

CONNECTIONS

Center for Civic Partnerships

California Healthy Cities and Communities

A Healthy Community Perspective on an Older California

The Center for Civic Partnerships has just released, “A Healthy Community Perspective on Aging Well: New Ideas for an Older California,” as a call to action for policymakers, chief executives, planners, businesses, nonprofit leaders and residents. It features promising practices, strategies and resources that communities can use to improve the health and quality of life for older adults. The need for these actions and strategies is compelling. Already home to more older adults than any other state in the nation, Californians age 65 and older will nearly double to 8.2 million in the next 25 years.

“With 10,000 persons turning 50 every day in the U.S., we are in the midst of a seismic demographic shift,” says Joan M. Twiss, Executive Director, Center for Civic Partnerships. “All predictions are that this generation will be very different than their predecessors in their later years. Tomorrow’s older adults will probably

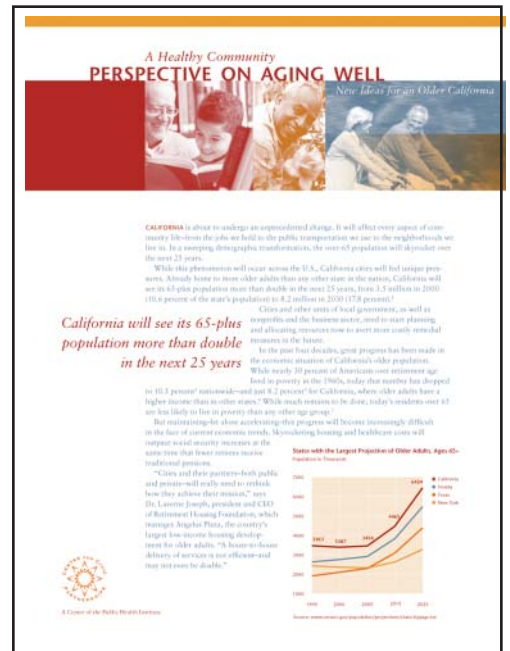
continue to work in some fashion and remain active in their communities, demand increasingly sophisticated assistive technologies, and expect the highest level of care. Communities need to prepare for this coming age wave in terms of housing and transportation options, access to supportive services, and opportunities for lifelong learning, employment and community involvement.”

The Center’s publication includes six case studies featuring promising practices in California and in selected cities nationally. A list of 35 strategies that cities and their partners can begin work on immediately are organized around the following six key domains:

- Community Involvement
- Housing
- Transportation
- Employment
- Lifelong Learning
- Supportive Services

The strategies include both short and long-term actions that communities can take *now* to better serve their older adults in the future. For example:

- City councils can appoint a resident commission to conduct research and recommend a multi-year action plan.



“The opening narrative presents a strong case for the need to act now to begin planning for significant changes in the 65+ population. Case studies were substantive, had variety and represented different settings.”

– Jeff Kolin, City Manager
City of Santa Rosa

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- Communities interested in improving transportation options can offer incentives to developers to incorporate smart growth principles into community design.
- Nonprofit and educational organizations can partner with local governments to increase access to employment development services and educational opportunities.

“We hope that this brief will not only stimulate community dialogue, but build momentum for the implementation of plans, programs and policies that meet the needs of a growing older population,” says Twiss. “The Center sees this work as the next step in its evolution to assist community leaders with addressing emerging issues that impact population health and quality of life.”

Already home to more older adults than any other state in the nation, Californians age 65 and older will nearly double to 8.2 million in the next 25 years.

-U.S. Census

The publication, funded by a grant from The California Wellness Foundation, was written, extensively researched and edited by Center staff and an experienced journalist. It was peer-reviewed by elected officials, current and former city managers, nonprofit leaders, subject matter experts and community activists. Distribution includes all mayors, council members, city managers, most department heads and various organizations and agencies throughout the state.

Copies are available on request and are downloadable through the Center’s web site www.civicpartnerships.org.



Glendale’s Long Range Planning Process

The goal of Glendale’s Long Range Planning Process is to create linkages between the City’s Quality of Life Indicators (completed in 2002) and City Council goals (defined in 2003) to budget and departmental responsibilities. In 2005, the city manager and department heads identified 16 themes and 96 goal statements within “principally responsible departments” for improving residents’ quality of life.

These themes and goals were subsequently summarized into seven service delivery areas to collect resident input:

- Community Services
- Economic Vitality
- Housing
- Transportation & Mobility
- Community Facilities
- Community Safety
- Health & Wellness, and
- Planning & Community Character.

Public review was conducted from January to April, 2006 and involved more than 600 residents who attended 14 community meetings (conducted in multiple languages), completed phone and website surveys, and participated in one-on-one interviews and special group presentations.

