)
Buellton	1,127	21.83% ACS S0101 (2021)
Lompoc	7,143	16.15% ACS S0101 (2021)
Solvang	2,157	38.22% ACS S0101 (2020)

Challenges to Affording Aging in Santa Barbara County

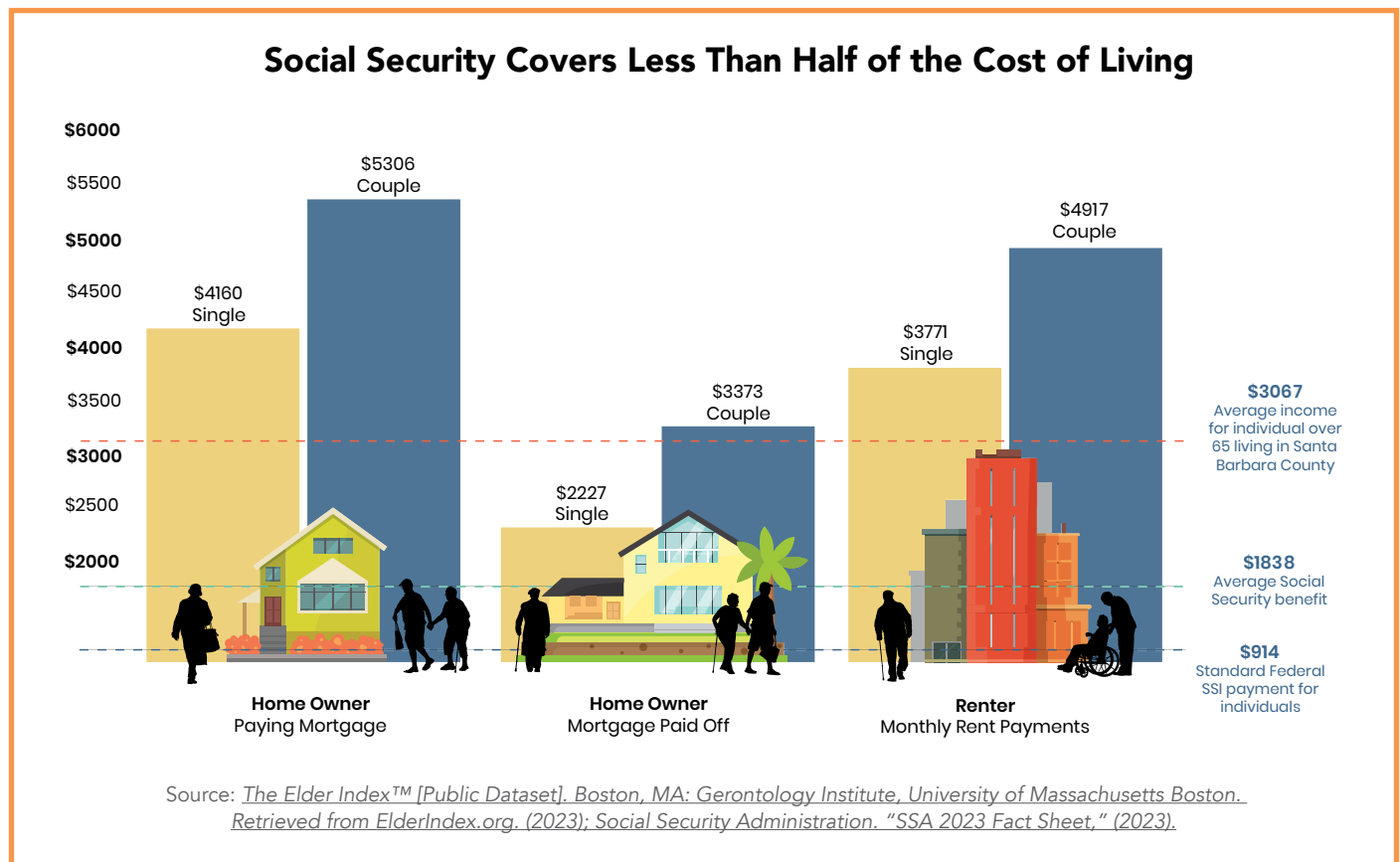
Income

The Median Household Income for older adults Age 65+ amounts to two-thirds of the overall Median Income.⁸

- The median household income for adults age 65 and older is \$68,051, or two-thirds of the median household income of \$105,274 for households without any residents aged 65 or older in Santa Barbara County.⁹

For older adults age 65+ who live alone, the median income accounts for only 55% of the overall Median Income.

- The median income for an adult male age 65+ living alone is \$36,815 and is \$37,492 for an adult female age 65+ living alone.¹⁰



8. See Appendix B for definition of Household.

9,10. U.S. Census Bureau. "Median Non Family Income in the Past 12 Months," ACS (2022).

Housing Affordability

The City of Santa Barbara is considered the 6th most expensive jurisdiction for housing in the United States.¹¹

Housing Cost Burden¹²

- 55% of older adult renters are housing cost burdened, meaning that their housing costs more than 30% of their income.
- 31% of older adult homeowners are housing cost burdened.

Maintaining a home in California costs an average of \$16,957, the seventh most expensive maintenance cost in the United States.¹³

Santa Barbara County Ranks 4th of all 58 California counties for the most severe cost burden for renters.¹⁴

- To afford a studio apartment in Santa Barbara County, an income of \$93,200 is required, which is about 2.4 times the median income of a person aged 65 or older in the area, while a two-bedroom apartment requires an income of \$119,760, approximately 3.1 times the median income of a person aged 65 or older.¹⁵
- As of April 2022, median rent for a 2-bedroom apartment was \$3,475 in the City of Santa Barbara, up 28% from April 2021 and \$4,545 in Goleta, up 95% from April 2021.¹⁶

Elderly Households (65+) in Santa Barbara County:

- Comprise over 33% of all households in the unincorporated county.¹⁷
- Account for 42% of owner-occupied housing units in Santa Barbara County.¹⁸
- Account for 16% of renter-occupied housing units in Santa Barbara County.¹⁹
- Account for more than half of households living alone in Santa Barbara County.²⁰



Seniors who live alone and on fixed income are more at risk for losing shelter than other demographics, especially as California rent continues to increase.²¹

11. U.S. News and World Report Website. "Most Expensive Places to Live in the U.S. in 2024-2025," (2024).

12. CA Department of Aging. Master Plan for Aging Dashboard.

13. Porch, "The Cost to Maintain a Home in America," Porch.com.

14. Housing Trust of Santa Barbara County, "Santa Barbara County Regional Housing Needs," (2024).

15. Ruggles, S., Flood, S., Sobek, M., Backman, D., Chen, A., Cooper, G., Richards, S., Rodgers, R., Schouweiler, M., "IPUMS USA: Version 15.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, (2024).

16. City of Santa Barbara. "2023-2031 Housing Element."

17. County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development Department. "Draft: 2023-2031 Housing Element Update." (June 2023).

18, 19. United States Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County by Demographic Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units," ACS, (2022).

20. U.S. Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County Tenure by Household Type (Including Living Alone)," ACS, (2022).

21. Ibarra, Ana B., Cal Matters. "The Fastest-Growing Homeless Population? Seniors," (2023).

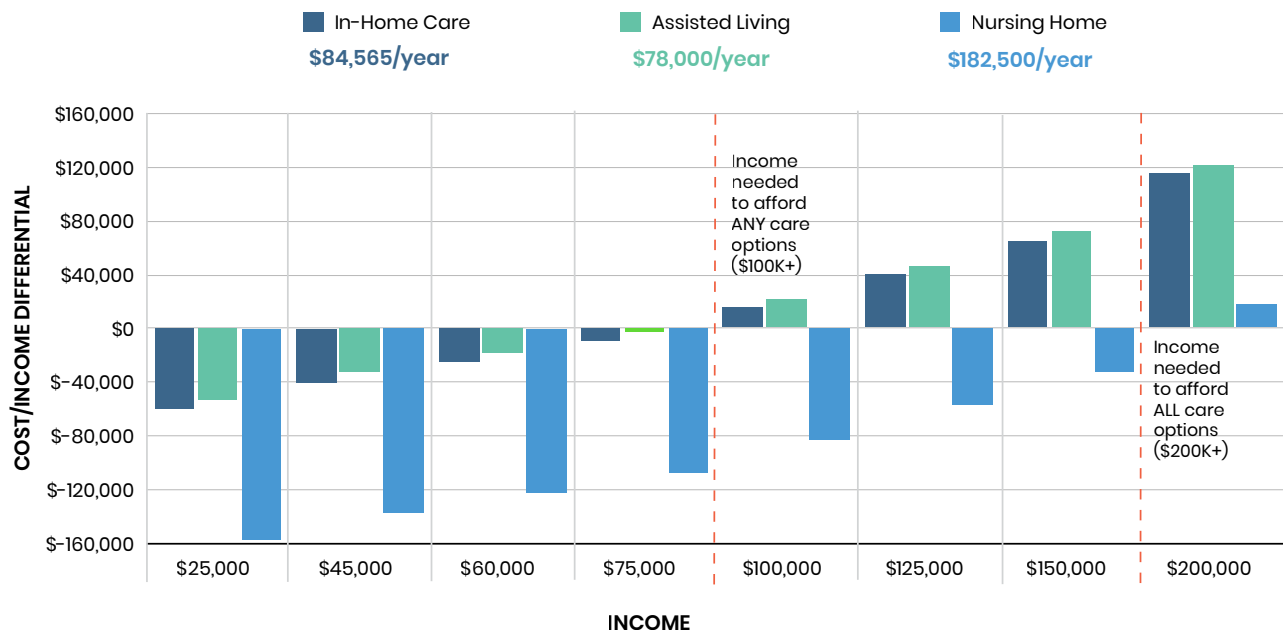
The Cost of Care

The Cost of Care Exceeds the Elder Index Cost of Living in Santa Barbara County

- The median cost of in-home care in Santa Barbara County is 183% of the annual cost of living for an individual aged 65 or more, \$46,198.
- The median cost of nursing home care is 395% of the annual cost of living.²²

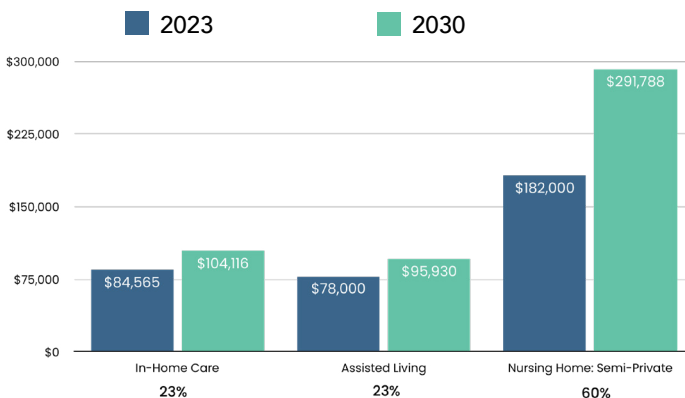


Care Affordability by Income



Genworth Financial Co. "Cost of Long Term Care by State: Cost of Care Report," (December 2023) .

