



City of  
**Mountain View**

THE STATE OF  
MOUNTAIN VIEW SENIORS

2021

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Mountain View, like the rest of the country (and, indeed, the developed countries across the world), is graying. People are living longer thanks largely to improvements in hygiene, advances in medicine and medical technology, and better public health. Further, Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) are expected to swell the ranks of those 65 and older dramatically in the next 20 years. Mountain View is likely to feel a greater-than-average impact on these seniors since it has the climactic, educational, cultural, and ethnic factors that make it attractive to an older population.

Mountain View benefits greatly from being in an area where crossing City borders to get appropriate services for seniors is not a problem. For example, the Mountain View Senior Center serves not only seniors (and their families) from Mountain View but seniors from surrounding communities as well. Where Mountain View's senior housing or care facilities are not available or appropriate, there are other options in 27 nearby cities and towns. In short, facilities and activities for Mountain View seniors should be considered part of a regional offering. However, a regional shortage of affordable senior housing affects Mountain View in particular.

This report was created by the Senior Advisory Committee in 2011 and updated every two years to summarize Mountain View's senior-specific programs and services. It has been updated to reflect the currently available census data for seniors and, to some extent, County and City data. The 2021 report was updated and approved by the Senior Advisory Committee in November 2021.

## **SENIOR EMPLOYMENT**

Age discrimination in Santa Clara County remains a problem. Engineers, technical workers, and those previously employed in the computer industry begin experiencing subtle forms of age discrimination as of about age 50, usually with "restructuring" of the company given as the excuse. Since these workers are usually at the peak of their earning period, finding jobs with comparable pay is difficult, and many turns either to consulting or other entrepreneurial work, or take jobs with less pay, sometimes not in a technical occupation. Some of those trying to return to technical work find that their skills do not match what the market currently demands, such as experience with programming languages or familiarity with certain organizational protocols and practices, and need additional training to become employable.

An additional problem has surfaced for many seniors who retired in the last 15 years in that many area companies have terminated their health insurance coverage of previous employees. This should not be considered the same as the limitations on COBRA coverage; it is a cancellation of a benefit promised as part of a retirement package. When this happens, the senior is without health-care insurance and must get it via Medicare or Medicaid, exchange via the Affordable Care Act, or privately, at an increase in personal expense.

## SENIORS OVER 65

Older seniors are more likely to experience multiple health problems and geographic isolation, which can lead to more health problems. In Mountain View, 11% of the senior population is 65 or older, and 59% of those 75 or older live alone. Women are twice as likely as men to live alone.<sup>1</sup>

There are at least four major problems associated with living alone:

- Lack of available transportation;
- Lack of immediate help;
- Isolation and depression; and
- Lack of mental engagement with transportation being the problem cited most often.

One issue with living alone is the lack of immediate help if there is a problem. Most people are aware of the “Help! I’ve fallen and can’t get up!” commercials; they reflect a problem more common to seniors and even more common to seniors who live alone. While the Mountain View Fire Department does an admirable job of responding to emergency calls, sometimes a fall results in unconsciousness or inability to dial 9-1-1, which means a longer time for help to reach the victim.

Living alone tends to promote isolation and depression, both of which have been shown to contribute to heart disease and other mental and physical problems. Further, unless the isolated senior is very active on foot, it also leads to a general lack of strength, which leads to other problems. Finally, lack of mental involvement can also lead to further mental problems, including more rapid onset of symptoms associated with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.

Older seniors are also more likely to fall and injure themselves, sometimes requiring hospitalization. One in three seniors aged 65 and older will experience a fall. One in two seniors 80 and older will experience a fall. Falls cause 65% of injury deaths among those 65 and older. The single most likely cause of these falls is related to balance and leg strength, both of which normally decline in one’s senior years.<sup>2</sup>

In case of a fall, a call to 9-1-1 will bring personnel from the Mountain View Fire Department to help the person get up again. This personnel will also determine whether the person needs medical attention or transportation to a hospital and will arrange for the appropriate resources to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> *Santa Clara County Seniors’ Agenda: A Quality of Life Assessment*, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, 2012, Section 5, Page 13.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.svhap.org/fpscc>.

