



Sonoma County  

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Area Agency on Aging

*Area Plan Update*  
*2006-07*

Sonoma County Human Services Department  
Adult and Aging Division  
2250 Northpoint Parkway  
Santa Rosa, California 95407  
707.565.5950  
[www.socoaaa.org](http://www.socoaaa.org)

## *Sonoma County Board of Supervisors*

Valerie Brown	1 <sup>st</sup> District
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Tim Smith	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
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Alice Diefenbach	Mary Raymond
Louis P. Funk	Laurel Ritz
Joanie Guy	Bennett S. Sparks
Joann Keyston	Alyce Sporer Mars
Raynetta James	Marvin Stubbs
Henry Lasky	Katherine Taylor
Maureen Latimer	Elizabeth Tipon
Bob Marshall	Van Tipton
Warren Metzger	

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**Adult and Aging Division**  
P.O. Box 4059  
Santa Rosa, California 95402  
707.565-5950  
[www.socoaaa.org](http://www.socoaaa.org)

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**Insert signed**

**TRANSMITTAL LETTER**

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# Preface

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is charged with addressing a broad spectrum of issues affecting older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers. The FY 2006-07 Update of the Area Plan 2005-2009 provides additional direction to work proactively in the collaborative development of home and community-based systems of care that are responsive to the needs of seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers in Sonoma County.

The AAA was created by the Older Americans Act (OAA) with a mandate to serve as a visible and effective leader and advocate, providing local leadership to accomplish state and federal program goals. The OAA goals, as broadly defined, are to:

- secure and maintain maximum independence and dignity in a home environment for older individuals capable of self-care with appropriate supportive services;
- remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence for older individuals;
- eliminate barriers and support the development of coordinated and accessible home and community-based systems of care.

The 1996 revision of the Older Californians Act (OCA) reiterates federal requirements to facilitate the development of home and community-based systems of care and adds increased responsibility for the AAA to provide local oversight to a number of state-funded programs, which were previously managed at the state level.

The 2005 – 2009 Area Plan and this 2006 – 07 Plan Update were developed with these goals in mind and in keeping with the Area Agency on Aging’s mission to promote dignity, independence and quality of life for seniors and adults with disabilities. The focus of this year’s work has been to educate staff, Advisory Council members and senior advocates about how lack of adequate transportation and housing impact that mission. Continued efforts are being made to educate the community about services for seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers, and to increase their access to those services. Finally, disaster planning for these populations is being highlighted, with an effort to collaboratively create an integrated, countywide disaster plan focusing on the needs of seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers.

# Narrative of Relevant Changes

1. **Introduction:** The Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a unit of local county government and operates within the Adult and Aging Division of the Human Services Department.

The annual budget of the AAA is approximately \$2,800,000. Revenues are received from Older Americans Act funding, the California Department of Aging and the County of Sonoma. Of the AAA budget, over \$2,000,000 is contracted to community service providers. Services delivered to the 60+ population, family members, and caregivers include: congregate meals, home-delivered meals, information and assistance, case management, legal services, senior center activities, adult day care, respite care, Alzheimer's day care, in-home care, medication management, and health insurance counseling.

The Director of the Adult & Aging Division also serves as the designated AAA Director. The AAA administrative staff includes: program development manager, 1.25 program planners, fiscal officer, account clerk, and secretary. The Linkages Program and the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) are direct services of the AAA. Staff for these programs include: four social workers and a registered nurse for MSSP, two social workers for the Linkages Program, and a supervisor shared between the two programs.

The Linkages and Multipurpose Senior Services Programs continue to provide essential support service to enable seniors and adults with disabilities to remain at home. The Linkages Program receives Older Americans Act funding to provide personal care to clients and respite services to caregivers.

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors has traditionally supported programs for seniors, and they continue to lend financial, administrative and policy-making assistance to the AAA. In turn, the AAA Advisory Council works closely with the Board to make policy and funding recommendations for persons over 60 years of age in the county. Over the years, an effective partnership has been created which is very beneficial to the elders and younger adults with disabilities in Sonoma County.