2030 Cost of Care Projections



For households making \$200,000 a year, in-home care represents 42% of total income. A year in a nursing home represents 91% of total income.²³

22, 23. Calculated from the "2021 Cost of Living for One Person," Elder Index. (2023). Genworth Financial Co. "Cost of Long Term Care by State: Cost of Care Report," (December 2023).

Poverty

8% of adults age 60 and older and 10% of adults age 65 and older in Santa Barbara County were living at or below the federal poverty level in 2022.²⁴

25% of adults age 65 and older are living in economic hardship (below 200% FPL).²⁵

In the first quarter of 2023, 13.1% of adults aged 65 or above were living under the California Poverty Measure in Santa Barbara County, up from 7% in 2017.²⁶



33.4% of households with one or more people aged **60 or above** receive food stamps or participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).²⁷

29.5% of low income older adults age 60 or above experienced food insecurity in 2022.²⁸



Poverty among older adults is not concentrated in any one region; however, the proportion of seniors living in poverty is twice as high in Guadalupe as anywhere else in the county. Guadalupe has 18% of seniors living in poverty while Lompoc, Solvang, and Goleta all have 7-9% of seniors living in poverty.²⁹



24. In 2022 the Federal Poverty Level was defined as \$13,590/year for a one person household. U.S. Census Bureau. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Age," (Accessed July 20, 2024).

25. Ruggles, S., Flood, S., Sobek, M., Backman, D., Chen, A., Cooper, G., Richards, S., Rodgers, R., Schouweiler, M., "IPUMS USA: Version 15.0. [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, (2024).

26. In 2023, California poverty levels are defined as individuals living on less than \$20,121 per year and a couple living on less than \$27,214 per year. Public Policy Institute of CA. "Poverty in CA," (2023).

27. U.S. Census Bureau. "Santa Barbara County by Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)," ACS (2022).

28. CA Department of Aging. Master Plan for Aging Dashboard. (Accessed July 2024).

29. Santa Barbara County Age Characteristics," Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, (2017).

Homelessness

"Seniors are one of the fastest growing homeless populations because they cannot afford the cost of rent."

— Bob Havlicek, Executive Director, Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara

- From 2017 to 2021, California's overall senior population grew by 7% but the number of people 55 and over who sought homeless services increased 84%, more than any other age group.³⁰
- In 2022, for every 10,000 people age 55+ in California, 59.8 sought homeless services. For every 10,000 people age 55+ in Santa Barbara County, 79.8 sought homeless services.³¹
- In 2023, 33% of homeless adults were over the age of 55 in Santa Barbara County.³²
- The highest concentration of homeless adults throughout the county is in the City of Santa Barbara.³³



"Every day we are seeing more older adults with physical disabilities or memory loss living on the streets. They are the most vulnerable and need not only physical support and housing, but our love and attention. They are our mothers, fathers, and family members and deserve to be safe and sheltered."

— Clarissa Ornales, Social Services Worker,
County of Santa Barbara Public Defender's Office



30. Barrington, V. "The Fastest-Growing Homeless Population? Seniors," *Justice in Aging*, (2023).

31. CA Department of Aging. *Master Plan for Aging Dashboard*. (Accessed July 2024).

32, 33. County of Santa Barbara. "Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care 2023 Point in Time Count," (2023).

Access to Caregiving is a Growing Concern

By 2030, there will be an 88% increase in older adults with self-care limitations in California and a 54% increase in demand for health care workers.³⁴

Expanding Need

- Older adults who turned 65 in 2023 have a 70% chance of needing long-term care in their remaining years.³⁵
- The number of people living with Alzheimer's disease in California will nearly double by 2040. Most of them are and will be women.³⁶
- Californians aged 65 or over have a 1-in-6 chance of developing Alzheimer's and a 1-in-5 chance of developing any type of dementia.³⁷
- In 2019, there were 8,505 people over the age of 55 living with Alzheimer's in Santa Barbara County. By 2040, that number is expected to grow by 97%, with nearly 16,768 Santa Barbarans over 55 projected to have Alzheimer's disease.³⁸
- Latino/Hispanic residents and people with lower incomes across all ages have more health disparities in Santa Barbara County than the rest of the population.³⁹
- While almost all U.S. born seniors in Santa Barbara County have health insurance, 91% of undocumented seniors lack health insurance.⁴⁰

Workforce Shortages

- By 2030, California is expected to face a shortage of up to 3.2 million care workers.⁴¹ The caregiver shortage is already affecting Santa Barbara County:
 - A 2022 Caring Together Santa Barbara County survey found that 40% of private pay caregiver requests are unfulfilled due to staffing shortages, scheduling issues, and the high cost of care.⁴²
 - On average, the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program has a running caregiver shortfall throughout the year. In fiscal year 2023-24, new provider enrollments averaged 100 per month, while the case referrals for services averaged 186 per month.



34. [Leading Age California](#). "Workforce Blueprint for Action," (2021).

35. [United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living](#). "How Much Care Will You Need?" (February 2020).

36. [Ross, L. K., Beld, M., and Yeh, J.](#) "Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Facts and Figures in California: Current Status and Future Projections," (January 2021).

37. [California Healthcare Foundation](#). "California's Direct Care Workforce: Who They Are, the Work They Do, and Why It Matters," (January 2023).

38. [Alzheimer's Association](#). "Number of Californians Living with Alzheimer's Projected to Double by 2040," (October 12, 2021).

39. [Santa Barbara County Community Health Needs Assessment](#) (2022).

40. [The Fund for Santa Barbara](#). "Toward a Just and Equitable Central Coast," (2021).

41. [California Department of Aging](#). Master Plan for Aging Website.

42. [Family Service Agency](#). "2022 Caring Together Santa Barbara County Caregiving Survey," Webpage.

"The gloomy reality is that most seniors will require long-term care. Almost 70 percent of Americans turning 65 today are expected to need extended services and supports at some point. About 20 percent will need care for more than five years. Despite this, the majority of those aged 40 and over have done no planning for their long-term care, according to a 2021 survey by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research."

— Michelle Cottle, *New York Times*, Aug. 9, 2021

The Caregiving Workforce

- In California personal care aides alone will be the largest single occupation by 2026 with nearly 275,000 new caregiver jobs.⁴³
- 80% of care workers are women, 74% are people of color and 47% are immigrants.⁴⁴
- Nearly 1 in 4 family caregivers are seniors taking care of other seniors.⁴⁵

Unpaid Family Caregivers

Unpaid family caregivers – family members and significant others who care for their senior loved ones– compose a vast majority of the caregiving community. Caregiving without pay is costly, both emotionally and financially, and the complex needs of seniors can be challenging for family members to meet on their own.

- An estimated 99,000 people, or 29% of Santa Barbara County's adult population are unpaid family caregivers.⁴⁶

“Through the Caring Together Lompoc initiative, we learned that 1 in 6 people in Lompoc were serving as an unpaid family caregiver... and are often unseen, feel alone, stressed and need help. Supporting unpaid family caregivers is critical to supporting the aging population in Lompoc Valley.”

- Ashley Costa, Executive Director,
Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare
Organization

- 4.4 million family caregivers in California provide an estimated 4.1 billion hours of care for older parents, spouses, and loved ones. In 2021, this unpaid care was valued at \$81 billion, up from \$63 billion from AARP's previous report in 2019.⁴⁷
- Most unpaid family caregivers in California work full-time in addition to providing care for their loved ones.⁴⁸

In a 2021 study on out-of-pocket costs for unpaid family caregivers, AARP found that eight out of ten individuals report having to pay routine out-of-pocket expenses to look after their family member, with an average annual total of \$7,242. Hispanic/Latino caregivers spend the most out-of-pocket - 44% of their income or about \$9,000 a year, Black caregivers spend 34% of their income on out-of-pocket caregiving expenses, compared to 14% of income spent by White Americans.⁴⁹



43. Parker Martin, J. "Workforce Blueprint for Action" LeadingAge California, (2021).

44. PHI. Workforce Data Center, Webpage, (2023).

45. County of Santa Barbara Department of Social Services Website.

46. Vanslyke, J., Mathies, A., Masters, N.T., Beadnell, B., Wiggins, P. "Caring for Those Who Care: Final Report on the Community Caregiving Initiative 2016 to 2022," (February 2022).

47. AARP. "Family Caregivers in California Provide \$81 Billion in Unpaid Care to Loved Ones" (March 8, 2023).

48. California Caregiver Resource Center, (2023).

49. Skufca, L. and Rainville, C. "2021 Caregiving Out-of-Pocket Costs Study," AARP Research (June 2021).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the direct care workforce will grow more than any occupation in the country, faster than registered nurses and fast-food workers combined.⁵⁰

Private Pay Caregivers

- The majority of paid homecare workers in California find it difficult to support themselves due to low wages and many are on public assistance.⁵¹
- A 2022 CTSBC survey of private pay caregivers in Santa Barbara County reported the following:⁵²
 - The hourly wage range for private-pay caregivers in Santa Barbara County ranges from \$16-\$26.
- The number of job applicants to private pay caregiver agencies has declined 70% since 2018, despite the increase in need and number of service requests. The reasons cited for job applicants not accepting positions include low pay, low shift availability, and commute times (particularly from North County to South County).
- Former private-pay caregivers who left agencies in Santa Barbara County cited lack of childcare and/or eldercare for relatives, better pay in another position, commute times, and lack of affordable housing in the area as reasons for leaving employment.



“Caregiving has been an undervalued field, largely because its workers are predominantly immigrant women.”

— Fernando Torres-Gil,
Director UCLA Center for
Policy Research on Aging

50. PHI. “New Research: 7.8 Million Direct Care Jobs Will Need to Be Filled by 2026,” (January 24, 2019).

51. PHI. “Direct Care Workers in the United States, 2020,” (September 8, 2020).

52. Family Service Agency. “2022 Caring Together Santa Barbara County (CTSBC) Caregiving Survey,” (2022).

1 in 6 Americans are caring for an adult aged 50+

51% say their role gives them purpose and meaning

21% say they feel alone

23% experience difficulty taking care of themselves

68% report financial strain due to caregiving

61% work in addition to providing care

— AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving.



In-Home Supportive Services [IHSS] Caregivers

IHSS is a government-run program that provides in-home assistance to Medi-Cal eligible aged, blind, and disabled individuals as an alternative to out-of-home care or private pay caregiver agencies.

