

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 2024 – DECEMBER 2024



CONTACT:

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CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

ACOA Officers:

- Jill Kleiner President 2nd Term
- Jim Donnelly Vice President 2nd Term
- Candace Evans Secretary/Treasurer 2nd Term

Current Roster of Members as of November 23, 2024:

- Francisco Benavides
- Roger Boaz
- Eric Britz
- Cate Burkhart
- Deborah Card
- James Donnelly
- Kevin Donovan
- Candace Evans
- Marilyn Fowler
- Michelle Hayes
- Denise Kalm
- Carol Kehoe
- Jill Kleiner
- Shirley Krohn
- Thomas Lang
- Nicola Lopez
- Steve Lipson
- Lori Magistrado
- Richard Morisky
- Julie Ortega
- Brian O’Toole
- Michael Rigsby
- Sam Sakai-Miller
- Carol Schaefer
- Terri Tobey
- Lorna Van Ackeren
- Michael Wener
- Dennis Yee

Advisory Council Objectives

The Council shall provide a means for countywide planning, cooperation and coordination for individuals and groups interested in improving and developing services and opportunities for older residents of this county. The Council provides leadership and advocacy on behalf of older people and serves as a channel of communication and information on aging issues.

The Council advises each: the Area Agency on Aging on the development of its Area Plan, the Bureau of Aging and Adult Services, Employment and Human Services and the Board of Supervisors. The basis of the Area Agency on Aging Area Plan is on unmet needs and priorities experienced by older people, as determined by assessments and input from the senior network throughout the County.

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The Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA) had another active year. Currently we have 28 active members compared to 26 active members as of December 2023. Vacant seats include the senior nutrition seat, five Member at Large seats, and six city seats in Antioch, Clayton, Hercules, Pittsburg, San Pablo, and San Ramon. .

During 2024, the ACOA focused on refreshing the ACOA bylaws and will be pleased to present them in early 2025 for the Board of Supervisors' approval.

The ACOA Legislative workgroup re-introduced to the California Senior Legislature (CSL) SP6 (now renumbered to SP4), The Brown Act Teleconferencing Proposal, to allow older adults, caregivers, people with disabilities, and the poor to work remotely with advisory councils, commissions, committees, and their attendant workgroups. For the second time, the proposal was voted #2 out of the top 10 CSL legislative proposals.

The ACOA continued to be participate in the Implementation of the Master Plan for Aging in Contra Costa Together (IMPACCT) Stakeholders Committee. The ACOA was pleased that the Board of Supervisors approved the Contra Costa County Master Plan for Aging (MPA) on October 8, 2024.

Key activities for each of our Committees and Workgroups are highlighted below:

- The Planning committee supported the AAA, as requested, with contract monitoring and RFP processes. To support the needs of the community, the Planning committee finalized the approach to onsite follow-up visits for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. In addition, the Planning committee provided input to the development of the Area Plan for 2024-2028, providing updates to the Area Plan objectives for 2025.
- The Membership committee continued recruitment efforts to increase diversity in the ACOA and assisted in finding applicants for vacancies on the council. The Membership committee created a new welcome to the ACOA packet.
- The Housing workgroup created and successfully presented on a trial basis the “No Place to Call Home” infographic and slide deck that utilizes current housing and income statistics to describe housing and homeless issues impacting seniors.
- The Health workgroup made health-related presentations at three Senior Centers.
- The Legislative workgroup continued tracking Assembly and Senate bills dealing with issues of importance to seniors and informing all workgroups of bills important for them.

- The Transportation workgroup provided advocacy on accessible transportation for senior and disabled adults through state legislation that supports, preserves, and encourages senior mobility programs.
- The Technology workgroup participated in the Bay Area Digital Inclusion Coalition, provided recommendations to the ACOA website, identified non-county resources for CoCoElders411.net, supported the AAA in the execution of technology programming grants, provided input for SP4 (formerly SP6), a California Senior Legislative proposal to revise the Brown Act and allow teleconferencing, and monitored AI (Artificial Intelligence) technologies and their impact on older adults.

Training/Certifications

Members of the ACOA are required to complete three training courses (the Brown Act & Better Government Ordinance, Ethics for Local Government Officials, and Implicit Bias Training Course) upon appointment. In addition, ACOA members are required to complete the Ethics and Implicit Bias training courses every two years.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- Fund Senior Services – allocate resources necessary to fund senior services as Contra Costa County moves forward with implementing the Master Plan for Aging (MPA).
- Support Brown Act Teleconferencing Revision – advocate and support the movement of CSL SP4 to a senate or assembly bill to allow older adults, caregivers, people with disabilities, and the poor to work remotely with ADVISORY councils, commissions, committees, and their attendant workgroups.