The AAA Advisory Council is made up of 21 volunteers representing all areas of the community: business, education, social services, health, government and others. Members represent all five supervisorial districts and geographic areas of the County. Most are over 60. In addition to members appointed by the Board of Supervisors, there are members-at-large positions selected to represent consumers, minority and disabled populations, service providers and senior advocacy groups.

The AAA Advisory Council conducts most of its work through subcommittees. The current committees include Legislative, Nutrition, and Planning &

Funding. Volunteers from the community serve on the Legislative and Nutrition Committees. The Executive Committee serves as a steering committee for the Advisory Council. Ad hoc committees are formed to work on short-term projects. Recently a group developed recommendations for new guidelines for including home health care agencies in the “Sonoma County Senior Resource Guide” and are assisting in their implementation.

2. **Changes in Goals and Objectives:** No changes have been made in the goals for the 2006-2007 Area Plan Update.

Objectives in each of the four goal areas have been added, revised and/or deleted. The rationale for changes in the objective is covered in the “Goals and Objectives” section which follows the Narrative Section.

3. **Needs Assessment Findings:** The Area Plan Update for 2006 – 07 contains activities that address the needs identified through the development of the 2005 - 2009 Area Plan. This information was used to develop funding priorities to assist in the development of the request for proposals that will be released in FY 06-07. It also aided in distributing one-time-only funds.

4. **FY 2005-06 Changes and Highlights**

- A. Awareness of Services/Outreach Efforts
  - i. Communitywide and Latino Outreach Efforts
  - ii. Outreach Efforts Survey Results/Best Practices
  - iii. City Council Presentations
  - iv. Increased Press Coverage/Boomer Articles
- B. Disaster Preparedness Planning
- C. Review of Funding Priorities
- D. White House Conference on Aging
- E. Legislative Advocacy
- F. Transportation
- G. Housing
- H. 211 Community Information Phone Line
- I. Elder Abuse Prevention Council
- J. Active Aging
- K. Making the Link
- L. Older Americans Month
- M. California Senior Legislature Elections
- N. South County Forum

- A. Awareness of Services/Outreach Efforts**

- Communitywide and Latino Outreach Efforts***

In an effort to improve awareness of services for older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers, AAA staff and the Advisory Council participated in four educational fairs, the Senior Day at the Sonoma County Fair, St. Francisco Solano Church’s Health Fair, Petaluma Senior Expo and

the Alzheimer's Association's Annual Conference. Materials were also provided for display at the Latino Health Forum, the Alzheimer's Memory Walk, the YWCA's Family Fun Fest and the Grandparents Parenting Again Conference.

Increased effort was made to access hard-to-reach populations, such as Latinos and older residents of mobile home parks. AAA staff coordinated interviews in Spanish by local senior service providers on Univision, presented at the Latino Service Providers' meeting in addition to attending fairs that focused on the Latino population. Direct mailings regarding the new "Sonoma County Senior Resource Guide" were sent to over fifty senior mobile home parks, resulting in the request for and distribution of 1,100 copies of the guide.

### ***Outreach Efforts Survey Results/Best Practices***

Seventeen service providers were surveyed regarding the target populations to whom they outreach and the outreach methods they use. Identified strategies and trends include:

- hiring bilingual staff to relate to clients
- providing presentations to service clubs, faith community groups, hospitals, professional organizations
- development of a website
- providing new clients with "Senior Resource Guide"
- meeting with hospital discharge planners and case managers
- monthly column in local press "Senior Center Happenings"
- monthly advertising on local bilingual radio program
- connection with local businesses who refer clients to services
- current waiting list for services limits need for outreach.

### ***City Council Presentations***

To increase the awareness of elected officials about the results of the recent needs assessment, Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council members and staff presented "Living Longer, Living Well: A Community Report on Older Adults, Adults with Disabilities, and Their Caregivers" to five of ten municipalities and to the Board of Supervisors in Sonoma County.

