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Sent: Friday, August 18, 2023 11:21 PM
To: General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: [Konveio Inquiry] General Comments re Seniors in the General plan

Vince Siminitus [REDACTED] sent a message using the contact form at <https://strivesanmateo.konveio.com/contact>.

General Plan Comments

I have reviewed the General Plan from the perspective of a long-time resident senior who has been active in the Age-Friendly San Mateo effort since 2020. I have led two of the four projects committed to by the City in its original application for Age-Friendly certification by AARP and in its subsequent Action Plan. It concerns me and the other community volunteers who have worked diligently on our Age-Friendly projects that this General Plan, with one exception, barely acknowledges this effort and lacks specific policies, goals or actions consistent with the commitments made in those documents. There is little indication of the necessary emphasis on senior needs given that it is the fastest growing segment of our population.

Cities fully committed to Age-Friendly have formalized and successfully integrated explicit, documented consideration of the impacts on seniors of policies, programs and decisions in all their departments. This approach is in addition to and separate from very specific senior-driven or senior-focused initiatives. A search of the general plan for mentions of "age-friendly" shows only two references, both in the context of the Pedestrian Network and Complete Streets initiatives. Even those misrepresent the age-friendly project's original focus on safe walking routes from the highest concentrations of seniors in the City in favor of an emphasis on targeted communities. Perhaps both need to be listed to achieve desired results and leverage the value of the work already completed. Our view is that current and future age-friendly initiatives that are not elements of the General Plan will struggle for future city resource support, both in funding and staff time. We do not believe it sufficient that goals, policies and actions that cover "all ages" will adequately address the specific needs of seniors, who will make up nearly 25% of our population in the time frame covered by the Master Plan.

Two examples of commitments already made by the City that are not referenced, even obliquely, in this draft of the General Plan are: Improving the lives and engagement of seniors through multi-generational programming and 2) Implementing an age-friendly business certification program. It may not be necessary to detail these programs in the master plan but when you look for the higher-level goal or policy they would fall under, I don't see one. It is certainly not obvious. We need to reexamine this document and determine where and how to incorporate policies and/or goals that truly capture how we will enable seniors to stay actively engaged in the community socially and economically, and how we are incenting our local businesses to support their needs

Failure to do so will likely jeopardize our ability to make these happen and compromise our commitment to Age-Friendly status.

Vince Siminitus