- As of July 2024, the hourly wage for IHSS caregivers in Santa Barbara County was \$18.17 which is slightly lower than both Ventura County's hourly rate (\$18.25) and San Luis Obispo's hourly rate (\$18.64).
- Caregivers serving a single care recipient can work a maximum of 70.75 hours per week, while those providing care to two or more individuals may work a maximum of 66.0 hours per week. The number of hours authorized for each care recipient varies according to their needs.
- A 30-hour work week at \$18.17 per hour would gross \$2,180 a month, which is 63% of the median rent for a two-bedroom

apartment in the City of Santa Barbara (\$3,475). A 40-hour work week at the same rate would gross \$2,907, or 84% of the same median rent.

IHSS Care in Santa Barbara County

- As of June 2024, there were 4,698 authorized recipients of IHSS in Santa Barbara County, a 7% increase over the preceding 12 months.⁵³
- 19% of those eligible for IHSS in June 2024 did not use IHSS services, with no timesheet activity noted for over 60 days.⁵⁴
- New IHSS case referrals increased 6% in FY 2023-24.⁵⁵
- 32% of authorized recipients were listed as age 65 or older.
- 68% of authorized recipients were listed as "disabled" (inclusive of all ages).

The California Legislative Analyst's Office estimates the annual turnover of IHSS workers is about 33%. This means that as many as 180,000 consumers must search for, hire, and train a new homecare provider each year. The cost of turnover per long-term care worker is estimated to be at least \$2,500.⁵⁶

53. Department of Social Services. "In Home Support Services Program Data" (2023).

54, 55. Ibid.

56. Legislative Analyst Office. "In Home Support Services Report," (October 18, 2017).

SECTION IV: Implementing the Master Plan for Aging



STATEWIDE

The California Master Plan for Aging (MPA) was launched in 2021 with Five Bold Goals and 23 strategies. Since then the MPA has had the full support of the Governor and the Legislature, with record budget investments exceeding \$9.5 billion.¹

California is a frontrunner in addressing the needs of an aging population, standing as one of only six states with a dedicated multi-sector plan for aging.² The MPA vision is to provide an adequate infrastructure of support for everyone in California to age with the appropriate levels of care needed throughout the varied stages of aging.

An adequate infrastructure requires integration of services and coordination within government and across sectors. To ensure cohesive planning and execution, Governor Newsom created a Cabinet Workgroup, composed of leadership from the Governor's Office and each Agency Secretary. This workgroup prioritizes older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers in program and fiscal planning.

In 2021-2022, 10 Cabinet Agencies, in partnership with local leaders, state government, the private sector, and stakeholders adopted more than 100 action-oriented MPA [initiatives](#). This was followed by the release of [95 initiatives](#) in 2023-2024 through multi-sector partnerships, with a

commitment by the Newsom Administration to update the initiatives with each legislative session. Many of these initiatives begin to address long awaited systems changes, including:

- **Caregiver Resource Center and Workforce Development Investments:** Programs like the [CA IHSS Career Pathways Program](#) and [CalGrows](#) were launched to provide training and stipends for caregivers, including unpaid family and friend caregivers.
- **Medi-Cal Expansion:** Extending coverage to individuals aged 50 and older, regardless of immigration status.
- **Implementation of CalAIM:** [California's Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal \(CalAIM\)](#) initiative, includes launching Enhanced Care Management (ECM), integrating care for those eligible for both Medicare and Medi-Cal, and incentivizing home and community-based care alternatives.
- **Older Adult Behavioral Health Investments:** Targeted investments to enhance mental health services for older adults.

The Five Bold Goals will ensure housing for all ages, improve access to health services, provide inclusive opportunities for seniors to live and work without fear of abuse or neglect, bolster the caregiving workforce, and increase economic security for aging Californians.

— CA Master Plan for Aging

- **Dementia Care Aware Program:** The nation's first program aimed at equipping primary care providers to administer cognitive health assessments.
- **Modernization of Area Agencies on Aging:** Strengthening California's network of 33 Area Agencies on Aging to better serve older adults.
- **Nutrition Support:** Expanded funding for home-delivered and congregate meals and infrastructure improvement grants for senior nutrition programs.
- **CalFresh Expansion:** Expanding CalFresh eligibility to income-qualified adults aged 55 and older, regardless of immigration status.
- **Digital Support for Isolated Older Adults:** Investments in technology and programs that connect isolated seniors to community and support services.
- **Equity and Access Leadership:** Appointment of the first State Chief Equity Officer and an [Executive Order on Equity](#) to advance inclusive and equitable aging strategies, expand healthcare access, and promote age- and disability-friendly communities.

To guide MPA implementation, the California Department of Aging established the [IMPACT Stakeholder Committee](#), which meets regularly with the Administration and provides annual progress reports with recommendations for advancing the MPA. In its three-year [report](#) released in April 2024, the IMPACT Committee recommended two critical priorities for MPA investments in the next two years: building a home care system of long-term services and supports (LTSS) for all Californians, and preventing older adult homelessness.

"Developing a comprehensive whole-of-government approach to MPA implementation requires ensuring issues impacting older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers are elevated in all conversations - including those impacting health, behavioral health, housing, and workforce..."

— MPA Third Annual Report, January 2024



In addition to these recommendations, the Administration is exploring various strategies to improve the affordability of aging. These include LTSS financing models for middle-income older adults and raising SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and SSP (State Supplementary Payment) benefits to at least the federal poverty level for low-income older adults.³

Several upcoming opportunities could further enhance support for older adults and people with disabilities across California:

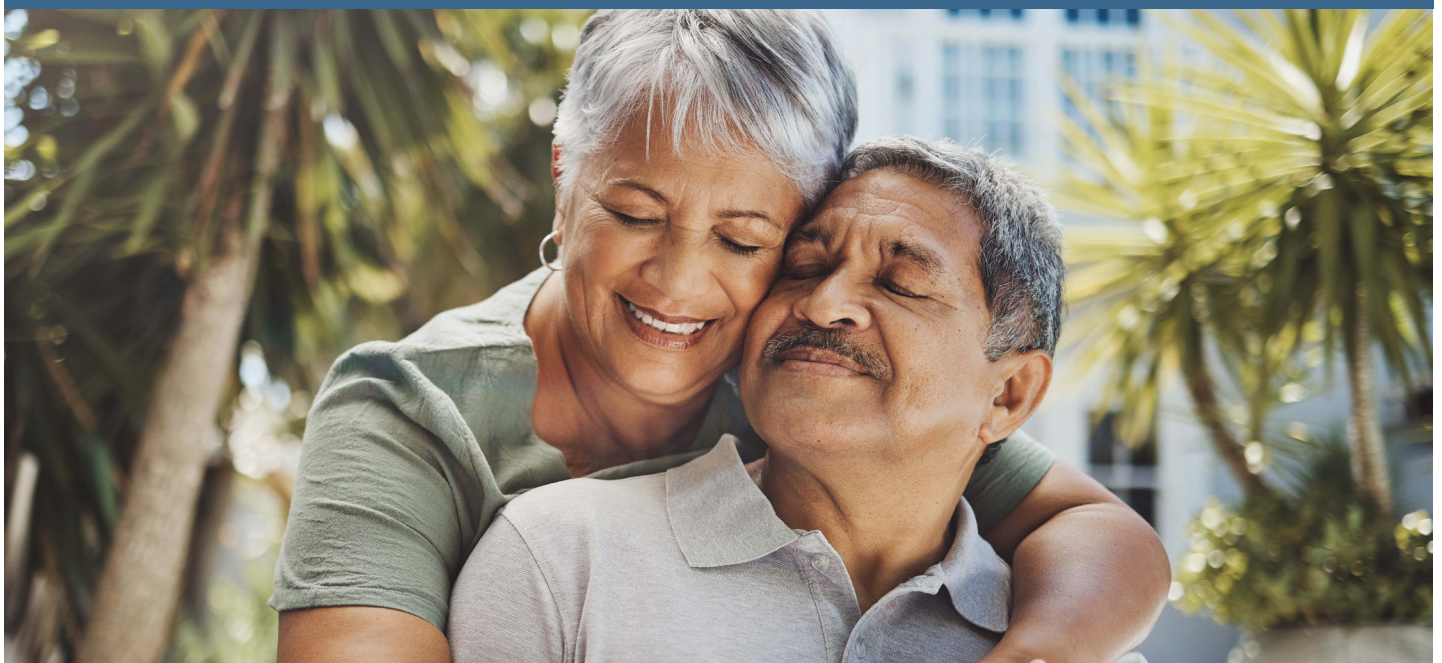
- Leveraging the newly designed Mental Health Services Act to benefit the aging and disability community.
- Accessing new funding under Proposition 1, which established the Behavioral Health Services Program and Bond Measure passed in March 2024.
- Utilizing California's designation as a National Housing Accelerator to expand housing options for seniors.
- Modernizing the Older Californians Act as proposed in recent legislation.

Additionally, the state is advancing a [Master Plan for Developmental Services](#) to modernize the future of services for individuals with developmental disabilities. This plan aims to achieve equitable, consistent, and accessible support for all Californians with developmental needs.

These multiple efforts demonstrate California's commitment to creating a comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable system of care that addresses the diverse needs of its aging population.

Successful MPA implementation will require strong local leadership and partnership. To date 50 counties, including Santa Barbara, are actively leveraging these investments and taking up local MPA planning and implementation. The [MPA Local Playbook](#) (Playbook) supports their efforts by providing steps and resources to engage local leaders, explore data, review best practices, and select priorities for local action.

The MPA Vision is “an age- and ability-friendly California in which the wish of the majority of older adults - to age safely and with dignity at home and as an integral part of their community - becomes an accessible and affordable reality. — CA Master Plan for Aging



Here are some examples of dynamic work underway in other jurisdictions that can inform and inspire the MPA planning process in Santa Barbara County:

Marin County is expanding the earlier commitments of the City of San Rafael to build an Age Friendly City as a member of the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. In January 2019, the County funded a full-time staff person for three years to create its own “Age Forward” Framework. Marin County’s MPA planning efforts are focused on equity and building strong collaborations, including a partnership with the [Marin Center for Independent Living \(MCIL\)](#) to address the growth in the number of older people with a disability. The planning committee and MCIL work together to prioritize equity in access to supports for older adults with disabilities.

Ventura County launched its MPA work in 2019 and finalized a local [plan](#) approved by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in 2022. The plan highlights a “Dementia Friendly Ventura County” initiative offering one-stop-shops for caregivers throughout the county and a Caregiver Navigator Project in partnership with the health community that ensures supports for older adults and people with disabilities upon discharge from outpatient clinics, hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities.

Butte, Glenn, and Shasta counties are participating in a [Rural Master Plan for Aging Project](#) which provides MPA planning and implementation support specific to rural needs such as transportation, health access, and recovery from recent wildfire disasters. They also are developing new collaborations around emergency preparedness to support older and disabled adults with re-housing, transportation, and trauma recovery.