### ***Increased Press Coverage/Boomer Articles***

AAA staff collaborated with the local newspaper, "The Press Democrat," resulting in the publishing of three major articles about seniors and "boomers." Issues such as the aging population boom/declining senior services and boomers' concerns about the housing market and its impact on retirement were highlighted. Other articles in a south county newspaper focused on transportation and elder abuse prevention and were published as part of a collaborative effort with AAA staff. Raynetta James, Advisory Council member, has also been responsible for writing articles in one of the rural newspapers, continuing to highlight senior issues.

## **B. Disaster Preparedness Planning**

The Legislative Committee adopted the goal of advocating for policies and regulations to adequately support older adults and adults with disabilities to be self-sufficient following the aftermath of a disaster. In addition, staff is involved in an effort to develop a disaster countywide plan that includes service providers and County Office of Emergency Services.

## **C. Review of Funding Priorities**

In preparation for the release of Request for Proposals in FY 06-07, AAA staff and Advisory Council members reviewed the budget, funding structures of OAA titles, target populations, demographic information, current funding policies and priorities. Staff also reviewed units of service, barriers to service and policy change for all titles. During meetings, questions arose that were researched. All information was considered before developing the funding priorities and policies for the 2007-11 Request for Proposals.

A public hearing on the funding priorities will be conducted in May 2006.

## **D. White House Conference on Aging**

Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey selected Advisory Councilmember Joann Keyston to attend the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. Ms. Keyston represented the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging's Advisory Council at the conference in December 2005. She presented conference information to the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council and to several other community groups.

## **E. Legislative Advocacy**

Legislative advocacy continues to be a strong focus of the Advisory Council. Legislative Aides attend monthly Legislative Committee meetings, providing essential updates on state legislative and budget issues and trainings, when requested. Representatives from the California Senior Legislature and the Alzheimer's Association also participate on the AAA Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee was pleased that the Adult Day Health Care program in California was allowed by the U.S. Senate to continue as an optional benefit under Medicaid state plans. The Committee had advocated for this allowance for several years.

## **F. Transportation**

Improving access to transportation resources was chosen as the number one goal in the Area Plan. The annual one day Advisory Council training focused on local transportation: its strengths and weaknesses. Participants were encouraged to use public transportation before the training in order to provide more meaningful input into the planning session. Presentations were given by the Santa Rosa City Mayor and representatives from Sonoma County Transit and its paratransit provider, Volunteer Wheels. The AAA sponsored a follow-up presentation by the Beverly Foundation on national models of transportation systems. Over 65 participants were in attendance.

AAA staff participated in a planning session in south county that also identified transportation as a major barrier to independence for seniors. A workgroup developed a plan to address the needs of seniors in south county. Because paratransit applications are quite lengthy and challenging for some to complete, the Petaluma Senior Center has become a site where seniors can receive assistance with those applications. Sequoia Senior Solutions has trained staff that can help homebound seniors in their care with the paratransit application form. The Petaluma Senior Center is also promoting group bus riding as a strategy for reducing social isolation. The center is organizing events using buses as transportation and is attempting to secure movie passes from the local theater as part of their "Seniors on the Town" promotion.

### **G. Housing**

The significant lack of affordable housing is one of the major barriers to keeping seniors in the community. Improved access to affordable housing was identified as an Area Plan goal. To assist agencies in helping clients identify affordable housing, the Sonoma County Housing Guide was updated by an intern.

### **H. 211 Community Information Phone Line**

Statewide, 211 Programs have been developing as a method for providing access to information for all populations. The Volunteer Center of Sonoma County and United Way are exploring options to develop a 211 system in Sonoma County. Volunteer Center staff provided a presentation to Advisory Council members and AAA staff regarding the status of that plan. AAA staff, with the help of an intern, are surveying several 211 programs throughout the state to determine how it has been working statewide and how the system might be adapted locally.

