



August 29, 2017

World Health Organization, Age-Friendly Communities  
c/o AARP  
150 Post Street, Suite 450  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Dear World Health Organization, Age-Friendly Communities,

On behalf of the City of San Rafael, I am pleased to share our ongoing commitment to being an Age Friendly City. We would like to request membership in the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. A citizen-led task force, named Age-Friendly San Rafael Task Force, is championing our local efforts and working collaboratively with the City. Consequently, San Rafael is thrilled to submit our application to become designated as an Age Friendly City.

The City of San Rafael has embraced the fact that our community is aging-in-community. Our middle age and older residents have become a larger proportion of the City's population since 2000. We have over 6,000 senior households (over one-half are 75 years and older) of which 73% are homeowners. As our community population ages, there is greater need for more supportive housing options and services. Acknowledging this need, the City's General Plan 2020 Housing Element includes a number of policies that reinforce senior housing and age-in-place assistance. With over 14% of the owner-occupied residential units, the City has made efforts to facilitate innovative ways for these residents to continue to live in their homes. In 2016, the City adopted a Junior Second Unit Ordinance, which offers a simple and affordable approach to re-purposing existing home space as a separate unit for the resident or a caregiver. In tandem with this effort, services such as Whistlestop's "Meals-on-Wheels" help support aging in the home. The City has also strongly supported alternative housing options for seniors of all income levels and lifestyles; examples include Rotary Manor and San Rafael Commons, which provide low-income apartments for seniors, as well as full service communities such as Villa Marin and Smith Ranch Homes.

San Rafael also has an active seniors program with 1100 members focusing on all areas of San Rafael; including a Multicultural program offered through the Al Boro Community Center in the Canal Area. Two Community Centers in San Rafael provide a congregate meal site in partnership with the County of Marin that provides not only a healthy meal but an opportunity for much needed socialization. The City also has a successful partnership with the Whistlestop to provide support staff to help run the Multicultural Seniors program activities that works with a largely dominant Spanish and Vietnamese speaking participants. Special workshops are coordinated with other non-profits in the community to educate older adults on senior access, AARP, Alzheimer's Association, SMART Train, Golden Gate Transit, Wellness Center, nutrition classes, exercise and much more. Older adults in the community also have access through the City of San Rafael to exercise classes, technology classes, swim programs,

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volunteering, cards, travel, special events and much more. The City of San Rafael provides a well-rounded program for older adults in the community to stay active, be social and stay involved in their community.

Marin Villages has a growing membership and provides transportation, social activities, help with household chores/repairs and a variety of other support services.  
[www.marinvillages.org](http://www.marinvillages.org)

We have developed a strong framework to build upon in addressing the WHO eight domains that contribute to the health and quality of life for older adults. We look forward to joining this global network of communities dedicated to giving their older residents the opportunity to live rewarding, productive, active and safe lives.

Sincerely,



Gary Phillips  
Mayor