## INCOME LEVELS

Data about the income levels of seniors in Mountain View comes from the U.S. Census. The median income for seniors in Mountain View is \$43,900 per year compared to an overall median income in Mountain View of \$139,720.<sup>3</sup> The percent of unemployed over 65 in Mountain View is 4.10%. The Federal poverty line is a fixed number for all 50 states and does not reflect the local cost of living.

## HOUSING

There are a variety of housing alternatives available for seniors; most are represented in Mountain View. Among the choices are:

- Your own house, condominium, mobile home, or apartment with a monthly mortgage, insurance, and taxes or with monthly rent payments.
- A senior residential community where you both purchase the unit and pay a monthly fee or where the monthly rent includes the care fee; a local example of the latter is Redwood Villa on Montecito Avenue.
- A life-care community where you purchase a unit and pay a monthly fee which depends on the level of service you need, all the way through hospice care; local examples are The Forum at San Antonio Ranch in Cupertino and The Sequoias in Portola Valley.
- A continuing-care community. There are none in Mountain View, and the nearest is The Terraces located in Los Altos. Others nearby are the Taube-Koret Campus for Jewish Life on Charleston Road, Channing House, Webster House, and Vi by Hyatt, all in Palo Alto.
- Residential care facilities where you rent a room in a house; some services such as meals are provided.
- Nursing institutions where your monthly fee includes skilled nursing and many other services.
- Alzheimer's and dementia facilities (frequently called "memory care units"), usually secure, that specialize in the unique kinds of mental and physical care required by patients with Alzheimer's disease and other kinds of dementia.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/mountainviewcitycalifornia>, US.

## **MOBILE HOMES**

A disappearing resource for affordable housing is a mobile home in a dedicated mobile home park. Mountain View has six mobile home parks, all privately owned, and, thus, are subject to owners' willingness to sell the land to developers. However, selling for another use in Mountain View would require rezoning, which can be problematic.

There have been several cases in Palo Alto and San Jose where a landowner has decided to sell the property and encountered resistance from the tenants.

In a mobile home park, each mobile home is owned and occupied by the resident, but the resident pays rent and other fees to the park's landlord. Mountain View's mobile home parks are:

- Moffett Mobile Home Park, 440 Moffett Boulevard
- Santiago Villa, 1075 Space Park Way
- Sunset Estates Mobile Home Park, 433 Sylvan Avenue
- Sahara Mobile Village, 191 East El Camino Real
- Bayshore RV Park and Apartments, 135 Fairchild Drive
- New Frontier Mobile Home Park, 325 Sylvan Avenue

The purchase price of a mobile home in one of these parks depends on the market. Mobile homes can be financed the same way that one finances a car purchase.

## **SUBSIDIZED HOUSING**

This is a snapshot of current subsidized housing in Mountain View. For more detailed information, go to the City of Mountain View Senior Center website, Senior Resource Guide: [www.mountainview.gov/depts/cs/rec/senior/seniorresourceguide.asp](http://www.mountainview.gov/depts/cs/rec/senior/seniorresourceguide.asp).

In Mountain View, subsidized housing units are available for seniors and have wheelchair access. At the time of this report, all waiting lists were closed. Waiting time can be long, and usually, the only reason one moves up the waitlist is that someone living in one of the units has died. These subsidized units include studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. City ordinance prescribes that all new housing must set aside 10% of all units for low- and moderate-income persons. The income limit for one person is \$46,550 (50% Area Median Income (AMI)) to \$253,200 (80% AMI) and for two persons is \$66,150 (50% AMI) to \$275,600 (80% AMI).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/preservation/homebuying/bmrhousing/default.asp>

Subsidized housing programs have income limits. Currently, an applicant for Below-Market-Rate (BMR) housing units for Mountain View seniors may not have a household income greater than \$55,000 to qualify for a single-occupancy unit.