### **I. Elder Abuse Prevention Council**

The Elder Abuse Prevention Council, EAPC, is a group of service providers and interested community members whose purpose is to prevent and raise awareness about elder abuse, and to promote effective response to elder abuse. The Council provides presentations on elder abuse prevention to individuals who are mandated to report such abuse and to community groups. There is a Court Monitoring Committee that observes court cases in which elder abuse is being prosecuted. The Council is reviewing and revising printed materials that provide guidance to consumers who wish to safely hire caregivers. Elder Abuse Prevention Council members participated in Attorney General's Lockyer's "Call to Action" in San Francisco.

### **J. Active Aging/Senior Safety**

The Sonoma County Hospital Alliance, a consortium of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., and hospitals, Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa, St. Joseph Health System, and the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, provided funding to the AAA for senior safety, focusing on fall prevention. Planning meetings have been held with representatives from health care, senior advocacy, community members, and media.

### **K. Making the Link**

The goal of the Making the Link Task Force goal is to educate physicians about the health risks that face caregivers. The Task Force has been extremely successful in reaching over 30 physicians with information about support services.

### **L. Older Americans Month**

Older Americans Month in May will be observed with the Ninth Annual Senior Art Show sponsored by the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council, Adult and Aging Division, Human Services Department, with cooperation and generous support from senior centers throughout Sonoma County. Acknowledgements will be given to active local senior artists.

### **M. California Senior Legislature Elections**

The California Senior Legislature (CSL) election will be conducted in Sonoma County on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Elections will be held for both the Senior Assemblymember and Senior Senator. CSL members will serve a four-year term. CSL members will attend the CSL session in Sacramento in October 2006.

**N. South County Forum:** The South County Forum is a project of the Health Care District in southern Sonoma County. The Forum has been focusing on senior issues, developing biweekly articles for the local newspaper. AAA staff continues to represent seniors at South County Forum meetings. During this reporting period, a planning process took place to answer the question: "What would make Petaluma a better place for seniors in the coming years?" Participants identified transportation, housing and community-based supports as three focus areas. Monthly planning meetings have been held to address the growing needs of seniors in South County with a goal of implementing at least one strategy in each area.

- 5. Target Population:** Sonoma County continues to be considered a rural/suburban county with significant unincorporated and geographically isolated areas. There are nine municipalities in the county: Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor. The Russian River/West County area includes the unincorporated city of Guerneville, as well as several other small unincorporated communities. Many of these communities are geographically isolated from one another and operate independently. Community members stress the uniqueness of each area and strongly emphasize the existence of local autonomy.

The California Department of Finance population projections for 2006 for Sonoma County indicate that there are 91,456 individuals age 60 and older, representing 18.6 of the total population 492,930 of Sonoma County. This represents an increase of almost 2% over the past year. The population of 85+ continues to be the fastest-growing segment of the entire Sonoma County population, with a projected growth of 75.5% between 2000 and 2010.

Projections for the 60 and older age group are 48% while the county's overall population is projected to grow by only 12.5% by 2010. Within 5 years, 21% of the county's population will be over 60, while 16% of California's population will be over 60. Clearly, Sonoma County will be facing major challenges in meeting the needs of the rapidly increasing senior population.

### Senior Population Growth Sonoma County vs. California

	Population Growth Rate 1990 – 2000		Projected Growth Rate 2000 – 2010	
	Sonoma County	California	Sonoma County	California
Total Population	18.1%	13.8%	12.5%	15.8%
60+	11.5%	12.0%	48.0%	35.1%
85+	64.7%	42.3%	75.5%	47.8%

*Source: U.S. Census data for 1990 and 2000; California Department of Finance Population Projections for 2010, Sacramento, California, May 2004.*

### Senior Population - Sonoma County

Population	1990	%	2000	%	2010	%
Total Population	388,222	100%	462,347	100%	515,968	100%
60+	66,742	17%	75,423	16%	110,212	21%
65+	52,135	13%	58,726	13%	75,690	15%
65-74	29,231	8%	27,426	6%	37,573	7%
75-84	17,729	5%	22,614	5%	23,150	4%
85+	5,175	1%	8,686	2%	14,967	3%

