December 16, 2021

Rafi Nazarians  
Associate State Director and  
Interim Advocacy Director  
AARP California  
200 S. Los Robles Ave., Suite 400  
Pasadena, CA 91101-2423

Dear Mr. Nazarians,

On behalf of the City of San Carlos, I am pleased to offer this letter in support of our application to the AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities, the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) International initiative to encourage age-friendly community efforts. The City of San Carlos maintains a strong commitment to serving the various needs of our community, and as an Age-Friendly City we will continue to support the health, vibrancy, and livability of our community for all ages.

The City of San Carlos is known as the City of Good Living. It is located on the San Francisco Peninsula and is known for its high quality of life and excellent public school system. Currently, over 15.6% of our population is over 65 and is the most rapidly growing age demographic in our City. We are proud of being a livable community for residents of all ages and are committed to Age-Friendly Community goals to ensure that older adults in our community receive respect, dignity, and involvement in all aspects of our City's future.

San Carlos has built local collaborative partnerships within the County of San Mateo by sharing resources and coordinating activities to move the Age-Friendly Initiative forward in this region. We formed an Age-Friendly Community Task Force comprised primarily of older adults from the community that are committed to:

- Conducting a baseline community assessment on the needs of older adults.
- Establishing a three-year action plan to address the identified needs.
- Developing tools to measure the progress of the action plan.

We look forward to working with AARP-WHO as we work towards increasing the Age-Friendliness of our City to provide its residents with the tools and resources they need to remain as independent and vitally involved with their community as possible.

Sincerely,

Sara McDowell  
Mayor, City of San Carlos
Membership Application

Join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

AARP Livable Communities

When a town, city, county or state joins the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, it is joining a global effort to be a more livable and age-friendly community.

The AARP network is an organizational affiliate of the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. (Communities wishing to join the global network instead of or in addition to the AARP program can find application information on the WHO website.)

To enroll your community in the AARP network, please complete and submit the application below.

Note: Since content added to this form cannot be saved, we advise that you review the questions in advance, gather the materials and information you’ll need, and draft the narrative responses offline for later pasting into the applicable fields.

Section 1: Community Details

Application Submission Date: January 31, 2022

State: California

Community Name: San Carlos

Total Population: 30,154

Percentage of Residents Age 60 or Older: 16%
Community Governance Structure (choose one)

- Borough
- City
- County
- Town
- Township
- Village
- Other (explain below)

Explain here if you selected "Other"

Community Type (Check all that apply)

- Urban
- Mixed
- Suburban (offices, apartments and shops)
- Suburban (mostly residential)
- Small Town
- Rural
- Remote/Frontier
- Other (explain below)
- Not sure

Elected Official Signing the Community's Letter of Commitment

Name (elected official)

Sara McDowell

Title

Mayor, City of San Carlos

Office Mailing Address

San Carlos City Hall, 600 Elm Street, San Carlos CA 94070

Community Contact

The community contact is the community staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work. (It is not the AARP staff member the community might be working with)

Name (community contact)

Amy Newby
Anna Kertel
Email (valid email address required to submit this form)

Position
City of San Carlos Age-Friendly Task Force Members

Telephone Number

Please describe the named person's role in the community's age-friendly initiative (100 words minimum)

Amy Newby and Anna Kertel are active members of the San Carlos Age-Friendly Task Force. Amy is Director of Parks and Recreation and the main point of contact for the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFE) during this Age-Friendly Project of the County of San Mateo. Anna Kertel is Recreation Supervisor, City of San Carlos. A few of their Task Force activities have included:

- Spread the good news about the age-friendly cities initiative
- Attend all San Carlos Age-Friendly Task Force meetings and work with CAFE during the Age-Friendly project process.
- Helped select and recruit participants for focus groups
- Introduce and discuss projects to address unmet needs per the focus groups
- Assist in determining projects to be included in application to AARP Age-Friendly Network of States and Communities

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter, which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To subscribe now, visit AARP.org/LivableSubscribe. You will not be disconnected from this page. After completing the newsletter form, AARP will send an email - with the subject line "Action Required" - containing a link for you to confirm the subscription.

