CARLSBAD NM
AGE FRIENDLY ACTION REPORT SUMMARY

The community of Carlsbad, New Mexico, joined the AARP/WHO Age Friendly cities and Communities Network in 2014. An action plan was submitted in 2016 and subsequently approved, with minor edits. Over the past 36 months, we have implemented, or started implementation, of many of the 75 points outlined in the 2016 Action Plan. We are very proud of our Age Friendly status and look forward to future efforts.

Our Vision

This community remains dedicated to enhancing its infrastructure, services and resources and maintaining its friendly, inclusive atmosphere. We are very proud of our Age-Friendly Community designation and will continue working to make Carlsbad “A Place to Call Home” for all ages.

Our Partners

The following individuals have assisted with the development and implementation of our Action Plan:
- Jaretta Faust - Carlsbad AARP
- Melissa Suggs – Carlsbad Medical Center Public Relations
- Donald Dayton – Retired Regional Director National Park Service
- Jeff Campbell - Director Marketing Carlsbad Department of Development
- Stella Davis-Chairman, Age Friendly Council
- Belinda Lopez - South Eddy County Community Action
- Cynthia Sharif - Eddy County DWI Director
- Karla Hamel - Director of Main Street
- Jeanne Watson - Lakeview Christian Home
- Wanda Durham - Past Chairman, Age Friendly Council
- Robert Defer - Executive Director of Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce
- Suzanne Carlsen – West Funeral Home
- Amy Calderon – Landsun Homes
- Amparo Vasquez – San Jose Senior Center
- Ashley Bock – Caring Angels
- Wanda Welch – Century 21
- Larry Henderson – retiree
- Dina Navarrette – North Mesa Senior Center
- Janell Whitlock – Director, Age Friendly Community Council
- Kyle Marksteiner – City of Carlsbad Public Information Officer
- Anthony Cook – Eddy County Health Office
Executive Summary

In 2014, the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico, proudly joined the WHO Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network. The development of Carlsbad’s Age Friendly Action Plan began with two community surveys – an AARP forum in September of 2015 and a Community Forum in October of 2015. Results from that 89 question survey formed the basis for the list of 75 action items, which was then developed into an action plan in 2016.

Results showed a need to improve on communication with seniors in the community, many of whom were not aware of some existing services. Of the 8 Domains reviewed, the participants in the Community group scored a higher satisfaction rate than the participants from the AARP forum in 7 categories, often significantly so. The community survey, for example, scored 71.9% in civic participation and employment, while the AARP group scored 30.8%.

Efforts were doubled, throughout the implementation process, to make sure that seniors were included in communication. Presentations were scheduled at both of Carlsbad’s senior centers, as well as at local places of worship.

The City of Carlsbad’s long range plan (Greater Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan 2030) and implementation committee was incorporated into the baseline assessment meeting, as well as numerous other community studies and surveys.

Members of the Chamber of Commerce’s Retirement Committee (later renamed the Age Friendly Communities Council) met monthly during the development and implementation of the action plan. In general, action items addressed went one of two directions – partnering with existing organizations to make sure the need was met or developing a new plan to address the ticket item.
As an example of the partnership effort: When it was discovered that a local retirement community public offered trips for seniors, the Council adjusted to focusing on letting other seniors know about this opportunity. No “job fair for seniors” previously existed, however, so the committee devoted several weeks toward recruiting potential employers and marketing the event (*please see below*).

The Council and the community as a whole benefited greatly from the implementation of the Action Plan. City of Carlsbad department heads were instructed to become more mindful of data as it relates to age-friendly initiatives. The City of Carlsbad’s transit director, for example, attended several Age Friendly meetings and developed a dialog about how facilities could be improved. Elected officials and members of the media were also reminded regularly of the Age Friendly initiative and its purpose. Members of the community, in particular seniors, were given direct opportunities to ask questions about services and facilities.

