



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

City of Foster City

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

Dear Mr. Nazarians:

On behalf of the City of Foster City, I am pleased to offer this letter in support of our application to the AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities, the institutional affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) International initiative to encourage age-friendly community efforts. The City of Foster City recognizes the importance of promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address our evolving demographics and enhance independent living. We maintain a strong commitment to serving the various needs of our community, and in alignment with the principles of an Age-Friendly City, we will continue to support the health, vibrancy, and livability of our community for all ages.

Foster City is located in the Bay Area's peninsula, with an aging population expected to nearly double by 2040. With such rapid growth of this age demographic, we strongly believe that the Age-Friendly City goals of ensuring that older adults in our community receive respect, dignity, and involvement in all aspects of our City's future are intrinsic.

Foster City, alongside its neighbors, 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. To respond to the growing needs of our residents, we have formed an Age-Friendly Community Task Force to take the necessary steps towards becoming recognized as an Age-Friendly City.

As outlined in our application, we are committed to a cycle of continual improvement, specifically by:

- Conducting a baseline community assessment on the needs of older adults in Foster City;
- Establishing mechanisms by which we can support and meet the goals of an age-friendly community;
- Establishing an action plan to address the identified needs based on our assessment; and
- Developing tools and key indicators 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 residents with the resources they need to remain as independent and vitally involved with their community as possible.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mahanpour, Mayor
City of Foster City

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Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email livable@aarp.org
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: *To Be Determined*

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: *Foster City, CA*

STATE: *California*

POPULATION SIZE: *33,901*

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: *15%*

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: *Mayor Catherine Mahanpour*

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: *610 Foster City Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404*
cmahanpour@fostercity.org; (650) 286-3501

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

- The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

NAME: *Jennifer Liu*

POSITION: *Director, Foster City, Department of Parks and Recreation*

EMAIL ADDRESS: *jliu@fostercity.org*

TELEPHONE NUMBER: *(650) 286-3380*

Please describe the named person's role in the city or community's age-friendly initiative:

Jennifer Liu, Director, Foster City Department of Parks and Recreation

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 add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe.

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NOTE: The application continues on the next page.

Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.

The Foster City older adult population has historically been a priority for the community and elected officials. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the delivery of senior programs, and the City Council has had a long-standing philosophy of subsidizing Parks and Recreation programs, understanding that Senior Programs (and Teen Programs) are the most highly subsidized programs. Parks and Recreation Department program offerings encourage socialization and lifelong learning. A variety of classes, ex. art, sewing, fitness; meal programs; weekly movies; tea parties; a 55+ Club; bus trips; card/game groups; and volunteer opportunities are examples of the programming available to Foster City older adults.

As the Parks and Recreation Department programming has evolved, partnerships have become a more substantial component of programming. The San Mateo Adult School has been a long-time partner offering many well attended classes, and the City will continue to offer classes for older adults in cooperation with the San Mateo Adult School. The Foster City Rotary Club has prioritized services for older adults for many years in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department through meal programs and social events. City collaboration with the Foster City Village has been a growing partnership since its inception. Joint programming continues to be expanded to provide a service to both Village members and residents. Work with the San Mateo County Library System also is planned to be enhanced through a collaboration among the City, Foster City Village, and San Mateo County Library System. Ideally, each partner will contribute approximately a third in our shared program to provide service to Foster City residents: the City, The Village, The Library all working together.