Section 2: Community Activities, Engagements and Collaborations (250-300 words)

1a. Briefly describe your existing community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people.
1b. Please identify how your community plans to become more age-friendly.
Section 2, Part 1a: Briefly describe your existing community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people.

The City of San Carlos is strongly committed to and supportive of their older adult residents. Focus group participants expressed that they are respected and included as an integral part of the community. San Carlos engages and collaborates with community organizations in order to enhance quality of life for their elders, promote their well-being and encourage an environment of community. One example of this high commitment is consistently demonstrated at the City’s Adult Community Center (ACC) where both older adult residents and also their adult children who may not be local, sometimes call to inquire about resources for their older parents who live in the area. They are consistently welcomed and supported.

San Carlos Adult Community Center is located on the City Hall campus and for the past 39 years, it has been home to over 100 seniors each day. The Center provides a wide variety of programs to enhance the overall wellness of their participants and is considered a valuable local resource for seniors to establish new friendships. There is no general membership fee to use the center, however, a small fee is charged to become a workout fitness room member. The Center houses a banquet room, a workout fitness room with access to a paid personal trainer, a game room, social lounge, dance studio, art room, three multi-use rooms, a commercial kitchen for preparation of our social meal program, a beautiful patio area with fire pit and BBQ, and staff offices.

Current Programs (pre pandemic): Main use of the Center is free and offers some very low-cost programs. The center is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm and hosts a wide variety of opportunities for recreation, relationships, and resources. We design our programs around the six dimensions of wellness: physical, social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and vocational.

Physical: Offerings include classes for fitness, core conditioning, and flexibility; balance and brains, art, dancing, fencing, yoga, walking group and more. We also offer classes co-sponsored by Dignity Health on diabetes management (DEEP) and fall prevention, and provide blood pressure screening and adult functional independence tests (AFIT).

Social: Many opportunities for social interaction including congregate meals, special events, socials and coffee chats. Currently, ACC also offers Curbside Lunches three times per week.

Intellectual: We have a wide array of classes and monthly day trips to encourage creativity and expand knowledge.
Emotional: Currently co-sponsor the Savvy care giver program with the Alzheimer’s Association, and “Let’s Talk” a support group guided by a trained facilitator to provide comfort when life gets challenging. The groups in all of our activities provide support for each other and give participants an outlet.

Spiritual: Meditation group, four different Tai Chi classes and have offered Reiki for many years.

The vision of Sequoia Village or VSMC is to create an environment where people live independently in their homes, connect with their community and age with dignity and grace. Sequoia is part of the Villages of San Mateo County, a membership-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Additionally, the City of San Carlos has made continual improvements to the sidewalks and at crosswalk signals for better and safer walkability.

Section 2, Part 1b: Please identify how your community plans to become more age-friendly.

Project: Medical Equipment Loan Program
Domain: Community Support and Health Services
Additional domains impacted by project: Respect and Social Inclusion, Social Participation
Unmet need addressed: Older adults needing medical equipment may not have access if their resources are limited. Although there may be equipment available locally at no cost, this information does not consistently reach elders. Lack of access affects the elder’s ability to be mobile and as independent as possible, to enjoy social activities and to participate in a way that improves their opportunity to interact daily with others.
Project duration: Short-term for inaugural project and then ongoing

Primary focus of project is to make available recycled durable medical equipment that is safe and sturdy, sanitized and available at no cost to local residents who need it. Medical equipment includes items such as walkers, wheelchairs, shower seats, canes, bed rails. The San Carlos Task Force members and other volunteers are partnering with the Rotary Clubs of San Carlos and Belmont/Redwood Shores on a program to provide local residents with durable medical equipment that is being re-used and recycled. The project is based upon a program of the Convalescent Aid Society of Pasadena (“CAS”) that has been in existence for over 100 years: Free Loan of Durable Medical Equipment | Convalescent Aid Society. We have had extensive contact with both their CEO and Chairman of the Board who have also provided considerable numbers of exemplar forms to assist
in our program development as well as a “DME Loan Startup Summary Framework 2021” (available if needed).

