

Recommendations for a New Area Agency on Aging in Santa Clara County: Setting the Stage for Shared Understanding and Smooth Transitions

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California's demographic shift is happening quickly. By 2030, adults 65 and older will make up 25% of the state's population, exceeding the population of people 18 and under for the first time ever and becoming more diverse than ever (Aging C. D., California Department on Aging Hubs Initiative, 2022). To compound this complex shift, the older adult population in the United States is growing faster than Older Americans Act (OAA) funding (Ujvari, 2022)

Local communities play a large role in the development of strategies to enhance services within this disproportionate funding and growing population environment.

On April 20, 2021, at the request of Supervisor Simitian, the Board of

Supervisors directed Administration and County Counsel to investigate the feasibility of standalone special legislation to de-designate and redesignate an area aging body and contact CDA on the County's intent. Pursuant to the vote and the request of the Board of Supervisors, this paper examines local AAA's and assesses the feasibility and proposed structure for an AAA located within Santa Clara County's Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS).

The County of Santa Clara is well-situated to be the backbone AAA organization for the County and this document outlines the special strategic and funding considerations that would provide a framework for a transition and highlights the benefits to the community as a result of a AAA transition.

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Background

Congress passed the OAA in 1965 in response to concerns about a lack of community social services for older persons. The original legislation established authority for federal grants to states for community planning, social services, research, development projects, and personnel training in the field of aging (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022).

The law also established the Administration on Aging (AoA) to administer the newly created grant programs and to serve as the federal touch point on matters concerning older persons. AoA is the governing body over the Administration for Community Living and the California Department on Aging (CDA). The federal funds are distributed to local AAAs who make decisions on the dissemination of these funds (Aging C. D., California State Plan on Aging, 2017-2021).

California currently has 33 AAAs. The organizations operationalizing or disseminating these funds are a mixed bag. Some AAAs function within local City or County government, managed within educational systems, or independently as non-profits. See exhibit A for a map of all PSAs and the administrative backbones of those agencies. In the summer and fall of 2021, California stakeholders had conversations about the current map of the state's AAA and Planning and Service Area's (PSA) and what options are available to streamline services for older adults and increase services to meet the growing need.

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County Counsel to investigate the feasibility of standalone special legislation to de-designate and redesignate an area aging body and contact CDA on the County's intent.

There are a variety of viable options for the structure of an AAA. This paper explores the transition of a California AAA from a non-profit organization to County government and what a smooth transition and model would look like. Situating the AAA in local government presents several advantages and careful planning and development considerations.

Overview of the California Department on Aging and the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Under the umbrella of the California Health and Human Services Agency, CDA administers programs that serve older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and residents in long-term care facilities throughout the State. These programs are funded through the federal OAA, the Older Californians Act, and through the Medi-Cal program (Aging C. D., California Department on Aging Programs & Services, 2022).

The Department contracts with a network of 33 AAAs, who directly manage a wide array of federal and state-funded services that provide meals, help finding employment, supportive services to assist older individuals as well as younger adults with disabilities to live as independently as possible, promote healthy aging and community involvement, and support family members in their vital caregiving role.

There is great variance between AAAs; those administered by non-profit agencies tend to vary to a greater extent than the programs run by local governments. See Appendix A for a complete list of AAAs in California and the administrative structure.

California Master Plan for Aging

Aging is changing and it's changing rapidly. California's over-60 population is projected to grow, particularly among Latino, Black, and Asian Pacific Islander communities and those living in nursing groups, increasing from 16 percent in 2010 to one quarter (25%) of the population by 2030, when there will be 10.8 million older adults in California (Aging C. D., California's Master Plan for Aging January 2021, 2021).

In June 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an Executive Order for the creation of the California Master Plan for Aging. The MPA is a California blueprint that promotes healthy aging and is a "blueprint" for state and local government to build a *California for All*.

The Master Plan established five goals for 2030:

Goal 1. Housing for All Ages and Stages. This broad goal includes major areas that impact housing. The goals developed consider transportation, affordable housing, outdoor & community spaces for all ages, emergency preparedness and response, and climate-friendly housing.

Goal 2. Health Reimagined. This goal's focus is on equity. The areas addressed include bridging health care with home, increase access to health care services across the spectrum, geriatric care expansion, and

nursing home care innovation.

Goal 3. Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation. Areas addressing this broader goal include bridging the digital divide, increasing opportunities for work, volunteerism and intergenerational engagement, and prevention in abuse and neglect.

Goal 4. Caregiving That Works. This goal addresses the expansion of a caregiving support network, increasing caregiving jobs, and virtual care growth.

Goal 5. Affording Aging. The strategies and initiatives identified to move this goal forward include ending homelessness for older adults, income security, and protection from poverty and hunger.

Goal three - Inclusion and equity, Not Isolation includes a variety of initiatives to address the inequities and systemic issues that create disparities among older adults. Initiative 101 encourages a review and potential change of California's Area Aging on Agency local leadership structures - including local area map, funding formulas, and designations to meet growing and changing needs and continue to advance equity.