It has been my honor to serve as President of the ACOA these past two years. I look forward to continuing to volunteer with the ACOA in the years ahead.

Jill Kleiner

Executive Committee Chair
Advisory Council on Aging President

Planning Committee Roster

- Candace Evans (Chair)
- Debbie Card
- James Donnelly
- Kevin Donovan
- Jill Kleiner
- Dennis Yee

EHSD staff members Tracy Murray, Alicia Espinoza, Jennifer Gomes-Figueira, and Jenny Lam strongly supported the Committee throughout 2024.

Committee’s Role

The Committee has four primary roles:

- Work with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) staff and the Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA) Committees to develop and provide an annual review and updates of the four-year Area Plan for Contra Costa County.
- Participate in the Request for Proposals (RFP) review process.
- Support the AAA in monitoring of contractors.
- Provides support to the AAA as requested.

Accomplishments

- Provided input to the development of the Area Plan for 2024-2028.
- Supported the AAA with monitoring of contractors.
- Reviewed proposals for Capacity Building.
- Supported staff on Focus Group Deliverables (iPads/Emergency Backpacks).
- Finalized Approach to onsite follow-up visits for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

2025 Work Plan

- The Committee will conduct four Focus Group onsite follow up visits by June 2025.
- The Committee will review and provide comments on the Annual Area Plan update for the March Public Hearing.
- The Committee will support the AAA with Request for Proposal (“RFP”) processes.
- The Committee will support the AAA with the annual Contractor Monitoring process.

Candace Evans

Planning Committee Chair

Membership Committee Roster (Includes Nominating Committee Roster)

• Debbie Card	District V	Nominating Committee
• Jim Donnelly	District II	Membership Committee
• Carol Kehoe	District I	Nominating Committee
• Jill Kleiner	District II	Membership Committee
• Niki Lopez	District III	Membership/Nominating Committee
• Richard Morisky	District II	Nominating Committee
• Julie A. Ortega (Co-Chair)	District II	Membership/Nominating Committee
• Logan Robertson (Co-Chair)	District IV	Membership/Nominating Committee

EHSD staff member Jenny Lam and Jennifer Gomes-Figueira strongly supported the Committee throughout 2024.

Committee's Role

To recruit and select Contra Costa County residents to serve as members on the Advisory Council on Aging. Conduct ten monthly meetings per year to review membership requirements, attendance, and recruitment activities. Form a Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of 2024 officer candidates for consideration. Assign and maintain a list of mentors for new members.

Accomplishments

We began the year with a strong focus on recruitment and refreshing our processes. This included updating our orientation training materials to better support new members. A new welcome package was developed, featuring an updated "Welcome to Membership" letter, and revised interview questions to improve the onboarding experience. Regardless of challenges from resignations and ongoing vacancies, we maintained a quorum based on a full 40-seat count. We only failed to meet a quorum once, during the October 2024 meeting. Through these obstacles, the council demonstrated resilience, showing consistent dedication and adaptability during this transitional period. This year, the Membership Committee successfully welcomed ten new members across various Member-at-Large (MAL) and local city seats. The Committee updated interview questions to better clarify the responsibilities associated with membership. District 1 representation within Contra Costa County has improved, though Districts 3 and 5 still require additional members. Current vacancies include five MAL seats, six local/city seats (Pittsburg, San Pablo, Hercules, San Ramon, Antioch, and Clayton), and one Nutrition Council representative.

2025 Work Plan

- Recruit to fill Member-at-Large (MAL) vacancies and support recruitment efforts for local and city seats.
- Encourage meeting attendance to ensure a quorum for conducting council business.
- Monitor and manage membership requirements, providing regular updates to the Executive Committee and general membership.

Julie A. Ortega
Membership Committee Chair

Housing Workgroup Roster

Kevin Donovan (Co-Chair)
Roger Boaz
Marilyn Fowler
Michelle Hayes

Uche Uwahemu (Co-Chair, Center for Elders’ Independence)
Logan Robertson
Victoria Snyder (Contra Costa County Senior Legal Services)

EHSD staff member Nhang Long strongly supported the Committee throughout 2024.

Workgroup’s Role

The Workgroup has two primary roles:

- Provide a forum for the discussion of affordable housing and homelessness issues.
- Advocate for actions that promote affordable housing and support those experiencing homelessness.

