

ANNUAL CHSSC REPORT TO TOWN COUNCIL

BY JEFFREY P. BLUM, CHAIR

Introduction:

The Los Gatos Community Health and Senior Services Commission (CHSSC) is pleased to present its Annual Report for 2023.

This year, the CHSSC focused on implementing the year one goals of the Senior Service Committee (SSC) road map, reviewing and approving Community Grants, completing a mental health and substance abuse report, and improving community awareness of our commission and the needs of older adults.

CHSSC was also instrumental in obtaining increased funding for older adult service provider programs and instrumental in improving relations between the town and Los Gatos Recreation.

CHSSC also performed numerous other tasks, which are enumerated in this report.

This report results from the efforts of all commissioners who attended numerous meetings amongst themselves and with service provider representatives and others, attended many events, conducted several investigations, made presentations to various groups to inform them about CHSSC's work and concerning its focus on implementing the SSC road map, and otherwise spoke to many residents to obtain their input on issues falling within our mandate. Substantial time was also invested in compiling information and preparing a report on the implementation of year one goals for the road map. Each commissioner has regularly reported his/her efforts in support of completing the goals of CHSSC.

Los Gatos is graying. People are living longer thanks to improvements in hygiene, advances in medicine and medical technology, and better public health. This may be a particularly acute problem for Los Gatos, given its attractiveness due to its climactic, educational, cultural, and ethnic makeup. Indeed, the older adult population in Los Gatos is projected to be approximately one-third of the town's total population, within the next several years.

CHSSC's Successes in 2023:

The CHSSC made significant progress on several of its goals in 2023.

*Task forces were created for implementation of several goals in the SSC road map, and liaisons worked with other boards and commissions, including transportation and housing, to encourage implementation of the road map goals in those areas. See attached for interim reports from CHSSC task forces and a transportation related report.

Task forces were created for goal two: Maintenance of core senior services, goal three: communications and engagement, goal four: volunteer support and engagement, and goal seven: integrated governance, funding and accountability for senior services.

Liaisons were appointed vis a vis Goal One: Appealing and inviting facility, goal five: enhanced transportation options for older adults, and goal six: senior housing information on approaches and options.

*Community Grants were approved for service providers such as Live Oak Adult Services, which will help to support important services for seniors in the community.

*A Mental Health and Substance Abuse report was prepared and submitted to the town council. CHSSC hopes to create a road map and possibly follow through with its implementation, in 2024.

*A SASCC health fair was held to raise awareness of older adult needs and provide resources and referrals to seniors and their families. CHSSC participated in this health fair, thereby informing attendees about our commission and about the HUB.

*A brochure was created by CHSSC to aid in informing the public about our commission.

*Numerous articles were written and published about CHSSC to improve publicizing of the organization and to inform the public about issues facing older adults.

*CHSSC wrote and spoke in support of the County Board of Supervisor's plan to grant Los Gatos \$125,000 for adult day care/case management services.

*CHSSC also reviewed the issue of the allocation of the \$125,000 grant from the County Board of Supervisors for adult daycare services and/or case management and made recommendations to the town council on how CHSSC deems it best to allocate the funds.

*CHSSC wrote and spoke in support of the County Board of Supervisor's proposal to conduct a mental health study seeking to determine gaps in the delivery of mental health services. The Board of Supervisors recently passed this proposal.

*CHSSC, through its advocacy, raised awareness of the need for improvement of older adults' services, leading to the creation of the Senior Service Commission, the creation of the road map, and LGS Rec.'s receipt of \$1,000,000 for its 55 plus program.

*CHSSC, also through its advocacy, aided in the reopening of the Live Oak Older Adult Day Care center.

*Through its advocacy, CHSSC was able to obtain for the town of Los Gatos, a part-time person to help older adults navigate the internet for purposes of locating needed resources.

*CHSSC listened to a presentation by Rockwell Pacific concerning the Los Gatos Meadows and made suggestions concerning the types of services the proposed senior living community should offer to older adults.

*CHSSC addressed tension between the town and LGS Rec., which helped to improve the relationship between the town and LGS Rec.

*CHSSC appointed a liaison to the foundation which will address the long-term issue of older adult services, including the project to build a new center. The liaison is and will continue to participate in a positive way in the pursuit of the foundation's goals.

*CHSSC primarily through its task forces, increased community volunteerism and engagement.

2024 Challenges for CHSSC

In 2024, the CHSSC will continue to implement the SSC road map, report to the town council on year one of the road map and address the governance issue for the coordination of senior services. The CHSSC will also face the challenge of the upgrade/reconfiguration of the Adult Rec. Center, which will require the SSC to work closely with the town to ensure that the needs of seniors are considered in the planning and implementation process. Additionally, CHSSC hopes to create a road map for improving the delivery of mental health services and possibly follow through with its implementation in 2024, in accordance with the Mental Health and Substance report it prepared.

The CHSSC is committed to serving the needs of seniors in the Los Gatos community. The SSC is grateful for the support of the town council, the community, and its partners. The SSC looks forward to continuing its work in 2024 to improve the lives of seniors in Los Gatos.