As a result of presentations made at local senior centers and before church groups, residents felt like they had a more direct voice and opportunity to interact directly with city employees. A very important facet of Carlsbad’s Age Friendly message was that its mission never focused exclusively on senior or retiree issues. Council members strove to make sure that age-friendly initiatives were inclusive to all ages and ability levels.

Carlsbad’s population has continued to grow significantly throughout our implementation phase. The Age Friendly Council will continue to strive to make this community accommodating to all of its residents.
2019 Major Initiatives

Branding

In 2019, the Chamber of Commerce Retirement Committee renamed itself the “Age Friendly Communities Council” as a way of stressing Carlsbad’s status as an Age Friendly Community. (Domain: Communication & Information)

Dementia Seminar

The Age Friendly Council hosted a dementia seminar on August 17. Two experts on the topic were invited to speak, and a crowd of about 40 was originally expected.

Instead, we had a crowd of 120, many of whom asked excellent questions about services available for a loved one with dementia. A local donor even sponsored lunch at the event, just to allow for additional time for people to ask questions. The event was videotaped, and local health care providers and retirement communities were given access to the video for future use. The success of the Aug. 17 showed an ongoing need for more information about dementia maintenance in the area, and the Council will continue to look for additional resources for the public on this topic. (Domain: Community Support & Health Services)

Teen Suicide Forum

The Council hosted a Teen Suicide Forum on Nov. 16 in response to statistics indicating that teen suicides rates are the highest they’ve ever been. Around 50 people attended the discussion and participated in the discussion with seven panelists. Topics included social media isolation, bullying and behavioral health services available in the area. The Council has made a commitment to host a similar forum on the spring that focuses on veteran issues. (Domain: Community Support & Health Services)
Cleanup and Beautification

Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway formed a Cleanup Task force in 2019, in response to a high level of public concern about littering and recycling. The task force has also focused on issues related to improving city and county codes. Keep Carlsbad Beautiful continues to work with residents, civic groups, businesses and all interested parties on clean-up initiatives in multiple facets and outreaches. (Domain: Outdoor Space and Buildings)

Arts and Culture

Creative Carlsbad launched its community events calendar this year. The organization has also established the “Pearl of the Pecos,” arts and culture district in Carlsbad. The “Night of Lights” holiday celebration continued to focus on local musical and artistic talent. (Domain: Civic Participation and Employment)

Other 2019 Highlights

The following initiatives were spearheaded by other community entities in 2019, though members of the Age Friendly Communities Council frequently assisted.

- Carlsbad celebrated the opening of a new, larger Albertson’s market this year. The 59,000 square foot store features a large salad bar and prepared foods with an expanded in-store dining room and an outdoor patio area, as well as a large produce section with extensive organic options, and a larger floral department. The store also features a full-service Starbucks coffee shop.
- New entertainment opportunities this year included the “Oil and Gas X-Patch Games” which featured a popular fishing tournament and concert starring Clay Walker; the expansion of the annual “Heritage Fest” celebration; the addition of a four day “Hawgfest” event
- With affordable housing remaining an issue, the City of Carlsbad has moved forward with both its Comprehensive Plan and Short Term Plan. Affordable housing initiatives include focusing on infill, development of draft infrastructure reimbursement plans and recruitment of builders in the region.
2018 Lookback

Focus items in 2018 included...

- **The Council sponsored two job** fairs specifically designed to reach out to seniors who might be interested in returning to the workforce. These job fairs were held within Carlsbad’s two senior centers (North Mesa and the San Jose Center), and most of the jobs offered consisted of part-time and voluntary jobs.

  **2019 Update:** No new senior job fairs were held in 2019.

- In September, the City of Carlsbad was awarded a $500,000 Community Development Block Grant to begin renovating a closed elementary school into a new senior center. The current San Jose Senior Center is not large enough to meet the community’s growing needs. Members of the Council participated in the application process.