The City currently has 13 BMR ownership units. All are sold and currently occupied. Resale of BMR units does not occur often.

BMR rental units, different than the ownership units, are:

- Novo Apartments, 2268 West El Camino Real: 10 units—2 studios; 6 one-bedroom units; and 2 two-bedroom units.
- Revela Apartments, 500 Ferguson Drive: 16 units—2 studios; 9 one-bedroom units; and 5 two-bedroom units.
- The Dean Apartments, 400 San Antonio Road: 48 units—5 studios; 28 one-bedroom units; 12 two-bedroom units; and 3 three-bedroom units.
- Madera Apartments, 455 West Evelyn Avenue: seven units—4 one-bedroom units; and 3 two-bedroom units.
- Elan Mountain View, 801 West El Camino Real—five units: 4 one-bedroom units; and 1 two-bedroom unit.
- Domus on the Boulevard, 2650 West El Camino Real—eight units: 5 one-bedroom units; and 3 two-bedroom units.
- Oakwood Apartments, 881 East El Camino Real—four units: 2 one-bedroom units; and 2 two-bedroom units.
- Verve Mountain View, 1984 West El Camino Real—seven units: 4 one-bedroom units; and 3 two-bedroom units.
- Montrose (West Building), 1720 West El Camino Real—eight units: 6 one-bedroom units; and 2 two-bedroom units.

## **ADULT DAY CARE**

For seniors who have memory problems or other long-term illnesses, research has found benefits from daytime programs that include activities. By providing a change in the daily environment, there is a chance for socializing with others; activities such as music and art; physical activity such as dance; simple calisthenics; and memory encouragement. These programs also provide much-needed breaks for caregivers. Some residential care facilities will provide respite care for



specific periods to give caregivers and families much-needed breaks from full-time caregiving. Although there are few facilities here in Mountain View, there are many in the surrounding areas along with transportation services that pick up, deliver, and return seniors home. Adult day-care programs are from half-days in the mornings to full days, five days per week.

- Avenidas Health Center (650-289-5400): located near the Mountain View Senior Center, Avenidas runs an adult day-care health program at the Rose Kleiner Senior Day Center.
- Golden Castle Adult Day Health Center, Palo Alto (650-964-1964).
- Live Oak Adult Day Services, 20920 McClellan Road, Cupertino (408-973-0905).

### **LIFE-CARE FACILITIES**

A life-care facility is like a combination of a senior residential community, assisted care facility, and skilled nursing facility. A resident buys into the facility for life and pays a monthly maintenance fee that depends on the level of care needed but does not need to ever move out of the facility. Redwood Villa on Montecito Avenue offers life-care programs and, nearby, The Forum at San Antonio Park and The Terraces (373 Pine Lane) in Los Altos, The Sequoias in Portola Valley, Channing House and Palo Alto Commons in Palo Alto, and Chateau Cupertino in Cupertino offer life-care programs. The Moldaw Residences (899 Charleston Road) in Palo Alto offers a variety of residential and care options.

### **ASSISTED LIVING AND RESIDENTIAL CARE**

Assisted-care facilities differ from residential care homes in that the latter is licensed to offer care for up to six residents, while the former is licensed for more. In terms of function, both offer assistance with activities of daily living to people who are sufficiently ambulatory to live in their own units or rooms. An assisted-care facility usually has more resources and nursing or other medical professionals either on-site or on-call.

#### **Assisted Living**

Villa Siena at 1855 Miramonte Avenue, with a capacity of 68, offers assisted care. Nearby in Palo Alto, Vi by Hyatt, 600 Sand Hill Road, offers assisted living for up to 24 residents. Palo Alto Commons, 4075 El Camino Way, offers assisted living for up to 53 residents. In addition, assisted living programs are available at Bridgepoint in Los Altos, Canyon House in Sunnyvale, and Lytton Gardens and Sunrise in Palo Alto. Assisted living is also available at the Taube-Koret Campus for Jewish Life.