After being selected by Supervisor Canepa's office to be among three cities in San Mateo County to develop an Age-Friendly Community (AFC) initiative, Foster City recruited a diverse task force of local residents with a strong commitment to improving the lives of Foster City's older adult residents. This group is currently comprised of **Sam Hindi**, Councilmember, Foster City Council; **Dante Hall**, Interim City Manager; **Jennifer Phan**; Principal Management Analyst, City Manager Department; **Jennifer Liu**; Director of Parks and Recreation; **Julie Paping**, Management Assistant, Public Works Department; **Deborah Owdom**; Chairperson, Parks & Recreation Citizen Advisory Committee (PRC) and Director, RSVP of San Mateo and Northern Santa Clara County; **Steve Okamoto**; Resident, Former City Councilmember and Member of Parks & Recreation Citizen Advisory Committee; **Amit Saini**, Resident, Former Member of Parks & Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee; **Ray Rosenthal**, Resident, Member of Foster City Lions Club; **Patricia Player-Maxwell**, Resident, Founder of Foster City Village, Owner of Maxwell's Senior Care Services LLC and Member of Rotary Club.

With support from the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence, Foster City AFC Task Force members have been meeting regularly since July 2020 to:

- Learn about and discuss age-friendly community concepts;
- Consider what we would like to see come out of a successful AFC initiative;
- Recruit older adult FC residents to participate in virtual focus groups/one-on-one surveys;
- Review the results of focus group discussions;
- Identify potential AFC project ideas that we can further develop, plan and implement; and
- Consider strategies to ensure the Foster City AFC initiative's continuation and sustainability.

2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming more age-friendly?

In August and September 2020, task force members recruited a diverse cohort of community residents to participate in virtual focus group discussions and one-on-one surveys that were conducted by the Center for

Age-Friendly Excellence. The race and ethnicity of focus group participants ranged from Caucasian, South Asian/Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Middle Eastern, as well as a variety of income levels. Foster City plans to conduct a second round of outreach to older adult residents to engage an even broader range of residents. This will also serve as a way to increase the visibility of the Foster City AFC Initiative and recruit new members for our AFC task force.

The collated notes and reports that resulted from focus group and survey discussions resulted in very useful information. This community input not only helped us identify a number of unmet needs of Foster City's older adult residents, but also identified current age-friendly strengths of our community and a list of proposed solutions that, when added to the strategies that task force members proposed, helped us come up with an impressive list of 72 potential AFC strategies.

During October and November 2020, we used all of this information to guide and inform our selection of four inaugural project ideas. Each of these ideas align with age-friendly domains, the focus group participants' feedback on unmet needs of older adults, the proposed strategies to address them and the many age-friendly strengths of our community.

3) Briefly describe the mechanisms the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments.

The Foster City Age-Friendly Community Initiative was launched with the assistance and guidance of the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFÉ), a project of the non-profit Los Altos Community Foundation. Through a contract with the San Mateo County Department of Aging and Adult Services, CAFÉ has also assisted the City of San Mateo and Town of Colma this year to initiate and develop AFC initiatives rooted in a thoughtful planning and implementation process.

As stated earlier, after reviewing feedback gathered from virtual focus group discussions and one-on-one telephone surveys with local residents about unmet needs of older adults that relate to the eight domains of age-friendly communities in addition to Foster City AFC Task Force discussions, the areas and domains that will be focused on are Coordination and Sustainability, Civic Engagement and Employment, Communication and Information, and Respect and Social Inclusion.

The organizations we will reach out to in our community to explore potential collaboration with us in our age-friendly endeavors will include, but not be limited to, other age-friendly communities in San Mateo County and beyond, Foster City Village, the County of San Mateo's Department of Aging Services and their New Beginnings Coalition, AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence, County Board of Supervisors members David Canepa and Carol Groom, Encore.org's Encore Fellows Program, the Corporation for National Service's Livable Community Corps project managed by Public Allies, Inc., the State of California Department on Aging, the Foster City Rotary Club, the Foster City Lion's Club, San Mateo County Library system, Peninsula Jewish Community Center, HIP Housing, Peninsula Family Service Agency, Sutter Health Mills-Peninsula,, Kaiser Permanente, the Foster City Chamber of Commerce, and local philanthropic foundations.