  **2019 Update:** Construction is ongoing.

- In 2018, Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway created a “Blue Ribbon Committee” with the goal of examining issues related to community housing and population and another committee focused on roads. Carlsbad is at the epicenter of an oil boom, which has resulted in new commercial options, but has also resulted in roadway congestion and housing shortages.

  **2019 Update:** 2019 was a very good year for Carlsbad in terms of road improvement. A state budget surplus resulted in funding availability for several local highways. The City of Carlsbad tripled its annual investment in road improvements. Approximately 1,000 new houses are planned or in development, but more homes are needed.

Focus items in 2017 included...

2017 Lookback

- “Friendship Park” a playground specifically developed for citizens with disabilities, opened for public use in October. The grand opening celebrated accessibility and community.

  **2019 Update:** Upgrades on the ground material were made to a playground adjacent to Friendship Park to improve accessibility. Friendship Park remains extremely popular. The City of Carlsbad has begun adding shade covers to parks and playgrounds around town to increase comfort and improve upon safety.

- A community health fair in November 2017 was implemented in response to the Action Plan. The fair drew a large number of health fair participants.

  **2019 Update:** Age Friendly sponsors such as Carlsbad Medical Center have held follow-up health fairs in Carlsbad.

- Members of the Chamber’s retirement community met extensively with the municipal transit system director to make sure the transit system is age friendly.

  **2019 Update:** Age friendly members have regularly met with transit management to maintain a high level of communication.
• Community Support & Health Services
  • Respect and Social Inclusion
  • Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
    • Transportation
    • Housing
  • Social Participation
• Civic Participation & Employment
• Communication & Information

**Action Plan Overview Key:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete!</td>
<td>The Council feels significant progress has been made, though some ongoing effort may be necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete/Ongoing</td>
<td>Significant progress has been made, but the nature of the project means that the goal can never fully be considered to be resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Some progress has been made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Yet Addressed</td>
<td>Little progress has been made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See Note X</td>
<td>Additional explanation is required and will be provided beneath the domain goal chart</td>
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*As noted in previous reports- initial action plan proposed resolutions were often considered to be guidelines. In many instances, a preferable path forward was created as a result of subsequent discussion.*
Community Support and Health Services

Domain Goal: To organize a network or coalition of the numerous health and support services available to residents and improve health behaviors.

Status

• Publicize the emergency warning system,                                      Complete/Ongoing
• Develop and host community education on emergency situations,                 In Progress: See Note 1
• Encourage emergency preparedness training for all citizens,                   In Progress: See Note 1
• Develop a “lifeline” system,                                                 See Note 2
• Assist with “Meals on Wheels” project,                                         See Note 3
• Prepare procedure for persons with dementia in an emergency,                  Complete!
• Identify ways to improve quality of health care and reduce costs. Increase health screenings and workshops, In Progress : See Note 4
• Continue to sponsor community forum on health care,                           Complete! Set for February
• Develop directory listing health providers and services,                      Complete!
• Attract and retain doctors                                                    Ongoing: See Note 5
• Work to create financial and academic incentives for medical students,       Ongoing: See Note 6
• Support nursing program at NMSU-C,                                           Ongoing: See Note 6
  (Youth Subdomain)
• Expand City Water Park,                                                       Complete!
• Assist with Project Playground Facelift,                                      Complete!
• Upgrade Riverwalk Recreation Area,                                           Not Yet Addressed
• Promote and support the Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex                     Complete/Ongoing

Notes

Note 1: This year, Carlsbad Medical Center partnered with local EMS to provide “Stop the Bleed” Coalition training at Carlsbad High School and Carlsbad Intermediate School.

Note 2: Improvements to technology and increased availability have made personal alert programs available to the general public.

Note 3: The Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation, in partnership with other organizations, has a program in place to deliver food to shut-ins. Now serves 400.