Residents attending community meetings participated in an interactive game, with small groups of up to six participants assisted by a trained facilitator and recorder. Childcare, food and prizes to participants helped to create a welcoming and supportive environment for civic engagement and public discourse. The 55-minute process engaged residents in a dialogue and selection of the most important service delivery areas in need of improvement. At the

conclusion of the exercise, each group was asked to share their results.

Results from the meetings have been summarized and are being statistically analyzed. Comments from recorders have been kept in their original state and have been shared with city council members. A final report including the results from all public dialogue and input will be completed by June 30, 2006.

For more information, contact Sam Engel, Neighborhood Services Administrator, at (818) 548-3700 or sengel@ci.glendale.ca.us.



Glendale Celebrates 10 Years as a Healthy City

On April 11, 2006, California Healthy Cities and Communities (CHCC) recognized the City of Glendale and the Glendale Healthier Community Coalition for their ten years of participation as a healthy city. Executive Director of the Center for Civic Partnerships Joan Twiss and CHCC Program Coordinator Thea Perrino presented the award to the Glendale City Council, noting some of the city’s exceptional accomplishments including the implementation of a Quality of Life/Community Indicators Study involving over 400 residents and resulting in the selection of 66 indicators in 11 categories. Findings from the study led the city to undertake a series of Long Range Planning community meetings in which residents helped set budget priorities.

Among many other notable accomplishments over the last decade, resident concerns over housing blight led to the creation of a landlord/tenant education program to improve living conditions in high density neighborhoods.



Glendale Hosts Successful CHCC Annual Meeting

On the heels of its 10th anniversary celebration as a California Healthy City, Glendale hosted the CHCC annual meeting with fun and flare on April 27, 2006. Mayor Dave Weaver opened the day by welcoming attendees at the City's new Police Department state-of-the-art community room. Sam Engel, Neighborhood Services Administrator, and Juan Gonzalez, Program Supervisor for Public Education & Outreach, then demonstrated an interactive resident engagement tool, used as part of Glendale's Long Range Planning process.

Attendees grouped around table-sized "game boards" and were given colorful voting tokens to help them identify community service areas that were most in need of improvement. Facilitators led each group through the process and, at the conclusion, each group reported on its results. Sam and Juan generously shared copies of the handouts, the game board, and a


PowerPoint presentation of the process so that participants could replicate the model in their own communities.

Other sessions featured:

- Chino's introduction of a health element into the City's General Plan Update, focusing on the relationship between the built environment and public health outcomes.
- Loma Linda's development of a community garden and tool lending library in a low-income neighborhood, a gardening system for older adults with disabilities, and a nutrition education program for low-income families.
- Riverside County Department of Public Health's efforts towards building livable communities through walkable, bikeable neighborhoods.



Meeting participants engaging in the long range planning exercise.

- Selma's development of a public walking trail, summer day camp, farmer's market and school nutrition project to promote and support healthy eating and increased physical activity.
- Emerson Elementary School's community garden and nutrition education program in the City of Riverside, involving students, parents, businesses and nonprofit organizations. 

Renew or Join the CHCC Network

If you are a current California Healthy Cities and Communities (CHCC) Network member – or if you are ready to join – now is the time! The CHCC Network is a membership program created for organizations and groups interested in the principles and practices of healthy cities and communities. It provides a means of affiliation with the California program and the international Healthy Cities and Communities movement.

It's easy to join – go to www.civicpartnerships.org and click on the Network link. Select CHCC




"Glendale has been an active participant of California Healthy Cities and Communities for over 10 years. Our local citizen coalition has been responsible for many initiatives to improve the health and life quality of our residents and our participation in the CHCC Network has been instrumental in guiding and supporting these efforts."

- Sam Engel
Neighborhood Services Administrator

Network Brochure, which includes a membership application form and instructions.

Participants have access to an array of services including:

- Priority status for CHCC funding opportunities
- Funding notices and other important resources
- Regional and statewide peer networking
- Assistance in addressing local government and community issues
- Subscription to "Connections" CHCC newsletter.

Annual membership dues are \$250 and membership runs from July 1 to June 30. 

San Fernando Receives CHCC Planning Grant

The City of San Fernando is one of the oldest incorporated cities in the San Fernando Valley. Located in northwestern Los Angeles County, the City has a population of approximately 25,000 residents, the majority of whom are Latino.


Over the past several years, the City has been concerned with the growth in childhood obesity, the drop-out rate in the school system, crime, and the overall quality of life in the City. In response to these issues, the City Council decided to implement health improvement measures such as the development of new parks, affordable housing, increased youth and adult sports programs, and health-related community events.