HUBS and Spokes

The pandemic made it more apparent than ever that all California adults and families need easy access to a strong network of aging and disability services to support home and community living as the populations age. (Aging C. D., California Department on Aging Hubs Initiative, 2022). Two goals within the Master Plan outline how a new model can be developed

to achieve seamless access to aging networks.

In accordance with this vision, initiatives 98 and 101 include:

- Building out a statewide *No Wrong Door* hub for public information and assistance on aging and disability
- Revisit California's AAA local leadership structures to meet the growing and changing needs and advance equity

Unprecedented resources proposed at the state and federal level for home and community living lend themselves to creating policies and supports to "build back better" (Aging C. D., California Department on Aging Hubs Initiative, 2022). To advance these initiatives on leadership in aging, CDA has invited the community to participate and engage in townhall discussions. The results from the discussions may help inform legislative, regulatory, budgetary, administrative, and partnership proposals in 2022. Locally, we should look to the results of these proposals to inform the hub model in Santa Clara County.

Regional AAA Structures Located in Local Government

Marin County

Aging and Adult Services (AAS) is a major unit within the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), operating under the Division of Social Services. AAS provides a multi-disciplinary system of services and supports for older persons and persons with disabilities. Marin County's state-appropriated AAA operating budget is \$1,524,893 for fiscal year 20-21

(Aging C. D., Area Agencies on Aging - Budget Displays, 2021). Local funding helps to meet the state-mandated match and covers additional programming and operating costs.

The AAA in Marin County operates a variety of OAA programs that include:

- Long-term Care Ombudsman
- Aging Disability and Resource Center (ADRC)/Information & Awareness
 - OneDoor is the local ADRC comprised of the AAA and the Marin Center for Independent Living - local Independent Living Center (ILC). ILCs and AAAs have the first choice to opt out when forming an ADRC, meaning either could operate an ADRC; however, having the AAA and ILC work together creates opportunities for better cross over and a more seamless system of access for community residents
- Senior Nutrition Program
 - Eight congregate dining locations
 - Meals on Wheels Program
- Administer fifteen contracts to operate the rest of the AAA functions that include:
 - Assisted transportation
 - Caregiver registry
 - Cash/Material aid
 - Employment services
 - Family caregiver support programs

- o Health promotion and disease prevention
- o Legal assistance
- o Rural case management

The Marin County Commission on Aging (MCCOA) is a 23-member federally mandated advisory council to the Marin County Board of Supervisors and the AAA. The Commission works closely with AAS on behalf of Marin's older adults.

City & County of San Francisco

The San Francisco AAA is located in the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) within the San Francisco Human Services Agency. The City & County of San Francisco's state-appropriated AAA operating budget is \$6,267,116 for fiscal year 20-21 (Aging C. D., Area Agencies on Aging - Budget Displays, 2021). The total operating budget is greatly augmented by San Francisco's general fund.

The organizational structure of the Department of Disability and Aging Services includes community services and direct service programs. The AAA is housed within community services which includes (Services, 2019):

- Office of Community Partnerships (AAA)
- Clinical and Quality Assurance
- County Veterans Office*
- DAS Eligibility*
- Integrated Intake and Referral *

* Cumulatively comprise the Benefits and Resource Hub

In 2019, the Office of Community Partnerships (AAA) partnered with 62

agencies to provide diverse services through 225 contracts with community partners. The Office of Contract Management within the Human Services Agency works closely with the AAA to centralize contract management.

Napa and Solano Counties: A Joint AAA Effort

In 2018, the local non-profit administering the AAA in Napa and Solano Counties contacted CDA to resign as the OAA administrator. The organization had been providing services in the area for the previous 40 years. At that time, per state statutes, the County was contacted and offered the opportunity to administer the AAA. Napa and Solano Counties forged a partnership to co-administer the AAA through an Inter-County Agency Agreement/Joint Exercise of Powers Authority.

The newly established AAA serving Napa and Solano Counties is nestled within the Older Adults and Disabled Services unit of the Public Health Department within Solano County Health and Social Services. The AAA is managed by an Oversight Board, an Advisory Council on Aging, Executive Director, Project Manager, and clerical/fiscal teams. Although the AAA is co-administered by Napa and Solano, all administrative supports of the program are housed at Solano County.

As part of the JEP, an Oversight Board consisting of members from both Napa and Solano Counties assist to ensure the fiscal health of the AAA. Napa and Solano Counties' state appropriated AAA operating budget is \$3,045,474 for fiscal year 20-21 (Aging C. D., Area Agencies on Aging - Budget Displays, 2021). The total budget

consists of a mixture of federal, state, and local funding.

The following programs are outsourced and administered through the Napa and Solano AAA:

- Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- Family Caregiver Support Program
- Legal Assistance
- Long-term Care Ombudsman Program
- Nutrition
- Senior Information and Assistance Program
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education
- Supportive Services

Organizational Structure of Santa Clara County AAA

Santa Clara County's AAA is managed by Sourcewise, a non-profit organization located in the City of Santa Clara. The agency has hosted the AAA since 1973; this also coincides with Santa Clara County's participation in OAA-funded programs. The agency receives \$8,314,456 in funding from CDA for fiscal year 20-21 (Aging C. D., Area Agencies on Aging - Budget Displays, 2021).