Note 4: Free screenings provided by Carlsbad Medical Center in 2019:

• Varicose Vein & Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screenings
• Healthy Heart Screenings (cholesterol, BMI, blood pressure, blood sugar)
• Men’s Health Screenings (cholesterol, BMI, blood pressure, PSA for prostate)
• Numerous free screenings such as balance testing, pulmonary function tests, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, were held at the Community Health Fair in March 2019
• Free monthly health talks for Senior Circle on topics such as heart health, prostate cancer, Medicare Annual Wellness Visits, Diabetes, sinus conditions, breast cancer, stroke symptoms,
  o Monthly childbirth classes
  o Monthly Lymphedema support group
  o CMC’s Healthy Woman program provided a “Go Red for Women” event in conjunction with Heart Month that included a healthy meal prep demonstration, heart health talk by local cardiologist Dr. Amanda Ryan, and a group fitness activity. Healthy Woman also organized a “Mammo Spa Day” to encourage women to get their annual mammograms.
• New services available include new bronchoscopes for advanced lung cancer screening and the use of the Abbot Loop/Event Recording Device for cardiac patients. CMC has also partnered with “MD Save.”

Note 5: Carlsbad Medical Center reports ten doctors recruited in 2018-2019.

  ▪ Thomas Reich, MD – ENT (2018)
  ▪ Sunkaru Touray, MD, MSc – Pulmonology & Critical Care Medicine (2018)
  ▪ Christina Sieberer, AGACNP – Cardiology (2018)
  ▪ Karie Thomas, PA – OB/GYN (2018)
  ▪ Leah Torres, MD - OB/GYN (2019)
  ▪ Delia Cathey, CNP – Family Medicine (2019)
  ▪ Awa Touray, MD – Internal Medicine (2019)
  ▪ Richard Tushman, MD – Urology (2019)
  ▪ Adenieki Mornan, MD – OB/GYN (2019)

Note 6:
• Clinical training for nursing students is provided at CMC
• CMC Auxiliary provides scholarships for local nursing students

Nursing Home Week
Respect and Social Inclusion

**Domain Goal:** to reduce isolation and increase a sense of belonging to the community for residents of all ages.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>• Create an activity events calendar monthly,</th>
<th><strong>Status</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Promote volunteer participation at recreation centers,</td>
<td>Complete!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to support youth activities,</td>
<td>Complete/Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support Adult Respite Care Center,</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Build a better relationship with SE Community Action,</td>
<td>See Note 1</td>
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**Attendance:** According to the City of Carlsbad, the total attendance at the North Mesa Senior Center throughout 2019 was 38,351. The total attendance at the San Jose Senior Center, discounting the Center’s role as a meal site, was 24,556.

Attendance at youth facilities and activities remains high: The Carlsbad Water Park served a total of 35,219 patrons (excluding field trips) in 2019.

**Note 1:** Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation, a non profit organization based in Carlsbad, provides care and supervision in a protective setting for dependent adults living in the community during some portion of a 24-hour day. The facility is owned by the City of Carlsbad and SNMCAC it the contracting agency. The city and the organization work closely together in providing adult day care services.

Services include social and recreational activities, training that is essential for sustaining activities of daily living, hot meals, and if needed, health care.

**Note 2:** Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation’s mission is “To change lives by developing human, social, educational and economic resources to their fullest potential.” The non-profit organization has strong ties with the local government, state and federal agencies and civic organizations. Services to the public at no charge, include congregate meals, home delivered meals, homemaker assistance, nutrition education, foster grandparent program and senior companion program, as well as operation of the HeadStart program for children from low income families.

*Please also see the Respect and Social Inclusion Domain for additional information on Senior Centers.*
Outdoor Space and Buildings