Contra Costa County established an MPA coalition that engaged with civic leaders and policymakers to help secure a designated funding stream from a local ½ cent sales tax which will cover the cost of MPA planning and some concurrent service provisions, as well as their ongoing implementation. The tax is projected to provide \$2 million a year for senior and disability services and supports in accordance with the MPA. Contra Costa County is also implementing a countywide [Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan](#).

“California’s Master Plan for Aging affirms the priority of the health and well-being of older Californians and people with disabilities. It is a “blueprint” for state government, local government, the private sector, and philanthropy to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes.”

— CA Master Plan for Aging

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Phase I: Prioritization and Foundational Recommendations October 2021 - September 2023

Santa Barbara County's planning for the MPA began in October 2021 with a public forum facilitated by the Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network (AAN) and sponsored by The SCAN Foundation. The "Local Voices, Local Action" virtual forum brought together over 100 stakeholders from diverse sectors within the aging and disability communities. Participants shared their concerns and aspirations for older adults in the county to remain safe and supported through all ages and stages of aging, aligned with the MPA's Five Bold Goals. Two goals emerged as local priorities: 1) *Housing for All Ages & Stages*, and 2) *Caregiving That Works*. Additionally, *Health Reimagined* was highlighted as a significant issue requiring further exploration.

AAN began moving the two priority goals forward through research, planning, and partnership with Caring Together Santa Barbara County (CTSBC) and its community health network of provider organizations and advocates dedicated to supporting local caregivers. A Master Plan for Aging Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) was formed in late 2021, initially focused on assessing older adult housing and caregiving needs, with support from CTSBC.

The Committee developed a list of recommendations for the Housing Element planning process which was distributed through AAN partners and shared at a community forum with representatives from Santa Barbara County and the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria.

To address the *Caregiving That Works* goal, CTSBC convened a core group

of caregiving stakeholders to focus on research, education, and advocacy. A stakeholder survey identified measures of success that included raising awareness, increasing support, and improving training opportunities for local caregivers.

Research by the Committee and CTSBC revealed the need to establish more home and community-based services (HCBS). In response, the Committee identified MPA Bold Goal 2 *Health Reimagined*, which emphasizes HCBS, as a third priority for local implementation.

"We will have access to the services we need to live at home in our communities and to optimize our health and quality of life."

— MPA Goal Two: Health Reimagined

The Committee also sought to elevate aging as a priority issue for decision-makers and planners in county and city government. To support this goal, the Committee initiated the development of this report as a "foundational document" to increase awareness of the current status of older adults and people with disabilities countywide. Preliminary data research was complemented by a series of discussions and listening sessions with AAN members and select housing, health, and human service providers to better understand the current status of older adults in Santa Barbara County.

Three key findings emerged from the research and listening sessions, guiding the Committee's subsequent work and recommendations:

1. **Data about the current status of older adults, beyond general demographic data, is sparse.** The Committee's preliminary research shows that data regarding the status of older adults in the county are neither readily available nor easily accessible on a number of indicators. Accessible data (presented in this report) are limited and do not answer many of the Committee's pressing questions. It will be important to work with data experts to identify which data indicators will provide a more comprehensive understanding about the experience of aging in all areas of the county, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. **Older adults' circumstances and needs have changed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and programs are still in flux.** Many older and disabled adults emerged from the pandemic more debilitated, isolated, and unable to return to community programs and other aspects of community life. Some programs went dormant during the pandemic isolation period while new programs and different modes of service delivery emerged (some with emergency response funding). Programs are shifting once again as emergency funds dry up and new funds become available.
3. **Emergencies and crises concerning housing, safety, and well-being among older adults and people with disabilities are on the rise.** This includes older renters on fixed incomes who might have experienced health crises and individuals with complex cognitive and/or behavioral health needs.

"During the pandemic of 2020, the state street shuttle was suspended. These shuttles were fully accessible and provided many seniors and people with disabilities access to doctors' offices, drug stores, and the Amtrak and Greyhound stations. Maintaining these services is vital to the health and welfare of our community."

*— Jacob Lesner-Buxton,
Systems Change Coordinator,
Independent Living Resource
Center, Inc.*



Phase II: Developing a Comprehensive Local MPA

October 2023 - June 2025

The findings in Phase I highlighted the critical need for additional resources and expertise to effectively plan for the MPA, including expanded research, resource mapping, and direct engagement with older adults and people with disabilities. To address these needs, the Independent Living Resource Center (ILRC) partnered with AAN to apply for the competitive Local Aging & Disability Planning Grant (LADAP), offered by the California Department of Aging (CDA). In July 2023, Santa Barbara was selected as one of 15 local jurisdictions to receive a LADAP grant, supporting the completion of a local MPA by June 2025.

In addition, Caring Together Santa Barbara County (CTSBC) secured a grant in 2023 from the [California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative \(CACHI\)](#) to enhance caregiving and caregiver support through community engagement. Together, the LADAP and CACHI grants present a unique opportunity for strategic, multi-sector planning rooted in community participation. These grants not only bring essential resources but also fund dedicated project coordination, laying the foundation for a comprehensive, countywide planning effort.

Phase II of MPA planning officially launched on October 12, 2023, with the countywide public forum titled “Transforming the Experience of Aging in Santa Barbara County,” sponsored by AAN and CTSBC, with support from The SCAN Foundation. In December 2023, a local MPA Advisory Committee was established under the LADAP grant, alongside a Leadership Committee for the CACHI grant.

The CACHI Leadership Committee focuses on MPA Goal 4, *Caregiving That Works*, guiding both planning and implementation efforts, in cooperation with the MPA Advisory Committee. The MPA Advisory Committee is coordinating the broader local MPA planning process that spans multiple sectors and will require extensive public and policymaker input.

To ensure alignment between these initiatives, project coordinators from the MPA Advisory Committee and the CACHI Leadership Committee meet regularly. They coordinate outreach and engagement activities, ensuring a unified approach to advancing aging services and caregiving support in Santa Barbara County.



Keynote Speaker Donna Benton, Ph.D. (third from left) with participants at “Transforming the Experience of Aging” forum.

Footnotes - Section IV

1. California Department of Aging. “Master Plan for Aging Budget Investments, Fiscal Years 2020-2024,” (January 25, 2024).
2. Multisector Plan for Aging. Webpage.
3. IMPACT Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting, Webinar (July 25, 2024).

SECTION V: Local Master Plan for Aging Priorities and Preliminary Recommendations



"The MPA provides a shared framework from which to advance system change and positively impact the lives of older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers for generations to come."

- MPA Progress Report 2023

Housing For All Ages & Stages

MPA Vision

"We will live where we choose as we age in communities that are age-, disability-, and dementia-friendly and climate- and disaster-ready."¹

The Challenge

As people age, their housing needs evolve. Older adults require varying levels of support and services throughout the aging process, with a particular need for affordable housing options that enable them to remain in their homes and communities. Institutionalized care should be a last resort, mitigated by the availability of affordable housing integrated with home and community-based services (HCBS). These services might include home care, adult day centers, respite care, nutrition programs, transportation, and support for family caregivers.

A significant challenge is access to affordable rental housing for older adults and people with disabilities on fixed incomes, as well as to Section 8 housing for those who qualify. Additionally, the county lacks sufficient assisted living options with memory care services to meet the fast-growing demand.



"The high probability of individuals retiring at age 65 and needing to find progressively higher levels of support, residential care, and licensed care as they age, makes a self-evident case that new physical building designs, new support and care program designs, and other radical changes in our communities will continue to be necessary to meet these evolving needs into the indefinite future."

*— Frank Thompson, Principal,
Frank Thompson Housing Consultants*

"Our community needs more service-enriched senior housing. As elderly residents age in place their needs can become much more profound. Having affordable senior housing that includes onsite supportive services is critical in our efforts to ensure that our community's low-income seniors age in place safely and without fear of premature displacement, or worse yet, possible eviction."

*— Alice Villarreal Redit, Resident Programs Supervisor,
Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara*



How do we ensure affordable housing with supports for older adults on fixed incomes?

Housing Recommendations

A local Master Plan for Aging must address how Santa Barbara County can expand some of its successful housing resources and draw upon model programs in other jurisdictions to address the growing need for housing with integrated supports.

The plan should encompass strategies that provide affordable and accessible housing options across the entire continuum of care for aging adults and people with disabilities. These include market-rate and affordable options for:

- Independent living
- Independent living with enhanced aging and disability-related services
- Assisted living

- Memory care and residential care facilities
- Mental health residential care
- Skilled nursing facilities

An effective MPA must also address the intertwined housing and healthcare needs of older adults and people with disabilities. Sustainable funding, both for capital projects and ongoing operations, will be essential to provide affordable, accessible housing integrated with healthcare and supportive services that enable aging in place. Innovative development models, such as co-locating housing with 'satellite' healthcare clinics or other community-based health services, should be explored.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT WORK

Supportive Services Program (SSP)

The Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara (HACSB) in partnership with the Family Service Agency (FSA) offers a clinical case management program providing crisis intervention services, care planning, and service coordination to vulnerable individuals, including seniors (over 60% of those served), who might be experiencing a decline in their day-to-day functioning. The primary goals of the SSP are to promote resident self-sufficiency, stability, and overall wellness. **In recent years, referred seniors have presented with higher acuity needs, often necessitating an urgent response and longer-term engagement with the program** to reduce over-utilization of emergency services, to reduce the risk of homelessness, and to effectively and consistently engage with behavioral health treatment and other support services.

HACSB. "Supportive Services Program (SSP) Annual Report," (August 2022-July 2023).

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT



Janice is a veteran and retired bus driver who fell on the job and developed nerve damage. She could not continue driving and did not know some of the benefits she could receive through the VA for a service-connected disability she developed while in military service.

She experienced housing instability and was living at the Salvation Army prior to moving into veterans housing with supportive services at Johnson Court. She is so appreciative to work with their supportive services specialist.