Additional participation on this project includes the President of Villages of San Mateo County, an organization devoted to elder care living issues, including medical equipment; and a partnership with the Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities (“CID”) which has been in existence for 4 years and provides some of the same services as proposed including means and methods to collaboratively accomplish our mutual goals. Within a short time, a brief preliminary trial resulted in the accumulation of 50 pieces of medical equipment, identification of storage for this equipment, assembling of a group of volunteers, and two cleaning sessions for the equipment gathered. Several pieces of equipment have even been distributed to disabled individuals.

Funding has been received from both the Belmont/Redwood Shores Rotary and the District Rotary 5150 Office for the project and we have been advised that further funding may be forthcoming from the organization. We have also met with a computer company that can fulfill our need for a computerized management and tracking system.

**Project: Expand and Improve Communications**

**Domain:** Communication and Information

**Additional domains impacted by project:** Respect and Social Inclusion, Community Support and Health Services

**Unmet need addressed:** This project will increase outreach and information provided to older adults to improve their accessibility through available publications, website access, or by calling the adult community center.

**Duration:** Short-term for inaugural project and then ongoing

Focus group participants expressed a need for improved publicity of available information and services. There is a lack of awareness of what resources exist and how to find them. City Hall and the Library were identified as go-to places to learn about community resources.

The focus of this project is to improve communication with our older adult population as well as expand the use of newsletters so that older adults are aware of existing services and any new resources in San Carlos. Residents receive information in a variety of ways and since not all use the internet, a digital divide exists. San Carlos currently has a senior newsletter and an e-newsletter that provides information for older adults. However, based on comments from the focus groups, not everyone is aware of this. We will make additional efforts to extend our communication outreach to elders including:
Expand information and outreach; raise awareness of e-newsletter and senior newsletter

Work with our management analyst to create a senior focused San Carlos Spotlight newsletter that is mailed to every San Carlos resident, work with management analyst to create a direct link to our adult services web page from the home page resources tab; periodically include a link to the senior newsletter in the City’s e-newsletter; inform residents that the newsletter is available in print form upon request; include information about the senior newsletter in the quarterly Parks and Recreation brochure; reorganize and provide more information on website for older adults; consider postcards and mailers as a way to communicate with seniors; expand the information about programs, resources, and services in the City’s senior newsletter - this can include resources from the City, county, or community groups. Use Spotlight newsletter (hard copy publication specifically for seniors) to provide phone numbers for ACC and other resources, as well as welcome them to visit ACC to get assistance with questions. Use available civic spaces to provide information such as the adult community center, San Carlos farmer’s market, and library. City material will be translated into languages spoken by major demographics of older adult residents based upon priority and importance of the content.

There is also a public access show, started by the Villages of San Mateo County President, called ‘Age-Friendly Bay Area’ that began taping in January 2022. Guest speakers, including guests from San Carlos, will be invited to talk about issues of aging to mitigate against the lack of information in this area. The show will also have a YouTube channel.

Investigation and collaboration

Research methods that other cities, the County, and community organizations have used to successfully communicate information to their older adult populations; collaborate with the City of Burlingame and other communities and community partners where appropriate, to provide information about resources, services, and activities to elder residents.

Project: Safer Streets in the City of Good Living

Domain: Transportation/Mobility

Additional domains impacted by project: Respect and Social Inclusion, Social Participation, Community Support and Health Services, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Unmet need addressed: Safety of older adults while walking and crossing streets.

Project Duration: Short-term for inaugural project and then ongoing
This project will be integrated into the *San Carlos “Safer Streets for All” Bike and Pedestrian Plan*. Focus group participants reported not enough crossing time at intersections. Older adults with mobility challenges, loss of peripheral vision, disabilities and/or dementia require more time to cross the street. The city will make an assessment of crosswalk lights and based on results, crossing time at some locations will be extended. What is safe for older adults will benefit younger children, too.