**Domain Goal:** To provide ample outdoor spaces that are safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing.

- Clean up City through City code enforcement and volunteer cleanup days. Work with Keep Carlsbad Beautiful, Status: Ongoing/See Note 1
- Maintain and upgrade appearance of City buildings, Complete/Ongoing
- Continue downtown improvements working with Main Street, Ongoing/See Note 2
- Maintain and improve Lake Carlsbad Beach Area, Complete/See Note 3
- Improve Riverwalk Recreation Center and Project Playground Complete/Ongoing
- Increase and improve signage, Ongoing
- Continue program to install audible crossing signs at intersections Ongoing
- Tear down dilapidated or abandoned buildings Ongoing
- Make all parks, public toilets and city buildings ADA compliant Complete/Ongoing
- Develop a campaign on pedestrian safety Not Yet Addressed
- Conduct a “walkability” study to address and maintain sidewalks See Note 4
- Utilize community input to develop pedestrian and bicycle paths See Note 5
- Continue to improve public landscaping and the appearance of private properties, Ongoing
- Implement local street improvements to meet the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists Ongoing

**Notes**

**Note 1:** Cleanup was a major focus throughout 2019, with implementation of a cleanup task force similar to action plan proposals. The City of Carlsbad is currently examining a series of code enforcement proposals designed to strengthen the cleanup code.

**Note 2:** The “Odd Fellows Building” – previously the largest vacant location in the Carlsbad MainStreet area, has been renovated and now serves as a local microbrewery. Carlsbad’s MainStreet area is currently at around 90% occupancy.

**Note 3:** The City of Carlsbad initiated massive improvements to the Lake Carlsbad Beach Area in 2019. This facelift included planting new trees and adding a pavilion and gazebo. A fitness park has also been added to a park in the south side of town.

**Note 4:** It has been several years since the last “Walkability” study was conducted. The City and Age Friendly Committee recognize the need for a new study.

**Note 5:** Some progress has been made due to improvements to the La Cueva Trails and street enhancements. The Age Friendly Council recognizes the need for additional effort.
Transportation

**Domain Goal:** To provide safe and reliable transportation for all citizens to all areas of Carlsbad.

**Status**
- Improve and restripe city streets, See Note 1
- Improve road maintenance process, See Note 1
- Provide transit opportunities for all segments of the city population, Ongoing/See Note 2
- Expand city-wide coordination to meet the needs of transit dependent residents, Ongoing
- Improve transit facilities, Ongoing
- Develop City policies to support the expansion and maintenance of the transportation system, Ongoing
- Develop City Transit to be more accessible, affordable and convenient, Ongoing
- Install well-placed visible audible crosswalks, Ongoing
- Promote and develop programs to help older adults drive as safely and as long of a time as possible Offered by AARP

**Notes**

**Note 1:** The City of Carlsbad has made road repair a major priority- tripling the amount of money spent on repairs due to the increase in gross receipts tax. While this remains an ongoing issue, the Council believes that all relevant organizations have been making it a high priority.

“We’ve recently completed resurfacing projects on the first phase of Kircher, as well as 6th Street, 8th Street, Muscatel, Texas, Plum Lane, West Riverside Drive and Wood Street. This upcoming week, we will be focused on resurfacing Vineyard Lane. Our next big project, which we will be starting before the holiday break, will be Church Street, from the high school to the beach.” ~ Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway, in his December 2019 Progress Report

**Note 2:** The Age Friendly Council has made maintaining a strong relationship with transit a high priority throughout the implementation of our Action Plan. While there is certainly room for improvement, the Council believes that an increased focus on customer service and communication has been very helpful. Transit reported 6,095 elderly pickups From Oct. 2018 through September 2019.
Housing

Domain Goal: It is important to make sure a full range of accessible housing options are available to residents of all ages.

- Encourage landlords to improve conditions and maintenance of houses,  
  Status: Ongoing
- Work with developers to provide more ADA accessible homes,  
  Status: Not Yet Addressed
- Improve the City’s capacity to engage in housing development programs,  
  Status: See Note 1
- Eliminate regulatory barriers,  
  Status: See Note 2
- Provide educational sessions on modifications of homes for increasing accessibility,  
  Status: Not Yet Addressed
- Support non-profit organizations in effort to provide transitional housing,  
  Status: See Note 3
- Use variety of housing options to support aging in place,  
  Status: Not Yet Addressed
- Eliminate or improve boarded up buildings,  
  Status: Ongoing

Notes

Note 1: The City of Carlsbad is implementing the restoration of an infrastructure reimbursement program to attempt to increase additional development. The Colonial Hillcrest Apartment renovation was a positive development in terms of affordable housing, but additional development programs are needed.