PROJECT 1: COORDINATION AND SUPPORT OF THE FOSTER CITY AFC INITIATIVE TO ENSURE CONTINUED PROGRESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Main Domains Addressed – This project will support all other projects, the various Age-Friendly Community (AFC) domains that are addressed and Foster City's AFC Initiative as a whole.

Other Domains Impacted – All of them.

Unmet Needs Addressed – As is often the case with other AFC initiatives in San Mateo County and elsewhere, the Foster City AFC Task Force members have identified this as an important issue to address up front as they launch their AFC initiative. City staff already have their plates full in terms of their current job duties, task force members only have a limited amount of time to devote to this initiative, and all agree that having someone assist them with coordination and support of their efforts will be an important element to ensure their success. Foster City's AFC Task Force also acknowledge that their initiative will need to be sustainable for the long term since support of older adults will continue to be a community wide issue for many years to come.

Project Duration – Short and Long Term. The first year will be devoted to making sure that everyone involved are supported in further development, planning and implementation of the inaugural AFC projects that are described below. Beyond Year 1, identifying or securing the resources and partners needed from a variety of potential sources that will support Age-Friendly efforts.

Primary Focus:

Foster City, in partnership with their task force members and other collaborative partners, will consider the following to support the Foster City AFC Initiative:

- Support the AFC initiative holistically throughout City Departments
- Conduct annual AFC update and discussions at a City Council meeting; Citizen Advisory Committees meetings; Interdepartmental Evaluation Committee Meeting; and an Executive Staff Meeting.
- Meet with CAFÉ and the County's AFC Coordinating group to discuss ways that the County, the current group of age-friendly cities and other collaborative partners can work together to secure sufficient funds to recruit, select and hire a County wide AFC coordinator and/or secure a cadre of full-time AmeriCorps volunteers or Encore Fellows to assist all AFC cities with coordination, capacity building and long-term sustainability planning for these initiatives.
- In addition, search how other cities in the AARP Network of AF States and Communities have planned how to support and sustain their AFC initiatives.
- Overall, Foster City will create a sustainability plan that supports an integrated AFC effort of projects, partners, and City resources.

PROJECT 2: A MULTI-FACETED PLAN TO PROMOTE EXISTING *CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT* OPPORTUNITIES AND DEVELOP NEW ONES

Main Domains Addressed – Civic Engagement and Employment.

Other Domains Impacted – Communication and Information; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion.

Unmet Needs Addressed – During focus group and one-on-one survey discussions, the need to better coordinate existing volunteer opportunities and development of new ones that are available through the City as well as other local non-profit and community groups was repeatedly mentioned. A separate group of community volunteers may work on its development, planning, and implementation. In addition, there is a great deal of interest in expanding the volunteer driver program that the Foster City Village has developed for their Village members who need rides in Foster City and locations close to town. (Note: The Foster City Village, which was founded by Foster City's AFC Task Force member Patricia Maxwell, is a supportive social network for older adult residents who live in their own homes. It was inspired by the original Village that was started in the Beacon Hill Neighborhood in Boston, Massachusetts in the early 2000s.)

The need for coordination of existing employment opportunities and the development of new ones were also

consistently brought up during focus group and one-on-one survey discussions. While participants in these discussions varied widely in their income level, several indicated an interest in continuing to work at least part-time even though they didn't need to for financial reasons and many acknowledged that there were a significant number of Foster City residents who would greatly benefit from part-time or full-time employment to help them meet the high cost of living in what is one of the most expensive areas to live in the entire country.

Project Duration – Short and Long Term.

Primary Focus: The first year will be devoted to recruiting a working subcommittee of interested community members. The subcommittee's primary focus is to identify and then implement strategies to provide a more coordinated and easier to access overview of current volunteer and employment opportunities, first through the City. The subcommittee will explore the feasibility of enhancing existing programs to fill in gaps within City senior services. Beyond Year 1, evaluate the feasibility of expanding the volunteer program beyond the City organization to network with other volunteer programs in our community and throughout the County.