Accomplishments

2024’s Workgroup focus was on continuing to provide a venue for the discussion of current housing trends, challenges impacting housing availability and affordability as well as the ongoing issue of homelessness. Additionally, the Workgroup provided advocacy for pending legislation and information to increase community awareness of the challenges facing low-income seniors and the disabled.

The Workgroup created the “No Place to Call Home” infographic and slide deck that utilizes current housing and income statistics to describe housing and homeless issues impacting seniors.

Workgroup meetings became a venue for housing focused groups, representatives of state legislators and county staff to share information and advocate for specific programs that could favorably impact housing affordability, availability and homelessness. During 2024 ten presentations were made to the Workgroup.

2025 Work Plan

The “No Place to Call Home” infographic and slide deck have been completed and successfully presented on a trial basis. The primary goal of the 2025 work plan will be to present them to groups throughout the county. We will continue to provide a forum for the discussion of housing and homeless issues and will be an active supporter of the MPA Impact Committee’s local playbook.

Kevin Donovan

Housing Workgroup Co-Chair

Uche Uwahemu

Housing Workgroup Co-Chair

Health Workgroup Roster

- Brian O’Toole
- Dennis Yee
- Francisco Benavides
- Thomas Lang
- Carol Schaefer
- Alan Goldhammer
- Terri Tobey (Co-Chair)
- Michael Wener (Co-Chair)

The Workgroup’s hybrid meetings and activities required the support of EHSD staff Cristina Ugaitafa, Glenda Pacha, and Jennifer Gomes-Figueira.

Workgroup’s Role

Review current and health-related programs and systems (physical, mental, and long-term care) that affect older adults who are residents of Contra Costa County. Advocate for and educate about quality, suitability, accessibility of these programs and systems.

Accomplishments

- Continued to evaluate/edit a brochure to be used by consumers entitled “Aging in Place in Contra Costa County.” The brochure is intended to assist all county seniors in planning and determining the appropriate location to age, safely and successfully in Contra Costa County.
- HWG members made health-related presentations at three Senior Centers.
- Continued hosting speakers from the community to address specific health issues/services at each meeting including PACE, IHSS, Senior Peer Counseling, SHARE, Senior Solutions, and MOWDR.
- Continued with provision of updates by members on specific health topics at each meeting.
- Assist with edits for finalizing 2024 – 2028 Area Plan.

2025 Work Plan

- Distribute Health Workgroup brochures to the public and agencies.
- Expand HWG to include speakers on elder abuse prevention topics.
- Edit for final approval in order to distribute “Aging in Place” brochure.
- Assist with implementation of the Master Plan for Aging goals as requested

Terri Tobey

Housing Workgroup Co-Chair

Michael Wener

Housing Workgroup Co-Chair

Legislative Workgroup Roster

- Shirley Krohn (Chair)
- Steve Lipson
- Lorna Van Ackeren

Workgroup's Role

- Review legislation and legislative issues that are important to older adults and people with disabilities in Contra Costa County.
- Develop letters of support/opposition concerning proposed and potential legislation.
- Identify potential legislative ideas for consideration by the California Senior Legislature (CSL).

Accomplishments

- Re-introduced CSL's SP6 (now renumbered to SP4), The Brown Act Teleconferencing Proposal, to allow older adults, caregivers, people with disabilities, and the poor to work remotely with advisory councils, commissions, committees, and their attendant workgroups. The proposal continued to be voted #2 out of the top 10 CSL legislative proposals.
- Workgroup members wrote letters supporting additional CSL proposals in areas including health, housing, and transportation.
- During the ACOA general meetings, briefed members on the process for reviewing bills and bill progress.

2025 Work Plan

- Ongoing support and promotion of CA Senior Legislature's SP6 with the goal of seeing it sponsored and subsequently enacted into law.
- The development of additional legislative proposals for promotion by the CSL.
- Educational outreach to all ACOA Workgroups to increase legislative ideas and advocacy throughout the ACOA.
- Additional outreach to nonprofits and service organizations that address the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.
- Meet from January through July to coincide with State Legislative schedule.

Shirley Krohn

Legislative Advocacy Workgroup Chair

Transportation Workgroup Roster

- Jim Donnelly (Chair)
- Kevin Donovan
- Denise Kalm
- Jennifer Cannon (Contra Costa Office of Emergency Services)
- John Cunningham (Contra Costa Dept. Conservation & Development)
- Riki Juster (Lamorinda Spirit Van)
- Rashida Kamara (CCTA)
- Rosa Noya (County Connection)
- Deanna Perry (ECC Transit Authority)
- Debbie Toth (Choice in Aging)
- Elaine Welch (Mobility Matters)

EHSD staff member Alicia Espinoza, and Jennifer Gomes-Figueira strongly supported the Workgroup in 2024.