*Projections for 2010 by California Department of Finance. Source: U.S. Census data for 1990 and 2000; California Department of Finance Population Projections for 2010, Sacramento, California, May 2004.*

## 2006 Demographics of Older Adult - Sonoma County

Demographic Category	Number	Percent
Total Seniors (60+)	91,456	18.6
Total Senior Males	40,702	8.0
Total Senior Females	50,754	10.0
Age 75+	38,883	7.0
Age 85+	12,748	3.0
White (60+)	79,553	87.0
Minorities (60+)		
Latino	5,205	6.0
Black	1,147	1.2
Asian	3,727	4.0
Pacific Islander	114	.1
American Indian	725	.7
Multirace	985	1.0

*Source: California Department of Finance Population Projections for 2006, Sacramento, California, November 7, ,2005.*

The 2000 Census Data identified 17,171 individuals 65 and older living alone, representing 29.6% of that age group (59,977). The 2000 Census Data also indicated that 5.9% of the age 60 and over population were at poverty level and 9.8% of individuals in that age group were at 125% of poverty level. Census data identified that 16.3% of the senior population live in rural areas. Of the seniors in rural areas, 19% live alone. Clearly, with the increase in population, these numbers have grown over the past five years.

### 6. **Conclusion**

The FY 2006-07 Area Plan Update was initially reviewed by the Planning and Funding Committee on February 1, 2006, and a public hearing was held on March 15, 2006 and approved by the Advisory Council at that time. The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors gave final approval to the update on May 9, 2006.

## Area Plan Goals and Objectives

### Goal #1: Improve Access to Transportation Resources

**Advocate improving access to transportation resources for seniors and adults with disabilities.**

#### Rationale:

Transportation to medical services, social services, and for social interaction was identified as an unmet need by senior participants, disabled adults and key informants in the fall 2004 needs assessment. The large geographic area and its widely dispersed senior population pose a major challenge to the AAA in its delivery of services for seniors and persons with disabilities. Isolated, rural and homebound seniors in particular, often have limited or no access to public transportation.

Activity and social interaction have been shown to improve the quality of life of older adults, but many Sonoma County older adults are unable to participate in social interaction or to avail themselves of essential medical and social services because of inadequate transportation. The availability of responsive transportation services is critical to the ability of older adults and persons with disabilities to remain in their homes.

#### Objectives

- 1.1 Advisory Council members will plan at least one educational presentation at an AAA Advisory Council meeting related to senior transportation services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed, February 15, 2005, August 17, 2005; three presentations on transportation were held.)*
- 1.2 **(REVISED 2006-07)** Advisory Council members will advocate for more inclusive paratransit requirements to at least one city or local transportation entity in Sonoma County. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2007. *(This objective was initiated during this planning year, resulting in an Advisory Council member training and presentations to the public and Advisory Council by the Beverly Foundation. More groundwork needs to be laid before an advocacy plan can be implemented.)*
- 1.3 Advisory Council members will attend three public meetings related to

transportation to advocate for expanding transportation options for seniors and adults with disabilities. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006; Advisory Council member attends bimonthly Para-transit/Transit meetings; Section on Aging Supplemental Transportation forum; Advisory Council Supplemental Transportation presentation)*

- 1.4 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will secure an intern to develop a brochure to educate people about options/solutions for older adults no longer driving. To be completed by April 2007.
- 1.5 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will collaborate with the local agencies to facilitate the distribution of 200 brochures for older adults no longer driving. To be completed by June 2007.

## **Goal #2: Increase Awareness of Services**

**Improve awareness of health and social services for seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers through community education and outreach.**

### Rationale:

Seniors are living longer; the fastest growing age group in Sonoma County is adults age 85 and older.

Improved and expanded community education and outreach on senior issues, accessible and affordable health care, and social services will assist older adults, and adults with disabilities to remain independent or in the least restrictive environment and provide them greater access to a wide range of services.

