

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

June 6, 2023

Establishing Older Adult Services and Programming in the Greater Avocado

Heights Community

California is projected to be one of the fastest growing States in the nation in total population, expecting to grow 30% by the year 2060. According to California Department of Finance Projects, the population aged 60 years and over is expected to grow more than three times that rate. Los Angeles County is expected to see their older adult rates grow over 170%, with a significant amount of growth through 2030. The County must be prepared for the future of aging, and age-friendly programs and services must be made available to meet the commitment to older adults, who have spent their lives contributing to communities.

Senior programming and senior centers are recognized as crucial community focal points under the Older Americans Act, playing a vital role in the lives of older adults across America. Serving as connections for one million individuals annually, the 10,000 senior centers nationwide provide programs that enhance the health, economic security, engagement, purpose, creativity, mobility, nutrition, and more of older adults.

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They serve as vibrant sources of physical and social well-being, offering essential services and tirelessly supporting and encouraging older adults. As experts in their communities on aging, senior centers collaborate with community partners to ensure access to critical programs and services such as health care, economic security, social engagement, purposeful activities, mobility assistance, nutrition, and more. Moreover, they play a crucial role in emergency response, serving as core partners in the community.

Additionally, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) also has robust programming to address the needs of older adults. DPR senior programs serve over 80,000 seniors annually, including serving as a safety net for food security to 75,000 congregate meals for seniors. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, DPR has experienced an unprecedented need and growth in senior programs in local parks, doubling in the County unincorporated areas/communities to 22 senior programs in 2023.

In the unincorporated community of Avocado Heights, older adults have identified the need for a dedicated and accessible space for seniors to gather, access essential programming, and interact with community. This community has a growing older adult community, as well as those living with disabilities, and would significantly benefit from programming and services from the Aging and Disabilities Department and the Department of Parks and Recreation. The two departments are engaged with community leaders to assess existing facilities within the area, as well as the programs and services best tailored to meet the needs of the growing older adult community in the region.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Aging and Disabilities Department, Department of Parks and Recreation, Chief Executive Office (CEO), and County Counsel, to move forward with the required steps to identify a dedicated space, programming, and services that will directly support older adults and adults with disabilities in the Avocado Heights and surrounding area, and report back within 90 days with a written report on the following:

1. Work with the community to develop program priorities for older adults in the greater Avocado Heights area;
2. Identify opportunities in existing County facilities or a space in the existing facility that can support senior programming for the community;
3. Plans for the Aging and Disabilities Department to partner with the Department of Parks and Recreation for programming, including the weekly “Senior Hour” Parks After Dark program at San Angelo Park; and
4. Identified funding from the Aging and Disabilities Department and the Department of Parks and Recreation for the necessary staffing, programming, services, and one-time facility improvements to support Senior programming at the identified location.

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