The following strategies are recommended to enhance housing options for older adults and people with disabilities Santa Barbara County:

- **Define “Senior Development”:** Align housing development with the levels of disability experienced by older adults. The current push for low- and moderate-income housing must also address the needs of the rapidly growing population of older adults, many of whom live with disabilities. For instance, the current allowance for senior housing at 7% is disconnected from the reality of a 25-30% level of disability.
- **Incentivize Senior Housing Development:** Encourage the construction of more housing tailored to older adults and people with disabilities, ensuring affordable housing options that are ADA-compliant.
- **Coordinate with Local Housing Authorities:** Work with the two housing authorities in Santa Barbara County to expand federal assistance for rental programs, prioritizing severely rent-burdened and very low-income older and disabled adults.
- **Increase Assisted Living and Memory Care Options:** Explore the implementation of the Assisted Living Waiver pilot program to expand these services.
- **Prioritize Homeless Prevention for Older Adults:** Utilize case management, rental supports, and ordinances to protect long-term mobile home residents from displacement.
- **Develop Expedited Placement Processes for Newly Homeless Seniors:** Create new pathways for older adults who may not meet prioritization criteria under the existing Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- **Ensure Emergency Shelters Are Age-Friendly and Accessible:** Modify shelters to meet the specific needs of older adults.
- **Integrate Behavioral Health and Complex Care Services:** Connect these services with homeless prevention, supportive services, and housing initiatives.
- **Evaluate Transportation Needs in Relation to Housing:** Collaborate with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) to develop MPA recommendations for the updated Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

AAN has provided additional housing [recommendations](#) to Santa Barbara County and its cities, emphasizing the prioritization of affordable, accessible, and inclusive senior housing in the Housing Element Planning process. AAN suggests that the next phase of MPA planning should involve engagement with developers, realtors, health care providers, and Housing Element planners to ensure integrated planning, policies, and budgeting in the Housing Element's implementation process.

These recommendations reflect a comprehensive approach to ensuring that housing options in Santa Barbara County accommodate the evolving needs of older adults and people with disabilities, fostering communities where aging in place is a viable and supported choice.

“It is a common misperception that creating accessible spaces during construction adds significant costs for builders. Integrating accessibility features into building design is an investment in the future, because it makes every dwelling a potential home for anyone at any stage of life.”

— Jennifer Griffin, Executive Director,
Independent Living Resource Center



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Mrs. Ema has been homeless for a couple of years; she lives in her car with her small dog. She says that she got the dog for company but also so she can sleep better. Most of the time she stays in safe parking. She needs to stay in the area because all of her doctors are in the area. She has income solely from social security. She sometimes pays for a hotel room in order to get rest, wash her clothing and do a deep clean of her car. Savings are difficult to accumulate as she must eat out, pay for necessary medical expenses, and care for her dog. Mrs. Ema waits patiently but wishes for a unit to become available soon. She has had a tour of Harry's House and can't believe that she might have the opportunity to move in. She tells the staff at Family Service Agency (FSA) that she can't believe she will not have to worry about anything – access to food, laundry, community, activities, and transportation when she doesn't feel well enough to drive.

By 2030, CA will be facing a shortage of as many as 3.2 million care workers.” — Susan DeMarois, Director, CA Department of Aging

CAREGIVING THAT WORKS

MPA Vision

“We will be prepared for and supported through the rewards and challenges of caring for aging loved ones.”³

The Challenge

The caregiver shortage is intensifying pressure on an already strained system that lacks equitable access to care. One in four caregivers is an older adult with vulnerabilities of their own, and many family caregivers are part of the “sandwich generation,” simultaneously caring for young children and disabled/older adult relatives. Caregivers are stretched financially due to lower end wages and the high cost of housing and living in the region. Service providers are caught between the need to offer affordable services and the demand for higher wages for caregivers, compounded by a lack of adequate resources for individuals with complex needs.

The majority of the caregiving workforce is women, particularly women of color. They carry a disproportionate burden in providing unpaid and paid care, often at the expense of their own children, families, and careers. As the data in this report shows, the caregiving workforce needs an intervention of supports including access to affordable housing, training, and higher wages.

Caregiver Shortage

Santa Barbara County is facing a significant caregiver shortage affecting access to essential caregiving support across all income levels. Contributing factors include an undervalued and underpaid workforce earning less than half of California’s median annual income, and a service delivery gap for middle-income seniors who cannot afford the high costs of care. The shortage of affordable housing further exacerbates the caregiving workforce crisis, as caregivers often cannot afford to live within

“In Santa Barbara County and across the country, most long-term care is provided by unpaid family caregivers. In Santa Barbara County alone, an estimated 99,000 people (approximately 29% of the population) are unpaid family caregivers. While caregiving provides rewards, it also exacts a toll. Caregivers are at significant risk for serious stress and diminished health outcomes.”

— Community Caregiving Initiative 2022 Report⁴

commuting distance of those they serve. Family members and friends are increasingly stepping in to fill these gaps, often at a high cost to their own careers as well as their personal and family well-being.

Gaps in Care

A major gap in care accessibility exists among the “missing middle”— individuals whose incomes are too high to qualify for benefits but too low to afford in-home care or assisted living. Additionally, there is an increasing demand for care for individuals with complex needs, including severe disabilities, cognitive impairment, substance abuse, and issues related to homelessness. This demand is placing pressure on crisis response providers such as Adult Protective Services, hospital emergency rooms, and law enforcement. While Santa Barbara County has some exemplary care homes, such as Garden Court and Golden Inn and Village, these facilities do not provide memory or cognitive care and are not fully equipped to handle the increasing population of high-needs individuals.

Disproportionate access to care services and programs is widely reported in some communities and areas of the county, particularly in rural areas. For example, IHSS reports more limited access to caregivers in the Santa Ynez Valley compared to other areas of the county. This disproportionate access and gaps in care will be further explored through community and stakeholder engagement supported by the CACHI and LADAP grants.

“We are an aging community and this is an expensive place to live. What happens to our marginalized population, especially the frontline workers if their livelihood is \$15-\$20/hour? How do we take care of the seniors if we don’t have the caregivers to do that?”

—Jeanne West, Senior Advocate

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT



Oscar is a 72 year old male living with his 92-year-old mother in her mobile home. He arrived at the hospital in a weak state, displaying signs of malnutrition and lack of personal hygiene. Oscar was dependent on his mother for feeding, monitoring, and care despite her age. No supportive services were available for either Oscar or his mom until they arrived at the hospital in dire need of care.



How do we grow the caregiving workforce to meet the level of care that will be required by 2030 and beyond?

Caregiving Recommendations

Communications & Public Awareness

- **Increase Public Education and Awareness:** Promote understanding of caregiving needs and challenges faced by caregivers and their families.
- **Enhance Community Awareness of Caregiving Resource Centers:** Publicize the services provided by these centers.
- **Establish a Gold Standard for Caregiver Support:** Create a model for effective communication, collaboration, and referrals among partner organizations.

Unpaid Caregivers

- **Expand Reimbursement for Respite Care:** Collaborate with the state to increase Medi-Cal reimbursement for respite care.
- **Improve Collaboration Between Healthcare and Social Services:** Strengthen communication with family caregivers and help them access eligible benefits.
- **Track Referrals and Close the Loop:** Ensure service referrals between healthcare and social services are monitored to confirm when services have been received, expanding public health data collection on older adults.

- **Promote Free Caregiver Training and Coaching:** Utilize resources available through programs like CalGrows.

IHSS Caregivers

- **Fully Restore Funding to the Public Authority:** Address prior cuts to ensure caregiver requests are met.
- **Build the IHSS Workforce:** Develop strategies for recruitment, potential pay increases, and benefits. Consider aligning with Ventura and San Luis Obispo Counties, which have lower costs of living and higher wages for IHSS providers.
- **Connect Caregivers to Training and Education Resources:** Explore local options for enhance IHSS training similar to the IHSS Career Pathways Program which concludes in September 2024.
- **Explore “Contract Mode” IHSS:** Look for ways to implement this approach in Santa Barbara County to address care inequities and gaps for those with severe disabilities, cognitive impairments, substance abuse issues, or histories of homelessness.

“We need to recognize caregivers, paid and unpaid, as essential workers whose well-being must be considered in systems change efforts.”

— Shannon Kenny, Founder and CEO, Alliloop



Caregiver “Listening In” Session at the “Transforming the Experience of Aging” forum, October 2023.

“We must invest in the long-term workforce by promoting compensation and training...and by creating career pathways that provide advancement opportunities for those...in the field.”

— CA Master Plan for Aging



Sarah Ilenstine, IHSS Caregiver (left) and Vickie Ponce, Community Partners in Caring (right).

Private-Pay Caregivers

- **Advocate for Higher Wages and Benefits:** Address increased compensation and benefits for paid caregivers, while exploring strategies to maintain or enhance affordability for care recipients.
- **Promote Training and Coaching Opportunities:** Explore options for free caregiver training and coaching resources, and provide incentives for paid caregivers to participate.
- **Support Career Development for Caregivers:** Advocate for the creation of clear career advancement opportunities for paid caregivers, enhancing their professional growth and retention in the workforce.

These recommendations aim to strengthen the caregiving system in Santa Barbara County by supporting both paid and unpaid caregivers, enhancing access to essential services, and ensuring that caregivers are fairly compensated and trained to meet the complex needs of the aging population.

“The reality is the impact of caregiving goes beyond the individual....no industry, profession, company, or level of seniority is exempt.. In the current workforce, roughly 61% of employees are caring for an aging loved one outside of work. They work, on average, an additional 20+ hours/week on caregiving responsibilities. Four out of 10 are part of the sandwich generation.”⁵

— Lisa Rill, PhD.
Veterans Care Coordination

“Our goal is to bring the community together in support of families facing the challenges of caregiving. Sharing resources for caregivers to ‘care’ for themselves will help improve their personal health and the quality of care they can provide for their loved one.”⁶

— Lisa Brabo, CEO, Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County



“The majority of older adults and people with disabilities want to live at home, even as their needs for care change - but California lacks an affordable, inclusive and equitable system to support them.”

— CA MPA Stakeholder Advisory Committee Report

HEALTH REIMAGINED

MPA Vision

“We will have access to the services we need to live at home in our communities and to optimize our health and quality of life.”⁷

The Challenge

Most older adults and people with disabilities prefer to age at home, remaining active and independent within their communities for as long as possible, even as their care needs evolve.⁸ Many are concerned about the possibility of institutional care and prefer it to be a last resort, only to be considered when absolutely necessary.⁹ Despite this preference, many older adults and people with disabilities experience premature entry into long-term care facilities due to increased disability, difficulties in navigating their home environments safely, a lack of accessible modifications, or challenges in independently managing their health and well-being.

Additionally, while behavioral health challenges often accompany aging, access to these services is limited, often leading to crisis. These often include such events as hospital transfers without appropriate placements and/or follow-up supports, premature institutionalizations, tenant evictions, and, in some cases, the complete loss of housing. Particular populations, such as Hispanic/Latino and LGBTQ+ older adults, report higher rates of mental distress, while Californians over the age of 85 have the highest suicide rates of any demographic group.¹⁰

While cost effective, access to home and community-based services (HCBS) that can help prevent crises and emergencies remains limited. Availability is largely dependent upon financial resources rather than need.



“A lot of our reports are self-neglect — not meeting their own medical, physical, food, and daily needs — and many are descending into homelessness.”