#### **Residential Care**

Residential care homes, sometimes also called board and care facilities, are usually homes where up to six paying residents can be cared for by licensed personnel who are not necessarily skilled

nurses. Mountain View has seen the closing of at least four of these facilities since 2017. The following residential facilities in Mountain View are currently licensed:<sup>5</sup>

- AAEDITA Residential Care Home, 1874 Villa Street
- Casa Alice Care Home, 809 Alice Avenue
- Casa Pastel, 13348 Pastel Lane
- Cypress Manor, 497 Sierra Vista Avenue
- Monte Farley II, 586 Burgoyne Street
- Paradise Care Home, 1615 Miramonte Avenue

### **NURSING HOMES/INSTITUTIONS**

- Grant Cuesta Sub-Acute Rehab, 1949 Grant Road, is licensed for 102 beds. It provides full-time nursing care in addition to physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology services, dental services, mental health services, physician services, podiatry services, social work, and some X-ray and clinical lab services as well as other activities for residents.
- Villa Siena, 1855 Miramonte Avenue, provides long-term nursing care for up to 30 residents in addition to providing assisted care as described above. It provides full-time nursing for these residents in addition to physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology services, dental services, mental health services, physician services, podiatry services, social work, and some X-ray and clinical lab services as well as other activities for residents. Villa Siena does not provide specialized Alzheimer's or dementia services, although some of its residents have been diagnosed with dementia. These residents may remain at Villa Siena as long as they can function without posing a danger to themselves or others.

### **SKILLED NURSING/REHABILITATION FACILITIES**

Skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities offer nursing services beyond the levels provided by assisted living facilities and employ registered nurses and physical and occupational therapists to help care for patients. Unlike assisted living facilities, these facilities are intended to be

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mountainview.gov/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=35919>

transitional, usually an intermediate step from a hospital to home. In Mountain View, there are three such facilities:

- Mountain View Healthcare Center, 2530 Solace Place, offers skilled nursing and rehabilitation services as well as a 32-bed memory care unit.
- Grant Cuesta Sub-Acute and Rehab Center, 1949 Grant Road, offers skilled nursing and rehabilitation services, specializing in post-acute surgical care.
- Outpatient Rehabilitation, 2400 Grant Road, is associated with El Camino Hospital and provides various kinds of rehabilitation services on an outpatient-only basis.

Additionally, The Terraces in Los Altos offers skilled nursing respite care.

### **ALZHEIMER'S CARE (MEMORY CARE) UNITS**

There are few places in Santa Clara County that specialize in care for Alzheimer's patients and those with other dementias. In Mountain View, the following residential care units can care for patients with dementia:

- Casa Pastel Care Home, 13348 Pastel Lane
- Paradise Care Home, 1615 Miramonte Avenue

In Palo Alto, the following residential care facilities can care for patients with dementia:

- The Palo Alto/Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life, 899 Charleston Road
- Sunrise Assisted Living of Palo Alto, 2701 El Camino Real
- The Wright Place, 2525 Annapolis Street, East Palo Alto
- Palo Alto Commons, 4075 El Camino Way

In Los Altos, memory care services for residents are available at The Terraces, 373 Pine Lane.

In Sunnyvale, there are five facilities offering memory care:

- Sunnyside Gardens, 1025 Carson Drive, offers memory care from minor memory issues to midstage memory loss to late-stage cognitive impairment.
- Atria Sunnyvale, 175 East Remington Drive
- Sunrise of Sunnyvale, 611 South Knickerbocker Drive

- Belmont Village, 1039 East El Camino Real
- Crescent Oaks, 147 Crescent Avenue

Additionally, many organizations that place caregivers offer respite service where a licensed caregiver spends a period in the patient's home, offering the regular caregiver some time off. These services usually charge by the hour or the day, and many provide overnight stays.