PROJECT 3: A MULTI-FACETED COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PLAN ABOUT SERVICES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Main Domains Addressed – Communication and Information.

Other Domains Impacted – Community Support and Health Services; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion; Housing; Transportation; Civic Engagement and Employment Opportunities; Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.

Unmet Needs Addressed – During focus group and one-on-one survey discussions, many acknowledged a need to provide clearer pathways, in a variety of formats, for older Foster City residents and for their family members and friends who support them to access information about currently available senior support services, recreational opportunities, social participation opportunities, transportation services, and affordable housing. Of particular concern were older adults and their varied access to computers and the internet, where this type of information is available. Three groups of older adults were identified as it relates to digital information access: (1) Those who have a computer/smart phone, but need training to better utilize that technology; (2) Those who don't have a computer/smart phone and WIFI, but would be interested in having help in obtaining a computer/smart phone (with WIFI access) and learning how to use it; and (3) Those who are not interested in learning how to use a computer/smart phone. They want information via talking to a knowledgeable person and/or in printed form, such as a newsletter.

Project Duration – Short and Long Term.

Primary Focus: The first year will be devoted to identifying and then implementing strategies (as soon as feasible) to provide more coordinated and easier to access information about services and opportunities that would support Foster City's older adult residents. Several modes currently exist such as the "Senior Expressions" newsletter produced by the City; there is an opportunity to reevaluate the use of existing resources to make them more robust and comprehensive. Outreach will also be made to non-profit and community organizations that are currently providing services of various types and support to older adults to find ways we can support them in increasing awareness of their services and for them to assist in our community and information efforts.

The second year and beyond, may be dedicated to organizing and coordinating programming to bring these resources together for in-person information exchange, such as guest speakers and events in partnership with service clubs and/or other organizations.

PROJECT 4: A MULTI-FACETED RESPECT AND INCLUSION PLAN FOR FOSTER CITY'S OLDER ADULT RESIDENTS

Main Domains Addressed – Respect and Social Inclusion.

Other Domains Impacted – Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services, Social Participation, Civic Engagement and Employment Opportunities.

Unmet Needs Addressed – During focus group and one-on-one survey discussions, many participants acknowledged a need to reach out to older adult residents who are socially isolated and/or homebound. While there is no one easy solution to identify isolated older adult residents, the Task Force discussed several strategies. For example, possible expansion of the existing, bi-monthly senior meal program; collaborative programming strategies to facilitate socialization and inclusion with partners; and meaningful intergenerational connections throughout the community, initially via existing City Citizen Advisory Committees.

Project Duration – Short and Long Term.

Primary Focus: The first year will be devoted to identifying and then implementing strategies (as soon as feasible) to address social isolation, recognition of Foster City's accomplished elders, and identifying ways to foster greater intergenerational connection with other residents from different age groups.

The second year and beyond, may be dedicated to continually refining plans and strategies and bringing best practice strategies from other AFC cities to assess and measure their impact on improving the livability of Foster City for their older adult residents.

Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

- Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Foster City and the Foster City AFC Task Force is very interested in contributing to and learning from other AFC member communities that are part of this rapidly growing movement around the United States and world. As with most other communities, Foster City's older adult population will continue to grow beyond its current level of 15%. The City believes that a collaborative and asset based community development (ABCD) approach that engages community members of all ages, businesses, organizations, and the region's field of aging network in partnership with the City to look at ways to create a more livable community for all of our residents including those over 60 is absolutely essential. Not only does it take a Village to raise a child, it also takes a village to support the elders who live among us in ways that provide a range of support services and opportunities for a good old age.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Foster City and their AFC Task Force understands that the expected steady increase in the number of older adult residents requires everyone to do their part in exploring and implementing new and cost-effective ways to create a community that enables them to thrive and not only “age-in-place” but, more importantly, to “age-in-community.” Foster City is grateful for this opportunity to join, learn from, and contribute to a like-minded network of age-friendly States and Communities that share these same goals.