Note 2: While regulatory barriers have not been eliminated, the City of Carlsbad has revamped its regulatory program in order to make the system more customer friendly.

Note 3: Carlsbad Transitional Housing and the Community of Hope are both healthy nonprofit organizations who assist hundreds of individuals each year. The City of Carlsbad has worked closely with both agencies to attempt to address ongoing and growing homelessness.

2019 Update: Currently the City has approved a total of 4,973 units for the purpose of housing temporary workers. 1,770 units of that total are found within man-camps, or the type of developments in which a developer brings in and places modular structure in which to house the workers. The remaining 3,203 units are found in approved Temporary RV Parks. Five new hotels are currently being constructed in Carlsbad. According to the Carlsbad Department of Development, the average cost for a nightly stay in Carlsbad has gone from $144 to $243 between 2017 and 2019.
Social Participation

**Domain Goal:** The City of Carlsbad will provide enriched programming such as technology training, health screening, physical activity and access to arts and culture.

**Status**

- Enhance the two city-owned senior recreation centers  
  Ongoing/See Note 1
- Increase the awareness of activities at the centers  
  Complete!
- Prepare monthly calendar of activities  
  Complete!
- Develop a directory of organizations, meeting dates, times and locations  
  Partial- See Note 2
- Promote NMSU-C classes for seniors with $8 per credit hour cost  
  Complete!
- Encourage participation in Senior Circle Activities  
  Ongoing
- Conduct campaign to make people aware of the services of the public library  
  Complete!
- Coffee with a Cop/community participation  
  Complete!
- Develop day trips for seniors  
  See Note 3

**Notes**

**Note 1:** The City of Carlsbad obtained Carlsbad Community Development Block Grant funding to move the San Jose Senior Center to a new location. Construction is ongoing by the fourth quarter of 2019. Senior Center attendance remains high.

**Note 2:** A variety of online directories have been created by the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce and the United Way of Carlsbad & South Eddy County. Some additional coordination may be needed to bring various efforts together.

**Note 3:** Day trips are being offered by Lakeview Christian Home- to outside groups as well.
Civic Participation & Employment

Domain Goal: We will provide a way people of all ages can, if they choose, continue to work for pay, receive employment assistance, volunteer their skills and be actively engaged in community life.

Status

- Promote the Carlsbad Community Volunteer Program, Complete!
- Recruit businesses to adopt age-friendly attitudes, Ongoing
- Provide volunteer opportunities, Complete!
- Host a “job re-entry” fair for older adults, Complete!
- Develop a data base of employment, educational and volunteer opportunities, See Note 1
- Provide training opportunities in the public sector, See Note 2
- Support and promote cultural arts events, See Note 3

Notes

Note 1: As discussed in the Social Participation Domain, several such data bases have been developed or are in development, but some additional coordination may be helpful. A high percentage of Carlsbad residents use social media to find out about upcoming events and opportunities.

Note 2: Computer classes are now offered at the San Jose Senior Center.

Note 3: Carlsbad has made significant progress in the development of cultural arts events over the past three years thanks to the implementation of Creative Carlsbad and the development of the Pearl on the Pecos Arts and Culture district. Area arts and culture projects are invited to meet monthly to share ideas and help get word out about upcoming activities.
Communication & Information

Domain Goal: The City of Carlsbad will ensure that members of the public are provided with up to date and accurate information about community efforts.