— Thea Hurst,
Adult Services Supervisor,
County of Santa Barbara
Department of Social Services

Health Reimagined Recommendations

To address these challenges, Santa Barbara County needs a more responsive, equitable, and affordable HCBS system—one that allows all residents to age in the location of their choice with care that adapts as their needs evolve. A local Master Plan for Aging must focus on building an integrated and effective HCBS network, connecting the health, human services, and housing sectors.

The following steps are recommended for the next phase of local MPA planning to support this goal:

Mapping Local HCBS Resources and Service Gaps

- Map current resources, including the capacity and outcomes of the current Multi-Purpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) and other community programs such as adult day, home health, nutrition, home maintenance, home safety planning, home share programs, specialized transit, and affordable in-home care support for activities of daily living.
- Conduct a community assessment to determine the extent of food insecurity among older adults and identify opportunities to address nutrition needs.

Exploring Model Programs

- Review successful HCBS programs and models from other jurisdictions, particularly those focused on behavioral and cognitive health, in-home case management, and expanded geriatric care (e.g., consider the PACE Program and explore Ventura County's "Hospital to Home Alliance").
- Identify past programs with positive outcomes that did not survive short-term funding cycles, such as the Doctor's Assisting Seniors at Home (DASH) program which provided on-call, rapid response home medical visits by registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians. DASH services to elderly patients led to a 28%

Q How do we build a robust network of integrated home and community-based care with funding streams that support integration?

reduction in hospitalizations for enrollees and a 33% reduction in emergency room visits, yet was not sustainable.

Developing Strategies to Increase Support For:

- In-home services (e.g., leverage CalAIM).
- Geriatric care.
- Emotional and mental health across the continuum of elderly and disability care.
- Cognitive, dementia, and memory care, working with healthcare systems and doctors to improve diagnosis, baseline medical assessments, and ongoing support after diagnosis.
- Organizational capacity and structures for HCBS service delivery.
- Volunteer-driven programs.

These recommendations aim to improve understanding of the current HCBS landscape across the county and identify programs and strategies to develop a more comprehensive system of care.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT WORK



Overcoming Isolation

Elizabeth is 74 years old and living alone with a hearing impairment. She recently fell and broke her elbow. Elizabeth cannot drive herself and needs help getting to doctors' appointments. She has been feeling isolated and alone because of her hearing disability. Community Partners in Caring (CPIC) implemented texting through their GoTo app so she can request rides and let CPIC know when she is available for friendly visits. Elizabeth says she would struggle to get enough money to pay for rides to her doctor's appointment if CPIC was not an option.

Footnotes - Section V

1. For a full list of the MPA strategies and initiatives to achieve "Housing for All Ages & Stages," see [California Department of Aging "Master Plan for Aging, Goal One: Housing for All Ages and Stages."](#)
2. Santa Barbara County Adult and Aging Network, California Master Plan for Aging Workgroup. "Prioritizing Seniors in the Housing Element Process," (July 2022).
3. For a full list of the MPA strategies and initiatives to achieve [Caregiving That Works](#) see the California Department of Aging. "Master Plan for Aging, Goal Four: Caregiving That Works."
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5. Rill, Ph.D., L., "Why Companies Should Care for Their Caregivers: A Call to Action," Veterans Care Coordinator, (June 4, 2020).
6. Hill, F. "FSA Launches Caring Together Campaign to Support Family Caregivers," (February 12, 2015).
7. For a full list of the MPA strategies and initiatives to achieve *Health Reimagined* see California Department of Aging "Master Plan for Aging, Goal Two: Health Reimagined."
8. Binette, Joanne, and Fanni Farago. "2021 Home and Community Preference Survey: A National Survey of Adults Age 18 - Plus." Washington, DC: AARP Research, (November 2021).
9. Suter, G. Area Agency on Aging for San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. "2022 Elder Needs Assessment Report," (2022).
10. Kietzman, K.G, Dupuy, D., Damron-Rodriguez, J., Palimaru, A., del Pino, H.E. and Frank, J.C. UCLA Health Policy Brief. "Older Californians and the Mental Health Services Act: Is an Older Adult System of Care Supported?" (January 2018).

SECTION VI: Next Step Considerations



“In age-friendly communities, older people are not only consumers of services but are rather a social capital that contributes to the well-being of the whole community.”

— Esther Lecovic, *Aging in Place: From Theory to Practice*.¹

A community is strengthened when it harnesses the diverse talents and contributions of its older adults and residents with disabilities. Encouraging and supporting the ongoing participation and contribution of all community members fosters individual and collective health, growth, and productivity. The MPA challenges counties across California to adopt a vision of successful living for all, regardless of age or ability.

Innovative solutions will be key to ensuring a positive aging experience in communities throughout Santa Barbara County. **Above all, creating disability and age-friendly communities requires dedicated partnerships, active engagement, and integrated planning that encompasses every aspect of community life - from land use and housing to health and social services, parks, transportation, and social activities.**

Phase II of the MPA Process

This next phase of the local MPA planning process is initiating partnership, engagement, and integrated planning through the stages outlined in the LADAP grant work plan:

1. Coordinating the work of the MPA Advisory Committee.
2. Building community awareness.
3. Gaining support from community leaders.
4. Facilitating community assessment and cross-sector engagement.
5. Selecting goals and priority initiatives.
6. Developing a local plan, followed by approval, public release, and initial implementation.

As the MPA Advisory Committee takes up its charge to forge a local MPA, the Committee suggests prioritizing recommendations from this report through further community input,

expert data analysis, and resource mapping, focused on the following areas:

- **Affordability:** Understand challenges related to income security and the racial wealth gap and bring affordability into focus in every area of the local MPA. Track state initiatives that aim to reduce financial burdens of aging, such as CalAIM expansion, LTSS financing, and the Assisted Living Waiver.
- **Housing:** Assess whether current housing planning and construction align with older adult and disability population projections and emerging needs. Explore the possibility of next generation older and disability-friendly housing development co-located with satellite healthcare clinics that provide a menu of extended supportive services.
- **Well-Being:** Evaluate food insecurity, healthcare access, transportation systems, parks, recreation, volunteer, and job opportunities, and examine the extent of crimes against older adults and people with disabilities. Explore options for increased integration of mental health supports across health care and social services.
- **Gaps in Care:** Identify gaps in services that contribute to premature institutionalization or unnecessary hospitalization. Determine the most effective ways to address complex care needs and ensure equitable access to care in rural and underserved communities.
- **Caregiving:** Assess how caregiver workforce shortages impact care experiences across various settings, particularly in lower-income and rural areas.
- **Household Status:** Identify renters and homeowners at risk of becoming unhoused, including those on fixed incomes, behind on tax or insurance payments, or living without supportive services.



"Across data indicators Latino/Hispanic residents of Santa Barbara County are most impacted by racial disparity."

— *Race Counts*²

"What makes the 21st century unique from previous eras is the rapid growth of two key groups: persons who are age 65 and older and immigrants and racialized minorities who will become the majority population as the non-Latino white population declines... Latinos will represent the next generation of at-risk elders. Thus, a crucial challenge is to invest in these emerging populations..."

— *Fernando M. Torres-Gil, MSW, Ph.D., Director of UCLA Center for Policy Research on Aging*³

Key Considerations for the Next Phase

Equity & Diversity

- Santa Barbara County's demographic trends indicate both an aging population and an emerging Latino/Hispanic population of older adults. The local MPA must incorporate cultural awareness about the norms and needs of Latino/Hispanic, indigenous, migrant, and immigrant farmworker populations, drawing upon direct community input and recommendations.
- Given that the region is home to speakers of over 20 languages, including Spanish, Mixteco, Tagalog, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Hindi, it is crucial to invest in an inclusive roadmap for aging well that celebrates intergenerational, inter-ethnic, and culturally diverse communities.

Research

- Conduct a community assessment to help shape the local MPA.
- Engage data experts and community assessment evaluators to monitor MPA progress.
- Identify current policy and planning initiatives

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

James is a 68 year old man who lives alone in a one-bedroom apartment that he was able to rent with the support of the Department of Behavioral Wellness. He has a history of going to the Emergency Department on a regular basis due to intoxication, altered state, and confusion. In 2013, James was introduced to Adult Protective Services (APS) and since then APS has received approximately 17 more reports. James has been homeless repeatedly since the initial APS report due to his substance abuse as he is unable to maintain permanent shelter, manage his financial affairs, or maintain his nutritional and personal care needs. James is eligible for IHSS but has no caregiver. James continues to live a life of substance abuse, self-neglect and frequent hospital ER visits, and is at risk of homelessness again.

“We see people regularly fail out of housing due to a lack of supports, as the housing tools weren’t designed for people with complex needs. It’s time to prioritize equitable access...there is currently a group of IHSS eligible people in every county in CA for whom hiring and managing a caregiver is a difficult or impossible task. They are eligible for a program that is not designed to help them.”

— Mark Burns, Former Executive Director, Homebridge, Remarks to Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network, July 26, 2023

to elevate older adult and disability priorities (e.g., SBCAG Committee on Transportation Advisory Committee).

- Identify existing national and state resources that can be leveraged locally (e.g., some could be as simple as customizing materials from the National Aging & Disability Transportation Center’s resources and materials to spread awareness about local transportation options).

Engagement

- Involve leadership from each city in the region and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.
- Build on existing community resources (e.g., religious and philanthropic institutions, cultural groups, the Chamber of Commerce, libraries, food banks, and volunteer groups) to create innovative strategies that raise awareness about aging and connect people to services and resources.
- Develop “MPA Ambassadors” across the county to lead community MPA efforts and foster engagement.
- Strengthen healthcare partnerships and build understanding between healthcare professionals and social service providers.

Moving Forward

The Committee recommends that Santa Barbara County explore structural solutions for planning and implementation across departments and agencies, similar to the Newsom Administration’s inter-departmental systems change model for the statewide MPA. Integrated planning should include leaders and representatives from planning departments in each of the eight cities in the county.

The Committee also advises that the County and its cities join the [AARP Age-Friendly Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities](#). More than 70 California cities

have enrolled in AARP's Age-Friendly Network, with the state of California leading the way by joining the network in July 2021.

With its rich community resourcefulness, creativity, and enduring commitment to older adults and people with disabilities, Santa Barbara County is well prepared to seize this opportunity to fulfill the promise for all its residents to live and age well. AAN invites everyone to participate in the next phase of this unprecedented journey to create a Santa Barbara County that is inclusive and supportive for all ages.