Traffic Calming measures include enhancing the visibility of crosswalks, striping narrow lanes, providing speed limit signs, installing high visibility crosswalks, adding informational or regulatory signs, and installing speed humps, pedestrian refuges, islands, median diverters, and barriers. These efforts help ensure that travel throughout San Carlos can be done safely and efficiently. Four existing crosswalk locations are the focus. Paving conditions are also being improved.

Participants also indicated safety issues for elders who walk in areas where there are bikers or youth who speed by on skateboards and motorized scooters. These activities can startle the older adult creating a fall hazard, a potentially life changing event for them. There are also unique challenges faced by residents with hearing or visual impairment. They may not hear a biker coming up from behind them. Although participants want youth to enjoy their outside activities, they believe that education of youth could be helpful in increasing their awareness of the older adult safety. The project lead will communicate with the School District on how to best integrate this into educational programs. In addition, San Carlos holds an annual ‘*Week of the Family*’ in January with daily events to strengthen family and community relationships. One event is the *Tour de Family* bike ride and can be used to emphasize riding safely around others. Thoughtful solutions, including education, improved signage, widening of sidewalks and paths, can also impact other age groups including children, those walking their dog, older adults with walkers, and cyclists.

**Section 2, Part 2:** How will older adults be involved in the community’s efforts to become more age-friendly? (250-300 words required)

In August 2021, City of San Carlos collaborated with community organizations, community leaders, and advocate residents to launch an Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) initiative to further increase the livability of the city for our older adult residents.
We created a diverse AFC Task Force to assess the major unmet needs of our older adult population. The Age-Friendly Task Force was honored to have Immediate Past Mayor Laura Parmer-Lohan (Term: December 2020 – December 2021) as a Task Force member, strong supporter, and advocate of the age-friendly initiative. Unmet needs of older adult residents were assessed based upon the World Health Organization’s following eight domains of livable communities as well as an additional category of dementia: 

- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Dementia

Six (6) focus groups sessions were held with a total of 33 participants. The sessions were conducted via Zoom or one-on-one phone interviews. Demographically, they represented a diverse cross-section of our community:

- Older adult residents, age 55 – 75 older
- Older adult residents, age 76 and older
- Asian older adult residents, age 55 and older
- LGBTQ older adult residents, age 55 and older
- Underserved residents, age 55 and older
- Community leaders and service providers for older adult residents.

Reports from these focus groups provided data that Community Support and Health Services, Communication and Information, and Transportation/Mobility were the domains that needed our initial focus.

We are committed to making our local communities livable, vibrant, diverse and inclusive. Also to sharing our learnings with other communities with the same intention. We share the value and mission of AARP and WHO age-friendly cities.
Section 2, Part 3: How will the efforts to become more age-friendly increase collaboration and coordination among relevant community agencies and departments? (250-300 words required)

The City of San Carlos launched their Age-Friendly Community initiative with the assistance and guidance of the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFE), a program of the Los Altos Mountain View Community Foundation. Through a partnership with San Mateo County, CAFE works closely with a leadership team including the County’s Department of Aging and Adult Services, San Mateo County Health, Villages of San Mateo County, and County staff. This year CAFE is assisting the City of San Carlos, as well as Half Moon Bay and the City of Burlingame, to develop AFC initiatives through thoughtful planning and implementation, based upon qualitative and quantitative data.

Focus groups were conducted with local residents, community leaders, and service providers for older adults regarding the unmet needs of the older adult population in San Carlos. These were facilitated using video conferencing and one-on-one surveys. The sessions focused on the eight domains of livability and the area of dementia. After reviewing feedback gathered from focus group discussions, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services, and Transportation/Mobility emerged as the domain(s) most in need of our initial attention.

The projects will be informed by best-practice research of similar efforts by other aging-related service networks and Age-Friendly communities. It will be implemented through a collaboration that will focus on bringing together non-profit senior service programs/organizations, the County Department of Aging Services, City Staff, the San Mateo County Commission on Aging, as well as other partners, including the Rotary Clubs of San Carlos and Belmont/Redwood Shores, San Carlos School District, San Mateo County Libraries, Friends of ACC, Sequoia Village, Rebuilding Together Peninsula, One Life Counseling, and other local businesses and community and faith-based organizations. These collaborations will facilitate our planning and progress.