Sourcewise directly administers the following programs:

- HICAP
- Meals on Wheels Intake
- Information & Awareness
- Senior Employment
- Multipurpose Senior Services Program
- Public Authority
- Senior Farmer's Market

- South County (Morgan Hill and Gilroy areas)
 - Transportation
 - Falls Prevention
 - Case Management

Sourcewise outsources the following programs through competitive procurement:

- Caregiving
- Legal
- Ombudsman
- Senior Nutrition Program
- Meals on Wheels Services
- Digital Inclusion
- Nutrition Education

Reimagining AAA Management and Addressing System Improvements by Creating a Government Run AAA in Santa Clara County

Per the Board of Supervisors directive in April 2021, this document was created to guide conversations and lead action around the creation of a AAA within the Social Services Agency (SSA) - Department on Aging and Adult Services (DAAS). DAAS is situated nicely to adopt a government run AAA model. The department currently houses one of the OAA flagship programs, the Senior Nutrition Program, and other ancillary programs, including Adult Protective Services and In-Home Supportive Services which, currently, lack integration and coordination with Sourcewise.

Some of the benefits of a AAA integration with DAAS include:

- Potential increase in older adults served by the Senior Nutrition

Program ensuring all CDA funds stay in nutrition. Historically, Sourcewise has transferred anywhere from \$500,000-\$800,000 in annual meals funding to other support services (Supervisors, 2014).

- More direct benefit to County and community via possible integration opportunities. An example of this is the future establishment of an Information & Assistance program that is connected to all the County services offering a one-stop shop containing resources and connections.
- County-led efforts in aging services.
- Enhanced fiscal transparency.
- Alignment with local desire for County to manage the AAA.
- SSA support as the administrative spine.
- County contracting and procurement processes will allow greater range of applicants and compliance with federal guidelines.
- Increased integration across County Agencies and Departments (outside of SSA) which results in higher access to broad spectrum of aging services.
- Potential for the creation of an Aging and Disability and Resource Center (ADRC) – more State and Federal funding to support the creation of an ADRC leading to an enhancement in services for target populations.

Policy, planning, and funding allocations are pivotal to a smooth transition and will result in seamless service access for older adults. The following special considerations need addressing by the County prior to a formal transition:

- Determinations of what programs the County will choose to provide, which will be outsourced, and how the County will staff and fund the Agency.
- Conduct fiscal evaluation to assess the cost to maintain compliance with CDA monitoring.
- Determine if the Sourcewise Area Plan will be used to provide planning blueprints.
- Review County structures that may impede the establishment of programming that responds to the community's needs.
- Assess the benefits of integrating the Seniors' Agenda 3-Year Action Plan and Master Plan within the AAA Area Plan. The Seniors' Agenda is the strategic planning think-tank for DAAS and the 3-Year Action Plan is a community-driven plan that integrates key performance indicators to assess impact.
- Decisions on what programs will be offered directly by the County, outsourced, and which programs will not be offered at all.
- Assessment of the return on investment of OAA programs.
- Appointments to the Advisory Council are determined in part by the

County Board of Supervisors. There may be a potential to combine or link the Senior Care Commission to the Advisory Council.

- Adoption of OAA Advisory Council By-Laws and set standards for how they will advise the County-administered AAA (Aging N. A., 2011).
- Determination of which models will be used for creating transparency with the community and the creation of a feedback loop for partners and community constituents.
- Fiscal considerations of the CDA mandated minimum administrative match of 25% of total OAA funds (Aging C. D., Area Agency on Aging Budget Policies, Exhibit B – Budget Detail, Payment Provisions, and Closeout, 2022).
- Understanding that the older adult population is growing faster than OAA funding and those fiscal implications should be used to determine feasibility and departmental structure (Ujvari, 2022).

Appendix B is a high-level organizational chart that uses regional AAAs situated within local government as a framework. This framework is based on the premise that SCC would administer the same programs currently administered by the AAA.

Conclusion

The post-pandemic environment has given rise to a heightened awareness of the challenges faced by and the opportunities to

serve the older adult population. Local resources to support the aging population have increased dramatically. In the future, use of this funding must be looked at in a holistic way to meet the increased demand.

The next wave of older adults will include Gen X and the millennial generations. These cohorts will be substantially larger than the Baby Boomer cohort. There is a great need to be strategic and concerted about the use of federal funds to ensure that the needs of this population will be met, and that programming and support networks continue to grow.

As outlined in the Master Plan for Aging, California's AAA local leadership structures must be reviewed for potential changes to local area maps, funding formulas, and designations (Aging C. D., Master Plan for Aging, 2021). An AAA co-located in local government has several advantages, including the potential for increased services for older adults, greater transparency, and heightened linkages to other services.

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Exhibit A: Planning and Service Area (PSA) Roadmap



PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR THE SANTA CLARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