"We need to think of older people as our single fastest growing asset on this planet. It's the one true resource that is growing. And if we can take advantage of all of the people who want to work and contribute and volunteer in different ways, we can have a whole different society."⁴

– Debra Whitman, Executive V.P. & Chief Public Policy Officer, AARP

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT WORK

Collaborative Partnerships

Viola, 85, made her career in the musical arts as a successful performer and teacher who helped to shape many young musicians. Viola's family money, income from teaching, and social security gave her a monthly income that kept her comfortable and covered her wants and needs. During the pandemic, Viola lost the ability to teach and had to use up the financial cushion she had saved for a "rainy day." By early 2022 Viola's income had dwindled to just barely cover her monthly expenses. When the owner of the property where Viola lived for many years decided to sell, Viola was given three months to relocate. At 85 and having outlived her savings, Viola faced homelessness. She sought help from the Legal Aid Foundation (LAF) and Family Service Agency (FSA) to stop the eviction and to find alternative housing. Legal Aid was able to help Viola get more time and FSA was able to help her access community resources to find housing she could afford. Viola shared that she was glad for the help she received, as she had never expected to find herself in such a position and had no idea what to do.



Footnotes - Section VI

1. Lecovic, E. *Anthropological Notebooks* 20 (1): 21-33, Slovene Anthropological Society. "Aging in place: From theory to practice," (2014).
2. Race Counts. "Santa Barbara County," Website.
3. Torres-Gil, F. and J. Angel. "The Politics of a Majority-Minority Nation: Aging, Diversity and Immigration," New York, N.Y.: Springer Publishing Company, (2018).
4. Keynote remarks at the National Press Club, Washington D.C., (August 8, 2024).

"Santa Barbara County's allure is as diverse as its residents. We need to match this richness in culture with policies that ensure every individual who is older, and/or has a disability and is part of the direct care workforce has a fair shot at calling this beautiful county their home."

*— Jennifer Griffin,
Executive Director, Independent Living Resource Center*



SECTION VII: Appendices



The Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network

3rd District Supervisor Joan Hartmann
1st District Supervisor Das Williams
Alliloop
Alzheimer's Association, California Central
Coast Chapter
Caring Together Santa Barbara County
Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens/
Area Agency on Aging
Coast Caregiver Resource Center
CommUnify
Community Health Centers of the Central
Coast
Community Members
Community Partners in Caring
County of Santa Barbara Department of Social
Services
County of Santa Barbara Department of Public
Health
County of Santa Barbara District Attorney
Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County

Foodbank of Santa Barbara County
Friendship Center
Gray Panthers Santa Barbara Network
Helen Sanderson Associates
Hospice of Santa Barbara
Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara
Independent Living Resource Center
Latino Elder Outreach Network
Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County
Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare
Organization
Long Term Care Ombudsman of Santa Barbara
County
NurseCore
OASIS Center
Sansum Clinic
Santa Maria Wisdom Center
Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People
Santa Ynez Valley Senior Citizen Foundation



APPENDIX B

AAN Master Plan for Aging Ad Hoc Committee

Lisa Brabo, CEO, Family Service Agency of
Santa Barbara County

Ashley Costa, Executive Director, Lompoc
Valley Community Healthcare Organization

Renee Cowans, Family Consultant, Coast
Caregiver Resource Center

Barbara Finch, Director Santa Barbara County
Adult & Aging Network and Children & Adult
Network Director, Santa Barbara County
Department of Social Services

Jennifer Griffin, Executive Director,
Independent Living Resource Center

Thea Hurst, Adult Services Supervisor,
Department of Social Services

Shannon Kenny, CEO, Alliloop

Jacob Lesner-Buxton, System Change
Coordinator, Independent Living Resource
Center

Cynthia McNulty, Program Director, Coast
Caregiver Resource Center

DeAnn Rosenberry, Senior Services
Program Director II, Family Service Agency

Marco Quintanar, Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Supervisor, Family Service
Agency of Santa Barbara County

Rryn Schumacher, Santa Barbara
County Public Health Department

Frank Thompson, Principal, Frank
Thompson Housing Consultants

Alice Villareal-Redit, Resident
Programs Supervisor, Housing
Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

Data Considerations

Population

The intention of California's Master Plan for Aging and Santa Barbara County's local planning process is to promote the health and wellbeing of all older adults regardless of age or ability. The data used to compile this report refers alternatively to older adults as individuals 'aged 60 and older' or 'aged 65 and older.' There is no single, universally accepted definition of 'older adult' or 'senior,' and while statistics that report seniority at age 60 are more inclusive, the U.S. Census Bureau frequently employs the cutoff age of 65 to better align with eligibility requirements for federal programs such as Medicare. This report gathers data from a variety of sources, and thus the data here will include both age thresholds (and occasionally age 55) in order to provide the most comprehensive view.

The data and data analysis provided here are based on estimates and projections that are as up-to-date as available at the time of their creation. Varying age thresholds and data sources mean that figures may not always agree, but such discrepancies are generally small and do not affect the overall trends and conclusions.

Population Projections and Estimates

The U.S. Census Bureau's Decennial Census provides the most accurate count of the U.S. population. The Census is conducted every ten years, most recently in 2020. Population data collected during the Census are used as the foundation for estimates and projections in subsequent years. For non-Census years, population figures are considered estimates, based on previous Census data, while numbers for future years are known as projections.

Both the U.S. Census Bureau and California's Department of Finance publish population estimates. While these estimates are generated independently, the two agencies closely collaborate on data sources and methodology. However, it's important to note that the Census Bureau does not produce population projections specifically for the state of California.

This report uses projections from the California Department of Finance for the years 2020 and beyond. These projections have been updated with the Census Bureau's estimates for 2020 through 2022, though they remain preliminary pending release of final 2020 Census data. As such, the years 2020, 2021, and 2022 are considered estimates, while the years 2023 through 2060 are projections.

Data Sources and Potential Discrepancies

The data presented in this report are based on the most current analyses available at the time of writing, utilizing population figures from sources such as the American Community Survey, Decennial Census counts, and estimates and projections from both the Census Bureau and the California Department of Finance. While there may be minor discrepancies in population figures due to variations in data sources and methods, these differences are generally small and do not significantly impact the overall trends and conclusions drawn from the data.

Defining Household Classification

The Census Bureau categorizes the population into two broad groups: households and group quarters. A household is defined as a group

of people living together in a single housing unit, which can include both family and non-family members. Group quarters refer to living arrangements where individuals do not reside in households, such as nursing homes, correctional facilities, and college dormitories.

This report primarily focuses on households, as they are the most common living arrangement for seniors. However, it is important to acknowledge that in California, approximately 100,000 individuals aged 65 years and older were living in group quarters in 2020. This distinction may contribute to minor inconsistencies in population reporting, in addition to the aforementioned discrepancies in population statistics.

Dependency Ratios

The dependency ratio, often referred to by demographers as the “old age dependency ratio” measures the size of the “dependent” population in relation to the “working-age” population, who theoretically provide social and economic support.

The ratio is based on age rather than employment status. The “old age” or “senior” dependency ratio is the ratio of adults age 65 or older per 100 working age (ages 18-64) population. The youth dependency ratio is the ratio of youths ages 0-17 per 100 working-age population.

In 2010, the youth dependency ratio was 36 youth for every 100 working-age persons. By 2030, this ratio declines to 34.9 and 32.4 by 2060. The opposite trend is evident for older adults. In 2010, there were approximately 20

adults age 60 and older for every 100 working-age persons. By 2060, it is projected that the ratio will more than double to 44.6 adults age 65 or over for every 100 working-age persons. The increasing senior dependency ratio and a relatively consistent youth dependency ratio mean that more workers are moving out of the working-age range than into it, with implications for access to care and other services.

Service Provider Interviews

The following people graciously gave their time in 1:1 and group interviews, sharing their experience and insights as service providers for older adults and people with disabilities. All interviews were conducted in 2022-2023.

Ramon Avitia, Public Authority Supervisor,
Santa Barbara County Department of Social
Services
Allen Bell, Supervising Planner, County of
Santa Barbara, Planning and Development
Lisa Brabo, Chief Executive Officer, Family
Service Agency of Santa Barbara County
Ashley Costa, Executive Director, Lompoc
Valley Community Healthcare Organization
Rubayi Estes, Santa Barbara Foundation
Rob Fredericks, Executive Director, City
Housing Authority of Santa Barbara
Stacie Furia, Director of Evaluation and
Learning, Santa Barbara Foundation.
Jennifer Griffin, Executive Director,
Independent Living Resource Center
Bob Havlicek, Executive Director, Housing
Authority of the County of Santa Barbara
Thea Hurst, Adult Services Supervisor, Santa
Barbara County Department of Social
Services
Cheri Jasinski, Community Member
Patricia Keelean, CEO, CommUnify
Shannon Kenny, Founder & CEO, Aliloop
Renee Kuhlman, Family Consultant, Cottage
Caregiver Resource Center
Gail Marshall, Board of Directors, Gray
Panthers
Cynthia McNulty, Program Director, Coast
Caregiver Resource Center
Jessica Metzger, Project Planner, City of Santa
Barbara, Community Development
Clarissa Ornales, Social Services Worker,
County of Santa Barbara Public Defender's
Office
Meaghan Rose, General Counsel & Chief
Government Affairs Officer, LeadingAge
California
Mike St. Denis, Managing Attorney, Legal

Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County,
Lompoc Office
Jessica Steele, Senior Planner, County of Santa
Barbara, Planning and Development
Alice Villareal Reddit, Resident Services
Supervisor, City of Santa Barbara Housing
Authority
Gary Suter, Executive Director, Central Coast
Commission for Senior Citizens, Area Agency
on Aging
Frank Thompson, Principal, Frank Thompson
Housing Consultants
Adalberto Velasquez, In-Home Supportive
Services Supervisor, County of Santa Barbara
Jeanne West, Community Engagement
Manager, Hospice of Santa Barbara County
Selena Evlizisor Whitney, Senior Planner, Santa
Barbara County Planning and Development
Department

South Coast Senior Affordable Housing Providers

Manny Ayala, Executive Director, The Terrace
Foundation
Patricia Fabing, Marketing Director, Friendship
Manor
Charlene Fletcher, Executive Director, Gardens
on Hope
Oscar Funez, Community Manager, Pilgrim
Terrace
Rick Gulino, Director of Resident Services &
Neighborhood Development, People's Self-
Help Housing Corporation
Veronica Herrera, Manager, Grace Village
Cindy Hill, CEO, Battistone Foundation
Alice Villarreal Redit, Resident Programs
Supervisor, City Housing Authority of Santa
Barbara
Christina Songer, Executive Director, Laguna
Cottages
Ruth Torres, Property Manager, St Vincent's
Villa Caridad Apartments
Chris Tucker, Executive Director, Garden Court
Cindy Young, Executive Director, Santa
Barbara Community Housing Corporation

APPENDIX E

Local Aging & Disability Action Planning (LADAP) Grant Summary

Purpose

The Local Aging & Disability Action Planning grant program (LADAP) of the California Department of Aging (CDA) provides over \$4 million to 20 organizations to develop local age and disability friendly action plans aligned with the goals of California's Master Plan for Aging (MPA).