Lack of information about available health and social services and difficulty in accessing those services were identified as significant barriers by isolated and rural seniors, monolingual Spanish-speaking seniors, adults with disabilities, caregivers, and key informants who participated in the fall 2004 needs assessment conducted by the Area Agency on Aging.

### Objectives

- 2.1 AAA staff will provide training on Medicare Part D to senior service providers to increase their knowledge on changes in Medicare. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed September 27, 2005)*
- 2.2 AAA staff will survey three counties that have implemented 211 community service telephone number and report to Planning and Funding Committee. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by March 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 2.3 AAA staff and Advisory Council members will provide one training on senior resources to Sonoma County Information and Assistance volunteers to increase outreach and knowledge about senior services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed April 2006)*
- 2.4 AAA staff and Advisory Council members will update and distribute more than 25,000 English and Spanish language Senior Resource Guides to increase public knowledge of available resources. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed update August, 2005; objective completed June 2006)*

- 2.5 AAA staff will update English and Spanish language Senior Resource Guides on the AAA website ([www.socoaaa.org](http://www.socoaaa.org)) and disseminate information about its existence to service providers, health care organizations and community groups, in order to increase community awareness about senior services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by September 30, 2005. *(Completed September, 2005)*
- 2.6 AAA staff and Advisory Council members will participate in four community events to increase awareness of services for seniors, adults with disabilities and their caregivers. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed October 2005)*
- 2.7 AAA, in cooperation with the Active Aging Task Force, will provide one community outreach event designed to increase the awareness of the importance of physical activity for seniors. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 2.8 AAA Making the Link Task Force will provide five presentations and information packets to health care professionals in Sonoma County. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed December 2005, over 30 presentations made)*
- 2.9 AAA staff and Advisory Council members will provide five presentations on the results of the 2004 senior needs assessment, *Living Longer, Living Well*, to community groups in Sonoma County to increase awareness of senior services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed December, 2005- 5 City Council presentations; 4 community presentations; 1 South County Forum)*
- 2.10 Nutrition Committee members will prepare and distribute a public service announcement in English and Spanish to five radio stations about senior nutrition services in Sonoma County. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 2.11 **(REVISED 06-07)** Nutrition Committee members will write two newspaper articles about senior nutrition services to increase awareness of nutrition services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2007. *(This objective was not completed during this planning period; projected completion date will be June 30, 2007.)*
- 2.12 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will provide a presentation to agency representatives serving Latinos to increase awareness about senior services in Sonoma County. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed September 27, 2005)*

- 2.13 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will translate into Spanish the “Tips for Caregivers” handout for distribution to health care providers through the Making the Link Task Force. To be completed by June 30, 2006.  
*(Completed March, 2006)*
- 2.14 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will continue to promote services by attending four Latino Service Providers meetings. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.15 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will continue to coordinate with planning efforts to address the needs of seniors in south county by attending at least four meetings of South County Forum. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.16 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will continue to present the results of the needs assessment, “Living Longer, Living Well” to four community groups in order to advocate for the needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.17 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff and the Making the Link Task Force will distribute “Caregiver Tips” in Spanish to 25 health care professionals working with Latinos. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.18 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff and the Making the Link Task Force will develop and distribute a “caregiver support prescription pad” to 25 health care professionals. The prescription pad will list resources about local support for caregivers and AAA contact information. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.19 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff and the Elder Abuse Prevention Council will make five educational presentations to financial institutions regarding the financial elder abuse legislation (SB 1018) enacted in January 2006. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 2.20 **NEW (FY 2006-07)** AAA staff and the Elder Abuse Prevention Council will make five presentations to consumer groups to educate them about elder abuse prevention. To be completed by June 30, 2007.

### **Goal #3: Increase Access to Home and Community-Based Services**

**Increase access to an effective system of home and community-based services for seniors, adults with disabilities and caregivers through leadership, collaborative partnerships, training, and advocacy.**

#### Rationale:

The fall 2004 needs assessment results indicated a need for leadership and coordination to increase access to home and community-based services in Sonoma County.