This past April, the City received a

\$5,000 planning grant from California Healthy Cities and Communities to expand their current health improvement efforts. San Fernando

will use the grant to identify the community's most critical challenges, and the assets and resources to address those challenges; involve residents in deciding what health and related concerns need the most attention; and define and develop its own solutions

to improve community health and livability.

For more information on San Fernando's efforts, contact Thea Perrino, CHCC Program Coordinator, at (916) 646-8680 or Dan LaBrado, Director, Recreation and Community Services, City of San Fernando, at (818) 898-1290. 


"The Northeast San Fernando Valley has the highest rate of child obesity in the State, and our rates of diabetes are unacceptable.

San Fernando wants to make a difference in the lives of the families in our city. Becoming a Healthy City is part of our effort to create a better community for our families and neighbors."

*– Nury Martinez, Mayor
City of San Fernando*

Riverside County Honored by the American Public Health Association

Riverside County was recognized during the American Public Health Association's 2006 National Public Health Week as a national leader in efforts to build healthier environments for children. The County was designated as one of five Blue Ribbon Communities that will serve as a national model for solutions that protect children's health and foster smart economic growth. The County's Public Health Department is working in partnership with local government officials, residents, and developers to create a healthier, more livable Riverside County. In particular, the County has made great strides in the areas of walkability, providing access to fresh foods and health care, and decreasing air pollution.

For more information, contact: Susan Harrington, Director of Public Health in Riverside County at (951) 358-7036. 

San Bernardino County Establishes Healthy Communities Program

San Bernardino County is spearheading a countywide strategic effort to create healthy environments and promote healthful lifestyle choices for its residents. This past April, the County Board of Supervisors authorized over \$560,000 for the establishment of a "Healthy Communities" Program within the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health. The program will be a collaborative effort of community-based organizations, health care

systems, government, high-risk populations, schools, faith-based organizations, and academia.

The funding will create three new "Healthy Communities" staff positions within the Public Health Department. The County has identified specific objectives for the upcoming year, including:

- Sponsorship of efforts in five new "Healthy Cities" (one in each Supervisory district) to support the desire of other local jurisdictions to promote healthy communities concepts.
- Community workshops to engage residents in designing healthier and more walkable communities.

- Staff training to bring County and city partners together to work on health impact assessments and other initiatives that promote healthy communities.
- Collaboration with city and County planners to provide assistance with strengthening city general plans to include health components that address the need for parks, trails, public spaces, and improving access to health services, nutrition, and physical activity programs.

For additional information, contact: Angelica Baltazar, Program Coordinator, at (909) 387-6627 or email at abaltazar@dph.sbcounty.gov.



Why Focus on Aging in Healthy Communities?

- Two-thirds of California's older population resides in the Los Angeles Basin and the San Francisco Bay Area – a trend that is expected to continue. Throughout the state, 38 counties, both rural and urban, will see their older population grow by more than 150 percent.
- Diversity of older adults is growing, with Hispanic and Asian American groups having the largest increases.
- Older adults are the most likely group of Californians to vote and donate money to political causes. These residents will have more impact than ever on local, regional and state policies and elections. 



Aging Well in West Hollywood

Editor's Note: The City of West Hollywood – a Charter City and CHCC Network member – has a long tradition of successful services and programs that meet the needs of older adults. Their approach exemplifies how Healthy City principles can be applied to programs, plans and policies to improve residents' quality of life.

Older adults living in the City of West Hollywood are active participants in municipal programs, services and other civic life overall. "People who don't live in West Hollywood envy what we have here," says one respondent who participated in a recent community survey. "For seniors, West Hollywood is the best city in the country." The following are examples of West Hollywood's innovative practices:

Supportive Services: The City spends over \$1 million each year on social services for older adults which are delivered primarily by local non-profit organizations. The Senior Center offers a variety of supportive services e.g., daily lunch meals, and an array of social, recreational, and cultural programming activities tailored to residents' needs.


Transportation: With 37,000 people living in only 1.9 square miles, West Hollywood is very walkable. Nonetheless it has many different forms of public transportation which are regularly used by over 40 percent of West Hollywood's older adult population. The City subsidizes bus passes for older adults, provides discount taxi voucher books, and operates a fixed route shuttle bus and a Dial-a-Ride van. Plans for a "door-through-door" transportation assistance program are currently under development.

Employment: The City partners with a non-profit employment program to provide WHEST-- West Hollywood Employment Services and Training--a job development and placement program for community members. The program specializes in "redeveloping" careers and in part time placements, providing one-on-one job counseling that older adults often need in order to re-enter the workforce.