## **REFERRAL AGENCIES**

There are several information and referral agencies located in Mountain View that keep tabs on available senior housing options:

- Caring.com, 1-800-973-1540.
- Mid-Peninsula Housing, 2330 Latham Street, 650-965-9749.
- Mid-Peninsula Housing, 90 Sierra Vista Avenue, 650-969-5600.
- CareSource is one of several referral agencies that help individuals to be located in residential and care facilities, 408-781-0651.

El Camino Hospital Library and Resource Center ([elcaminohealth.org](http://elcaminohealth.org)) can be accessed Monday through Friday by calling the main switchboard at 650-940-7000.

Senior and Aging Adult Resources—[Santa Clara County Fire Department](#).

## **REPAIR PROGRAMS**

Mountain View senior homeowners with a limited annual household income (please check with specific programs on income limits) can obtain free home repairs by calling the Mountain View Senior Center for a referral or by directly contacting Rebuilding Together Peninsula at 650-366-6597. Projects range from house painting, minor electrical work, carpentry, and plumbing to yard work and installation of safety features (grab bars, railing, half-steps, wheelchair ramps, or lifts). Repairs are provided at no cost to the homeowner because of donated funding, government grants, donated or discounted materials, and volunteer labor. Income limits for Rebuilding Together Peninsula can be found on their website: [www.rebuildingtogetherpeninsula.org/apply-for-repairs](http://www.rebuildingtogetherpeninsula.org/apply-for-repairs).

In addition, the Mountain View Day Worker Center can provide unlicensed but sometimes skilled workers for home repairs, yard work, window cleaning, and other home jobs at reasonable rates.

## SENIOR HOMELESSNESS

In Santa Clara County, about 7,500 people are homeless on any given night, as counted in the biannual “Point in Time” count of Santa Clara County, and were without a home on any given night.<sup>6</sup> Of those, 2,500 are considered chronically homeless, according to Destination: Home, a public-private partnership with Santa Clara County. However, it is difficult to find reliable statistics on the homeless because many of them do not want to be found, are couch-surfing, living in their cars or RVs, or finding room in public shelters on a day-by-day basis. Those without vehicles sometimes wind up on the street, sleeping in bus shelters or all-night public buses, under freeway overpasses, or in makeshift unofficial campgrounds.

In Mountain View, there are several RVs and trailers parked regularly along Leghorn Street, Independence Avenue, Crisanto Avenue, Latham Street near Showers Drive, and along South Shoreline Boulevard near Eagle Park and at night in parking lots at churches, office buildings, or large shopping centers. Mountain View provides a safe parking program to individuals living in their vehicles. “Safe parking” is a program that gives a temporary, overnight, safe location to park for individuals and families living in a vehicle while providing access to services that will transition them into more stable housing. The goal of Safe Parking is to offer stability—a reliable transition space for program participants as they work through challenging times and make the changes needed to move toward being rehoused and, where applicable, reemployed.”<sup>7</sup>

A follow-up study of 587 people from the “Point in Time” survey found that 43% were over 51 years old, a 23% increase since 2015.<sup>8</sup> “The lack of affordability in high-cost markets such as Silicon Valley, New York, or D.C. definitely exacerbates the problem [for older people],” said Dan Soliman, who oversees housing impact studies at the AARP Foundation. “However, the issue is far-reaching into communities throughout the nation.” He added that many older adults “have not, and likely will not” recover from financial hits taken during the recession. “We may see more older adults with little to no means in the future vying to survive,” he said.

Brian Greenberg of LifeMoves, which runs 17 shelters serving 750 people each night in Silicon Valley, said their five nonfamily shelters have seen a pronounced rise in the average age of clients. Over the past three years, LifeMoves has seen a rise in the age of an average year and one-half older. Clients are over age 55 and many have health-related challenges. More clients have mobility issues, bearing walkers and wheelchairs. Others take multiple medications that need management. Many have a hard time adapting to dorm-style living. “Many clients have never been homeless before and never imagined they would experience homelessness,” Greenberg said. They are people who were in service-sector jobs, whose spouses passed away, and rent tripled over the past decade, and they can no longer afford to rent, given their fixed income.