The mandate of the AAA is one of overall leadership and, as such, the AAA will bring together a collaborative partnership of community agencies to promote an effective system of home and community-based services.

Following the mandate of the OAA, the AAA will take a visible and effective leadership role in advocating for policy decisions that affect seniors, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers.

The AAA will continue efforts to fill gaps in services and reduce duplication of services.

#### Objectives

- 3.1 AAA staff will coordinate with Older Americans Act home delivered meal programs and case management programs to determine feasibility of case managers providing initial assessment and annual reassessment to home delivered meal program participants to increase clients' awareness about and participation in other senior programs. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by December 30, 2005. *(Partially completed; Case Managers are providing initial assessment, June 2006.)*
- 3.2 AAA staff will meet with two departments at Sonoma State University to provide information on the Area Agency on Aging and initiate opportunities for collaboration. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed September, 2005)*
- 3.3 The Legislative Committee will advocate for the expansion of case management programs through letters to local legislators to meet the increasing need and to reduce the waiting list for MSSP and Linkages programs. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*

- 3.4 AAA staff and Advisory Council members will participate in the planning process for the expansion of mental health services as a result of the passage of Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed October, 2005)*
- 3.5 AAA staff will coordinate three HICAP Coordinating Committee meetings which includes HICAP and four planning service areas (six counties). Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed May 2006)*
- 3.6 AAA staff will conduct survey to contracted agencies to determine programming and outreach efforts to Older Americans Act targeted populations, analyze results of survey, and provide training to service providers on best practices as identified by survey and other research. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed January, 2006; provided training to Senior Center Directors)*
- 3.7 AAA staff will revise Linkages, Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) and Adult Protective Services vendor agreements for alignment with countywide agreement standards and expand number of vendors. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 3.8 AAA staff will attend and participate in four meetings of the statewide C4A workgroup to address the declining attendance at senior dining sites. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Deleted)*
- 3.9 AAA staff, in coordination with the Planning and Funding Committee, will develop strategies and a timeline to prepare for the system impact resulting from the increased senior population in 2006 and beyond to plan future services. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Partially completed; initial step to review funding policies and priorities, completed June 2006.)*
- 3.10 AAA staff, in coordination with Planning and Funding Committee, will review AAA funding priorities and develop funding priorities for the Request for Proposals (RFP) for FY 2007-2011. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*

- 3.11 AAA staff will attend statewide meeting to coordinate and collaborate to increase active aging programs for seniors. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed July, 2005)*
- 3.12 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will investigate, submit presentation/proposal and secure funding to focus on the promotion of active aging. To be completed by June 2006. *(Completed December 2005)*
- 3.13 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff and Elder Abuse Prevention Council will attend the "Call to Action" sponsored by the California District Attorney's Office to plan for further elder abuse prevention programming. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed November 2005)*
- 3.14 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will participate in countywide meetings to begin to develop and integrate disaster plans for seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed January 2006)*
- 3.15 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will work closely with the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County, Sonoma State University, and Santa Rosa Junior College to recruit interns and volunteers to assist in the completion of Area Plan projects. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 3.16 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will collaborate with Santa Rosa Junior College's Computer and Information Sciences class' web design team to engage their assistance in the re-configuration of the AAA website to increase the awareness of services. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed June 2006)*
- 3.17 **(New FY 2005-06)** AAA staff will provide technical assistance to case management contractors to enhance the development and/or revision of care plans. To be completed by June 2006. *(Completed February 2006)*
- 3.18 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will convene a task force to develop a senior safety program that addresses fall prevention. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 3.19 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will coordinate with the United Way staff to develop measurable outcome objectives for the Active Aging project. To be completed by June 30, 2007.