Section 3: Network Membership

Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your community’s membership in the age-friendly network and enable AARP to better understand how to support the network.
1-a. What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities (100 words minimum)

The City of San Carlos is known as the City of Good Living. Although the City's ongoing efforts have led to our being age-friendly in many aspects, we are striving to meet the needs of our older adult residents even further based on the input we received during this recent age-friendly assessment process.

With the older adult population anticipated to double by the year 2050, it is critically important that cities explore and implement new and cost-effective ways to create communities that enable our older adults to thrive while also aging-in-community. We recognize the value that our older adult residents provide to the community. The City of San Carlos is grateful for this opportunity to be a part of this valuable initiative and to join, learn from, and contribute to a like-minded network of age-friendly States and communities that share these same goals.

1-b. If you have consulted with an AARP State office or the national AARP Livable Communities team to discuss enrollment, please provide that person’s name, title and e-mail address or phone number.

N/A

2. What aspect of your community's current or intended age-friendly work could be useful to other communities in the network? (100 words minimum)

The City of San Carlos and the San Carlos Age-Friendly Task Force are very interested in contributing to and learning from other Age-Friendly member communities that are part of this rapidly growing movement in the United States and throughout the world. We are enthusiastic about spreading the word about these efforts. As with most other communities, the older adult population of the City of San Carlos will continue to grow beyond its current level of 15.6%. The City believes that a collaborative approach can create a more age-friendly community, enhancing life for all of our residents. Communication and Information is an area where there are many opportunities to partner and collaborate with other communities in determining improved and expanded methods of getting service and resource information to elders.
We believe that we have many valuable programs that enhance the lives of our older adult residents. As mentioned earlier, our adult community center applies a holistic/expanded approach toward our activities for elders. This approach and our programs can be shared with other age-friendly communities. Sequoia Village provides a wide range of services that helps to increase the independence of older adult residents and their ability to actively participate in the community. The Village concept has been and can continue to be adapted to other communities. Our Medical Equipment Loan program and Safer Streets projects can both be models for other cities, based on the needs of other age-friendly cities.

Section 4: Required Materials

1-a. Letter of Commitment
Provide a digital file (PDF preferred) of the signed document.

1-b. Resolution or Proclamation (optional)
If your community issued either document in addition to the commitment letter, provide a digital file (PDF preferred) here.

2. Logo or Image
Provide a digital file (JPG preferred) and/or a link to a downloadable logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights and permission to provide for use by AARP and the World Health Organization.

Please email attachments of items 1-a, 1-b and your community’s logo or image to Livable@AARP.org.

Website URL
https://www.cityofsanCarlos.org/
Section 5: Social Media

Provide the most applicable Twitter handle(s) and Facebook account(s) for your community (i.e. an age-friendly coalition, the local government, key elected officials and/or local partners).

Twitter 1:
https://twitter.com/cityofsancarlos

Facebook 1:
https://www.facebook.com/cityofsancarlos

Twitter 2:

Facebook 2:
https://www.facebook.com/scparksandrec

Additional social media accounts (optional):

City of San Carlos
https://www.facebook.com/cityofsancarlos
https://twitter.com/cityofsancarlos
https://www.instagram.com/cityofsancarlos
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCauL-xGBGU3foDIXDY6VHKQ

City of San Carlos Parks & Recreation
https://www.facebook.com/scparksandrec
https://www.instagram.com/sancarlosyouthcenter
https://www.instagram.com/scparksandrec/ (@scparksandrec)
Section 6: Agreement

I have read and understand the requirements for my community to become a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, including the need to conduct a community assessment; develop and acquire approval of an action plan; implement the plan; submit an annual best practice and provide periodic updates, including a five-year progress report.

✔ Yes, I understand the requirements.

SUBMIT YOUR COMMUNITY’S APPLICATION TO THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY STATES AND COMMUNITIES

Receipt of the application will be acknowledged by AARP within 24 hours of submission or during the next business day.