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<sup>6</sup> Kurhi, E., More Seniors on the Streets, *San Jose Mercury News*, July 25, 2017, pp. 1, 6.

<sup>7</sup>[https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/preservation/safe\\_parking\\_program.asp#:~:text=Safe%20Parking%20Program%20lots%20in%20Mountain%20View%20currently,vehicles%20County-operated%20lots%20%28City-controlled%20through%20lease%20or%20ownership%29](https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/preservation/safe_parking_program.asp#:~:text=Safe%20Parking%20Program%20lots%20in%20Mountain%20View%20currently,vehicles%20County-operated%20lots%20%28City-controlled%20through%20lease%20or%20ownership%29)

<sup>8</sup> Kurhi, E., More Seniors on the Streets, *San Jose Mercury News*, July 25, 2017, pp. 1, 6.

Beginning in May 2021, Mountain View and LifeMoves opened a Project Homekey site on Leghorn Street. Project Homekey is a “welcoming, dignified, and safe interim housing community that offers a private unit for each household—whether a family, a couple, a single adult experiencing homelessness—while providing intensive case management and support services designed to return people to stability.”<sup>9</sup> The site consists of 100 rooms, 88 for individuals and 12 for families.

Homeless living takes a toll. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, those chronically living on the streets have an estimated lifespan between 42 and 52 years, compared with 78 for the general population.<sup>10</sup>

Fifty (50) is the new 75 for that population, said Drive Margot Kushel, a UCSF professor who has studied the aging homeless extensively. “People basically prematurely age...There are 75-year-olds who climb mountains. What we see here is an inversion of that.”<sup>11</sup>

Kushel added that does not mean the person with health issues has been on the streets their whole life. Those who became homeless later in life fared better than the long-term chronic homeless, but still much worse than the general population.

“What we know is that many of them were already poor, working class, doing physical labor jobs, low-skill but still high-stress jobs,” she said. “And they likely had poor access to health care.”

In the 2015 report *Home Not Found*, the County Social Services Agency noted that 70% of its clients were female, but 69% of the homeless who had contact with the criminal justice system were male.<sup>12</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-funded nonprofit agencies whose client data are collected by the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Valley Medical Center, and Mental Health see roughly equal numbers of men and women. However, the nonprofits represented by HMIS have the highest percentage of seniors in their caseloads.

It is difficult to get an accurate picture of senior homelessness in Mountain View, let alone of the homeless problem in general. From the 2015 *Home Not Found* report, it is recognized that 63% of the people in the County who died while homeless from 2007 to 2012 were 55 and older, while those over 55 made up only 17% of the County’s homeless population.

As stated previously, vacancies in subsidized affordable housing in Mountain View are rare and waitlists are long. As of this writing, the most recent site of affordable housing, 819 Rengstorff Avenue, filled its 48 units immediately when it opened in March 2015.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.lifemoves.org/homekey/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://nationalhomeless.org/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mercurynews.com/2017/07/20/seniors-on-the-streets-aging-homeless-population-of-silicon-valley/>

<sup>12</sup> [http://destinationhomesv.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/er\\_homenotfound\\_report\\_6.pdf](http://destinationhomesv.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/er_homenotfound_report_6.pdf)

The Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey Comprehensive Report 2019,<sup>13</sup> “Point in Time” survey, found a total of 9,706 persons experiencing homelessness on January 29 to 30, 2019, a 31% increase from 2017 and the highest number seen in over a decade. Specific to the City of Mountain View, 574 were unsheltered compared to 411 unsheltered in 2017, and 32 were sheltered compared to five in 2017. (Sheltered residents include those who occupied emergency shelters, transitional housing, and safe havens.)