- Promote senior centers and Senior Circle as information exchanges, Status: See Note 1
- Sponsor students to senior training seminars, Status: Ongoing
- Provide training to utilize 311 system, Status: See Note 2
- Educate citizens on the emergency warning system, Status: Complete
- Sponsor quarterly community outreach meetings, Status: In Discussion
- Conduct workshops on caregiving resources, Status: See Note 3
- Develop promotional campaign on age-friendly effort, Status: See Note 4

Notes

Note 1: Action Plan completed and ongoing. Increased communication between the City of Carlsbad PIO and Carlsbad’s senior centers have resulted in daily/weekly events being shared with a larger group of citizens.

Note 2: While this effort is ongoing, the City of Carlsbad has devoted a significant amount of resources to keeping the public informed about the 3-1-1 service. Call numbers have been high, but the relatively high transient population (due to the oil boom) means that there will always be new residents who need to be informed about the 3-1-1 process. The City of Carlsbad received a total of 8,941 311 calls in 2019 – most of them related to solid waste pickup.

Note 3: Our two largest senior care facilities, Landsun Homes and Lakeview Christian Home, have both conducted workshops. 2019’s dementia seminar was a great example of a successful workshop effort.

Note 4: The Council and community have been committed to promoting the Age-Friendly effort, through press releases, web presence and Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway’s monthly column. Despite new challenges presented by the oil and gas boom, Carlsbad was recently selected by Expedia as a top travel destination, and the citizens of Odessa, NM, picked Carlsbad as the best road trip destination for the second year in a row.

We believe residents know about Carlsbad’s status as an Age-Friendly community and are very proud of it!
Challenges

A significant escalation of area oilfield activity resulted in the magnification of many present issues – housing, roads and infrastructure. Many of the action items highlighted in the original 2016 study have become even more critical. Roads are more congested than they’ve been, and houses are more expensive. The Housing Domain, in particular, continues to merit significant additional investment.

For example, after multiple professors from the New Mexico State University-Carlsbad nursing program retired in 2018, the program was unable to fill vacancies. Administrative staff said this was largely due to a housing shortage. Consequently, NMSU-C was unable to offer a nursing program in the fall of 2018, though the program has been restored for 2019. Service industry issues have also compounded due to low unemployment, with some restaurants closing during slower time periods due to a critical labor shortage.

In 2019, local oil companies announced the creation of the Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP), a consortium of oil companies invested in the area. PSP has pledged to assist the community with necessary infrastructure development, but there has been little progress so far.

The Age Friendly initiative must continue to work in hand with all other local governmental and economic development agencies during this critical juncture in Carlsbad and South Eddy County’s history.

On a different topic, some age-friendly action plans became difficult to implement due to staffing changes. For example, an individual planning more trips for seniors retired and moved out of the area. While the item list and proposed Action Plan were helpful, there were some overlaps and repetitions. We would recommend a more refined Action Plan for communities developing a similar plan in the future.

Recent Nursing Scholarships- NMSU-C
Future Plans

Following the completion and approval of the 2020 report, Council members pledge to continue to meet approximately once a month to discuss current and future projects. Immediate obligations include:

- Maintenance of “Ongoing” projects highlighted above. For example, members of the public need to continually be reminded of the 3-1-1 service and the early warning notification system.
- Review of Action Plan topics not yet addressed and the development of a priority list. For example, Committee members would like to see a new walkability study conducted.
- The “meeting of the minds” – bringing in members of different agencies from around the community to a discussion with AARP representation – is also a process with its own tangible benefits.

There have been many changes to this community since the process started in 2014, with some population estimates predicting double the population. The Council will consider partnering with AARP to conduct a new series of public surveys in late 2020 early 2021 and subsequently develop a new action plan that incorporates introduced topics and concerns.

Council members will also continue to seek new sponsors and partners to assist with future plans. The Friendship Park model (grassroots effort which included corporate and governmental buy-in) has proven to be effective. Such projects could include:

- A park designed for seniors
- A Dementia Café’
- County wide roadside cleanups designed for famiies
- Expansion of youth tutoring programs
- And many others!

Thank you for allowing our community to participate in such an important program! We will maintain the highest level of commitment to age-friendly principles!

Please see appendix for several examples of Age-Friendly community activities.