Housing: The City's strong rent control law has kept rents more affordable than in surrounding communities. Consequently, most older adults reside in rental units. The City has also developed new and inclusionary housing units in partnership with developers and non-profit housing programs.

Community Involvement: Older adults serve on the City Council, boards and commissions and are a vital part of the political life of the community. The City's Senior Advisory Board advises the Council on needs, services and programs. Seniors are also essential participants in the City's annual Senior Health Fair, Book Fair, and Veteran's Day celebrations.

Lifelong Learning: Through its partnership with the Westside Adult School, West Hollywood's Recreation Services Division offers classes for older adults such as computer education, English as a Second language, Conversation Café (practicing conversational English), and Physical Fitness.

For more information contact Daphne Dennis, Social Services Manager at ddennis@weho.org. 

Connections is a publication of California Healthy Cities and Communities (CHCC). It is published three times per year. CHCC is conducted by the Center for Civic Partnerships, Public Health Institute, under Contract #04-35633 with the California Department of Health Services, supported by the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the CDC.

California Healthy Cities and Communities assists cities and communities with developing, implementing and evaluating inclusionary, community-driven programs, policies and plans, which address environmental, social and economic determinants of health. CHCC advocates a broad definition of health: a shared vision; widespread community participation; system reform; collaborative partnerships; engaging local assets; and a means to measure progress and base improvements upon results.

Executive Editor	Editor	Guest Writer	Designer
Joan Twiss	Thea Perrino	Carol Pepper-Kittredge	Jade Chin

California Healthy Cities and Communities
Tel: 916/646-8680 Fax: 916/646-8660
Email: chcc@civicpartnerships.org

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Connections

Center for Civic Partnerships
California Healthy Cities and Communities
1851 Heritage Lane, Suite 250
Sacramento, CA 95815



A Center of the Public Health Institute

Events & Resources

Websites

Public Health Indicators and National Data is a web-based resource for community-level social indicators of health, with links to community specific sites, indicators and comparisons. The site can be viewed at: <http://www.communityphind.net.net/>

American Society on Aging (ASA) Launches Civic Engagement Program
As part of a strategic commitment to strength-based approaches and programs for older adults, ASA has embarked on a three-year initiative funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies to explore the developing area of civic engagement. To learn more about ASA's work in Civic Engagement programs, visit: <http://www.asaging.org/civicng/>

Free Skin Cancer Prevention Educational Modules
The California Department of Health Services, through its Skin Cancer Prevention Program has prepared two no-cost skin cancer prevention educational modules that it offers to the public: one for outdoor work sites and the other for preschool/child care sites. The order forms are accessible at: www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/skin/default.htm. Please direct any questions regarding the modules to Andrew Manthe by E-mail at amanthe@dhs.ca.gov

California School Garden Network is a "one-stop shop" for teachers and educators seeking information about growing and sustaining a school garden for students. To visit the site, go to: <http://www.csgn.org>

Publications

Creating a Regulatory Blueprint for Healthy Community Design
International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Designed for local government officials, this guide provides strategic framework for reforming zoning and related development codes to encourage the design of more compact, vibrant, and healthy communities. The guide is available at: <http://www.bookstore.icma.org/>. Once at the website, search for item number E-43346.

Active Living and Social Equity: Creating Healthy Communities for All Residents
International City/County Management Association (ICMA). This guide describes how local managers, department heads and local government staff can design healthy communities for all residents, regardless of income, race or ethnicity, age, ability or gender. The guide is available at: <http://www.bookstore.icma.org/>. Once at the website, search for item number E-43306.

Community Quality of Life: A Health Promotion Approach to Understanding Communities
Five principles guide the community quality of life approach, which adheres to World Health Organization concepts of health and health promotion. It also emphasizes the social determinants of health and well-being and uses a quality of life model to consider the effects of these determinants. For more information, visit: <http://www.utoronto.ca/qol/communit.htm>

Access to Safe Parks Helps Increase Physical Activity Among Teenagers
is a UCLA health policy research brief. Based on data analysis in California, it highlights that teens with no access to safe parks, those living in urban areas, in apartments, in neighborhoods perceived as unsafe, and from low-income families get less physical activity. To read this brief, visit: http://www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu/pubs/files/TeenActivity_PB_120605.pdf

Events

2006 Civic Entrepreneur Summit Infrastructure: A Regional Challenge
September 24-25, 2006, San Francisco, California. Sponsored by the California Center for Regional Leadership, the Civic Entrepreneur Summit is the statewide convening of the leaders of California's new civic regionalism. For information, call (415) 445-8975, ext. 100.