Workgroup's Role

To address transportation barriers and gaps in service experienced by Contra Costa older adults through education, advocacy and the promotion of effective coordination of services and mobility management that enhances the autonomy and independence of older adults in Contra Costa County.

Accomplishments

2024 Presentations from:

- Fully Integrated Solutions for Public Mobility- Via
- Tri Delta transit- Tri My Ride (micro-Transit Service)- Deanna Perry
- Alborg Denmark- Public All Electric Regional Bus System- Jim Donnelly
- CCTA Accessible transportation Workshop- Rashida Kamara
- Contra Costa MPA Road Map- Transportation Strategies
- CCTA Richmond Paratransit Audit Report & Follow-up- Rashida Kamara
- OES Transportation Plan Update- Jennifer Cannon

Provided advocacy for:

- Mobility Management in Contra Costa City-based transportation programs.
- Attended community meetings and trainings that provided information on the Master Plan for Aging, CCTA and Regional Transportation Organizations.
- Participated in the Paratransit Coordinating Council, DACLAC, and the Task Force for the Implementation of the Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan.
- Supported further development of the Master Plan for Aging.
- Provided updates of services for older adults in need of transportation services.

2025 Work Plan

- Review survey data and report on COVID 19 Impacts on Accessible Transportation Services.
- Schedule six presentations in 2025 from transportation service providers and educators in Contra Costa County.

- Participate in the Paratransit Coordinating Council, DACLAC, Accessible Transportation Task Force, and Regional Transportation Organization meetings.
- Participate in Master Plan for Aging local implementation, ensuring senior transportation and people with disabilities' issues are addressed.
- Participate in CCC's Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan implementation.

Jim Donnelly

Transportation Workgroup Chair

Technology Workgroup Roster

- Cate Burkhart
- Jim Donnelly
- Candace Evans
- Jill Kleiner
- George Lee
- Julie A. Ortega
- Carol Kehoe
- Justin Lola (Center for Elders Independence)
- Denise Kalm
- Sam Sakai – Miller
- Steve Lipson (Chair)

EHSD staff members Ana Bagtas, Alicia Espinoza, and Jenny Lam, and Jennifer Gomes-Figueira provided strong support to the workgroup throughout 2024.

Workgroup's Role

To support the Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA) by identifying and recommending ways to improve access and use of technologies for both the Contra Costa County older adult community-at-large as well as ACOA members. The workgroup activities include:

- Held Regular Monthly Meetings.
- Attended CCC Representatives: Bay Area Digital Inclusion Coalition.
- Facilitated Speakers/Educational Presentations.
- Provided ACOA Website Recommendations Edits/Updates/Additions.
- Identified non-county web resources (e.g. OATS /AARP) for use by CoCoElders411.net an unaffiliated digital resource.
- Supported the AAA in the execution of technology programming grants.
- Coordinated with the Legislative Workgroup on technology specific legislative proposals.
- Monitored AI (Artificial Intelligence) technologies and their impact on older adults.

Accomplishments

In 2024, the Technology Workgroup participated in the Bay Area Digital Inclusion Coalition; provided recommendations to the ACOA website, identified non-county resources for CoCoElders411.net (an unaffiliated website for older adults); supported the AAA in the execution of technology programming grants; provided input for SP-6, a California Senior Legislative proposal to revise the Brown Act and allow teleconferencing; Prepared and advised on SP-3 and SP-4 for the CSL and monitored AI (Artificial Intelligence) technologies and their impact on older adults; and advised the AAA in the implementation of federal, state and local technology funding programs including Digital Connections, CHAT, Access to Technology and Measure X.

2025 Work Plan

- Review new technology-centric proposals for the California Senior Legislature.
- Provide recommendations to the AAA regarding technology-related funding.
- Continue to monitor AI issues as they relate to older adults and the disabled.

- Identify Educational Pathways for Older Adult Technology Training.
- Explore Advisory Technology Partnerships with other agencies.
- Continue to identify non-county resources for CoCoElders411.net.
- Identify and support new programming that addresses goal 3 of the Master Plan for Aging local Playbook, Inclusion & Equity, and Not Isolation.

Steve Lipson

Technology Workgroup Chair