- 3.20 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will attend four meetings addressing disaster preparedness planning for the senior and disabled population. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 3.21 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will include AAA contractors in the disaster preparedness planning process by facilitating disaster preparedness planning discussions at a minimum of three service providers' and senior center directors' meetings. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 3.22 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will ensure that all contractors have developed a disaster preparedness plan and are aware of their responsibility in disaster preparedness response. To be completed by June 30, 2007.
- 3.23 **(NEW FY 2006-07)** AAA staff will facilitate three meetings with service providers funded through Title III B, C, D, E, VII B and the Linkages and HICAP programs to ensure efforts are being made to meet the changing needs of seniors. To be completed by June 30, 2007.

## Goal #4: Improve Access to Affordable Housing Options

### Increase affordable housing options for Sonoma County seniors and adults with disabilities through advocacy.

#### Rationale:

Accessible and affordable housing for seniors and adults with disabilities has been identified as a need by seniors, disabled adults, and key informants in the fall 2004 needs assessment. As people age, their housing needs change. There is a critical shortage of affordable housing options for seniors and disabled adults in Sonoma County. Waiting lists for affordable housing continue to increase as the demand outpaces the supply and the senior population grows.

#### Objectives

- 4.1 Planning and Funding Committee members will plan one presentation at an Advisory Council meeting on senior housing needs, options, and best practices to increase senior housing options. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed March 30, 2006)*
- 4.2 Advisory Council members will attend two local public meetings related to affordable housing to advocate for increasing the supply of affordable housing for seniors and adults with disabilities in Sonoma County. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed December 2005 by attending one Continuum of Care and two subcommittee meetings)*
- 4.3 AAA staff will update Sonoma County Senior Housing Guide on AAA web site and distribute 50 copies of the guide to service providers. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2006. *(Completed April 2006)*
- 4.4 **REVISED FY 2006-07** Legislative Committee members will plan one presentation at an AAA Advisory Council meeting on the Assisted Living Waiver Pilot Project to expand the project statewide. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2007. *(Completion date delayed due to late implementation of waiver)*
- 4.5 **REVISED FY 2006-07** Advisory Council members will provide information to local legislators and service providers on the Assisted Living Waiver Pilot Project. Projected start date FY 2005-06. To be completed by June 30, 2007. *(Completion date delayed due to late implementation of waiver)*

## Summary and Conclusion

The Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging developed the 2005-09 Area Plan by addressing the issues identified in the fall 2004 needs assessment. The overriding factor impacting Sonoma County seniors is their rapid increase in population, particularly in the over 85 age group. That segment of the population is growing faster than any other age group.

The Area Agency on Aging will continue to respond to the needs identified through the 2004 planning process. Transportation was noted as the number one issue for seniors. AAA staff and Advisory Council members discovered first hand that fixed route systems are less than efficient if you need to arrive somewhere quickly. In Santa Rosa, Sonoma County's largest municipality, paratransit planners report that its system is challenged to meet peak hour demands and last minute cancellations.

Awareness of services was identified as the second most important focus for the Area Agency on Aging. Distribution of the "Sonoma County Senior Resource Guide," presentations to community groups and participation in numerous fairs, community access television programs and activities have proven to be effective strategies for informing community members and partners about senior issues and services.

In order to facilitate the independence of seniors and adults with disabilities, the AAA will continue to provide leadership to increase access to an effective system of home and community-based services, the third goal noted in the Area Plan. It is imperative to maintain individuals in their own homes or in the least restrictive, home-like environment possible.

Access to affordable housing was the fourth objective established in the 2005-09 Area Plan. Sonoma County is a highly desirable area and is particularly attractive to those planning retirement. At the same time, housing costs have skyrocketed, making it impossible for low-income individuals to purchase their own home, and very difficult to find affordable rental accommodations. AAA staff will continue to collaborate with groups that are seeking to identify and increase low-income housing options for seniors and adults with disabilities.

The Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging staff is fortunate to work closely with an Advisory Council and community members that assist in the completion of the Area Plan objectives. Meetings are held monthly. Please contact the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging at 707/565-5950 if you would like to participate.



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**Human Services Department**  
COUNTY OF SONOMA