Santa Barbara County is pleased to be among the first communities selected for a LADAP grant to improve livability for people of all ages and abilities. The grant enables the development of a local MPA that is centered on community engagement and equity principles and practices. The plan will address the current, emerging, and future needs of Santa Barbara County's older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, and families through cross-sector collaboration and transformational systems change.

With the support of this grant, Santa Barbara County envisions a future in which residents have the support and resources they need to age in place while enjoying optimal health, safety and happiness.



Key Components

Awareness & Engagement

- Build awareness among community members and leaders about the needs and experiences of older adults, persons living with disability, and their caregivers and family members.
- Engage and listen to the voices of older adults and people living with disability, particularly among under-represented communities.
- Expand local data collection and analysis to better understand the status of older adults and people living with disability.

Action Planning

- Create an action plan centered on the changing needs of older adults and people with disabilities, and in alignment with California's Master Plan for Aging.
- Weave equity, inclusion and affordability into all aspects of the action plan.
- Bridge the geographic, cultural and economic divide between the three distinct parts of the county, North, Mid and South.
- Address sustainability by identifying potential future funding sources and partnerships from government and philanthropic.
- Incorporate evaluation mechanisms.
- Strengthen the leadership capacity of the Santa Barbara County Adult and Aging Network by expanding partner engagement and increasing membership among people with lived experiences.

Santa Barbara County MPA Advisory Committee 2023-2025

Established December 2023

With support from the California Department of Aging Local Aging & Disability Action Planning Grant, a cross-sector Advisory Committee was formed in December 2023 to advise the development of a local Master Plan for Aging by June 2025.

Lacey Baldiviez, Chief Impact Officer,
FoodBank Santa Barbara County
Lisa Brabo, Chief Executive Officer, Family
Service Agency of Santa Barbara County
Cathy DeCaprio-Wells, Adult Services
Manager, Santa Barbara County Department
of Social Services
Barbara Finch, Adult and Aging Network
Director, Santa Barbara County Department
of Social Services
Robert Gibson, Union Representative, United
Domestic Workers Union
Jennifer Griffin, Executive Director,
Independent Living Resource Center
Amelia Grover, Manager of Social Work,
Dignity Health
Joan Hartmann, Third District Supervisor, Santa
Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Alma Hernandez, North County District
Representative, Office of Supervisor Joan
Hartmann

Christina Hernandez, Council Member,
Guadalupe City Council
Marjie Kirn, Executive Director, Santa Barbara
County Association of Governments
Kemba Lawrence, Community Services
Director, CommUnify
joyce ellen lippman, Community Member
Dinah Lockhart, Community Member
Jack Mohr, Equity, Wellness, Promotion and
Prevention Manager, Santa Barbara County
Public Health Department
Angela Oslund, Interim Director, City of Santa
Maria Parks & Recreation
Marco Quintanar, Long-Term Care
Ombudsman, Family Service Agency
Beatrice Reynolds, Service Coordinator, Union
Plaza Apartments
Citlaly Santos, Strategic Engagement Director,
CenCal Health
Margaret Weiss, MPA Project Coordinator,
Independent Living Resource Center
Kathryn Westland, Executive Director,
Friendship Center
Hilda Zacarias, Executive Director, Community
Partners in Caring

APPENDIX G

CARING TOGETHER SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Grant Summary: California Accountable Communities for Health

In 2016 the Santa Barbara Foundation began the Community Caregiving Initiative (CCI), bringing together 28 cross-sector organizations to support caregivers, connect organizations to ensure access to services, create knowledge, and raise awareness about caregiving and policy solutions. The goal was to create a diverse network that would sustain itself after Foundation leadership ended and evolve independently to continue the work. In 2022, when the Foundation ceased funding and managing CCI, a team stepped up to share leadership. The post-CCI network, called Caring Together Santa Barbara County, now includes 41 partner organizations.

Caring Together Santa Barbara County's vision and overarching aim is to honor the caregiving role; develop integrated, inclusive, easily accessible health and social service systems that support caregivers and their loved ones in culturally aware, respectful, and appropriate ways; promote policies that support caregivers; and promote aging with dignity.

In 2023, Caring Together Santa Barbara County (CTSBC) received a grant to develop an Accountable Community for Health (ACH) focused on caregiving.

For decades, long-standing inequities have exacerbated health issues in low-income communities and communities of color, resulting in persistent health disparities. Accountable Communities for Health provide a powerful framework for tackling those inequities by breaking down barriers and promoting a new way of working together.

Caring Together Santa Barbara County's ACH syncs with Goal 4 of the California Master Plan for Aging (MPA), "Caregiving That Works." Caregiving is one of the priorities for the Santa Barbara County Master Plan for Aging.



Within the 2.5-year grant period, the ACH will move five key objectives from the Early Stage to the Completed Stage, move the CTSBC partnership from late-stage Establishing Collaboratives to the stage

of Sustaining & Growing ACH, and sustain a powerful, county-wide demonstration of how an approach that centers DEI/anti-racism and community voices can achieve a pressing goal of California's Master Plan for Aging.

The Five Grant Objectives:

1. Establish governance structure, including a leadership team that includes residents, which ensures effective decision-making and accountability to partners and the community.
2. Adopt and incorporate diversity, inclusion, and equity/anti-racism (DEI/AR) principles throughout CTSBC activities.
3. Center voices of community residents who are most impacted by inequities in governance of CTSBC; defining short- and long-term outcomes; design/implementation of portfolio of actions.
4. Adopt and implement a sustainability approach/ plan that articulates its value, quantifies its needs, and identifies specific funding sources
5. Collaborate with the CA Department of Aging to implement the CA Master Plan for Aging: Goal 4, *Caregiving That Works*.

Additional References

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California Department of Aging, January 2023, "Master Plan for Aging MPA Second Annual Report."

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APPENDIX I

Additional Resources

AARP Livable Communities

[AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities](#)

[AARP Livable Communities Handout](#)

Age-Friendly Plans

[City of Sacramento. "Age Friendly Action Plan March 2024," \(2024\).](#)

[City of San Rafael. "Age-Friendly San Rafael Strategic Action Plan 2020-2023," \(2021\).](#)

[City of West Sacramento. "Age-Friendly Action Plan 2017-2020," \(2017\).](#)

[County of San Diego. "Aging Roadmap San Diego County Regional Plan Update," \(2023\).](#)

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[2023 Local Master Plan for Aging/Kings & Tulare Counties.](#)

[Ventura County. "Ventura County Master Plan for Aging," \(2021\).](#)

Disability

[Aging & Disability Resource Center \(Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo\).](#)

[University of Montana Rural Institute Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities.](#)

Housing Elements

[County of Santa Barbara. "2023-2031 Housing Element Update \(December 2023\).](#)

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SECTION VIII: Acknowledgments



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AAN Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee

Santa Barbara County Adult & Aging Network

Caring Together Santa Barbara County Leadership Team

Lisa Brabo, Chief Executive Officer, Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County

Ashley Costa, Executive Director, Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization

Renee Cowans, Family Consultant, Coast Caregiver Resource Center, Cottage Health

Namino Glantz, PhD, Program Manager, Health Linkages, In support of Promotores

Shannon Kenny, Founder and CEO, Alliloop

Tracey Little, Family Caregiver Support Program, Dignity Health

Cynthia McNulty, Program Director, Coast Caregiver Resource Center, Cottage Health

Ginny Rojas, Community Member, Caregiver

DeAnn Rosenberry, Senior Program Manager, Senior Services, Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County

Emmanuel Verduzco, CACHI Grant Coordinator, Family Service Agency of Santa Barbara County

Hilda Zacarias, MPA, CPA, Executive Director, Community Partners in Caring

Rob Fredericks, Executive Director/CEO, Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

Bob Havlicek, Executive Director, Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara

Jessica Martinez, Senior Administrative Office Professional, Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services

Dennis Tivey, Communications and Outreach Coordinator, Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services

South Coast Senior Affordable Housing Consortium

California Department of Aging

Susan DeMarois, Director

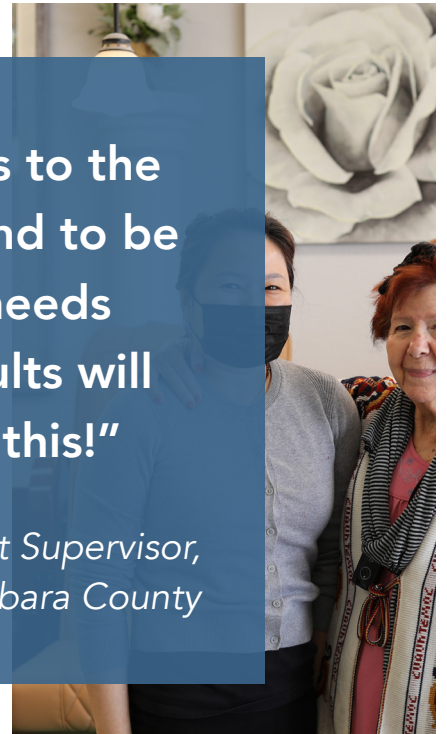
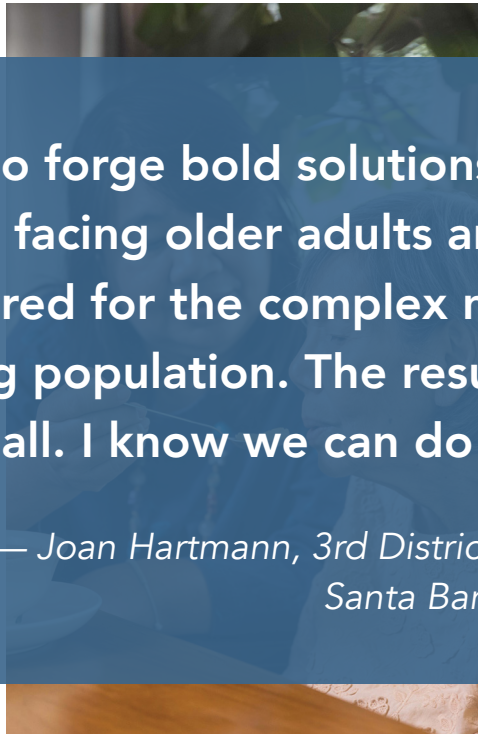
Sarah Steenhausen, Deputy Director

Jacqueline Siukola Tompkins, Project Director

Ross Lillian, Chief of Research

Evan Wallis, Data Specialist

The SCAN Foundation



"It's time to forge bold solutions to the challenges facing older adults and to be well prepared for the complex needs of an aging population. The results will benefit us all. I know we can do this!"

— Joan Hartmann, 3rd District Supervisor,
Santa Barbara County



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For more information and to participate in California Master Plan for Aging planning and activities in Santa Barbara County, please contact:

Barbara Finch

Children & Adult Network Director
Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services
bfinch@countyofsb.org