



August 29, 2019

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

We are writing on behalf of Long Beach residents that live and support the 10,000 residents of Rose Park neighborhood we need your support in maintaining the Office of Aging staff member for Fiscal Year 2020.

The City of Long Beach must remain vigilant that not everybody has equal access to resources in the community. Those over 65, and those aging with disability are our most vulnerable and systematically receive the least equity.

The issues that older adults face, range from isolation and depression, as well as economic and housing insecurity. Currently hundreds of older adults are facing displacement due to the sharp increase of rental costs without an increase in their fixed income. To cut funding to such an integral part of the community is not acceptable.

As the second most diverse city in the nation, our older adult population is an important part of this fabric of the community. Nearly 40% of the population within the city is made up of older adults and persons age 50 or more. This population is expected to increase by 22% by 2025. Furthermore, 52% of these individuals live alone, while 38% live with a disability. These numbers are only going to continue to increase. Long Beach is in critical need of housing, transportation, health, safety and quality of life services for this population.

The current Long Beach Strategic Plan for Older Adults is a collaboration between the Department of Health and Human Services and the community to address the growing needs for this population. The gap analysis addresses the older adult's journey, adoption of an age-friendly mindset, senior volunteerism, just-in-time systems, integration of social services, coordination of services, scalability of co-located services, and inclusion of vulnerable communities. This plan discusses the next steps for these issues including the needs and opportunities that currently exist. We, in Rose Park, are actively working to participate and engage to support our older adult residents to age-in-place.

The Office of Aging is the single critical infrastructure needed not only for this population, but also for those who are caretakers for these residents. This office allows for individuals who utilize the services to remain as independent as possible while connecting them to resources. Currently the one staff member has been essential in the first phase of this cutting that person will be detrimental to our community.

We encourage you to maintain the Office of Aging staff member through one-time funds to continue connecting older adults to the resources needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
The Healthy Neighborhood Initiative of Rose Park Neighborhood Association
[email with review and approval of those below at RPNA]

Chris Robson
Jessica Truesdell
Dawn Mendelson
Gretchen Swanson
Brooke Baker
Emily Stevens
Richard Connelly
Janna Vandenberg
Phyllis Sands