Of the residents and representatives of various County agencies and service organizations who responded to the “Point in Time” survey, the highest-priority needs for services in their areas were emergency rental subsidy housing assistance, access to fresh and nutritious food, homeless services, abused or neglected children, and transportation services.

## **HEALTH**

Mountain View seniors have access to some of the best medical facilities in the country. This abundance of physicians and other medical/dental/vision facilities exists within the City. Such density means that seniors and all other residents have these important and skilled providers nearby and easily accessible.

In addition to the familiar El Camino Hospital (ECH) and various medical clinics, dental offices and optical service units are well distributed throughout the City for relatively easy access in shopping centers and along well-traveled accessible routes. There are three nursing convalescent homes within the City, each rated A+/A by the Better Business Bureau. Each can be readily accessed for inquiry through internet searches.

Further, the Community Services Agency of Los Altos and Mountain View (CSA) offers food items and nutrition education to individuals and families needing assistance. CSA staff includes geriatric managers who provide in-home assessments, counseling, and referrals to help seniors live independently to avoid premature institutionalizing and unnecessary hospitalization. For seniors with chronic conditions, CSA case managers partner with specialized social workers and ECH staff to assist them. They also have volunteers who can provide escorted transportation and shopping assistance.

Beyond these resources for physical health, a simple typed computer inquiry for “Health Services in Mountain View” will yield an abundance of access information to specific services ranging from general health to hypnotherapy to home care or mental services.

For mental services, it is well known that, at times, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has significantly restricted everyone’s mobility and potential to expand their horizons. Healthy seniors were affected, but it has been especially hard on those who may have decided to restrict

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<sup>13</sup> <https://osh.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb671/files/2019%20SCC%20Homeless%20Census%20and%20Survey%20Report.pdf>

or no longer drive their car as well as those for whom it became necessary to enter a local assisted living facility. Many of these seniors' mental health would benefit from the opportunity to occasionally visit local service providers and entertainment venues. This will be addressed in the Transportation section below.

The continuing status of advisories for distancing, masking, and cleanliness during the pandemic have been thoroughly communicated throughout the City. Notably, residents have welcomed this counsel and continue to accept this guidance.

## **COOLING CENTERS**

When the weather gets hot, Mountain View offers cooling centers to its seniors and other members of the community. The Mountain View Fire Department makes the decision to open cooling centers (Senior Center, Library, Community Center, and Police/Fire buildings) based on the City policy that makes its decision on information from the National Weather Service and calls for service within Mountain View. Hours for the cooling centers are related to hours the facilities are staffed and are:

- Senior Center Lobby: Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., 266 Escuela Avenue, Mountain View. COVID-19 restrictions are causing changes often. Call to confirm hours at 650-903-6330.
- Mountain View Public Library: Monday through Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., 585 Franklin Street, Mountain View. COVID-19 restrictions are causing changes often. Call to confirm hours at 650-903-6887.

When the Fire Department decides to open the centers and to include or delete other centers, it uses as many methods as possible to spread the word, including television, radio, newspapers, social media accounts, and the internet.

- City website: <http://www.mountainview.gov>.
- County website: [www.sccgov.org](http://www.sccgov.org).
- Countywide 2-1-1 phone system: [www.211scc.org](http://www.211scc.org).

Only the City website is under Mountain View control, however. While information is sent to all media outlets, there is no guarantee that they will run the information.



## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation options provide mobility and, thereby, prevent isolation, promote independence, and enable access to health care, employment, stores, entertainment venues, civic and social activities, and to family and friends. Seniors frequently find their options limited because of cost, safety, time, and frequency of services and destinations served. For many, simply getting to and from a bus stop is a limiting factor. Seniors who cannot drive themselves have found that getting around is difficult. From interactions with SAC members and Mountain View seniors, many report that they cannot depend on friends or family to take them shopping, to medical or other appointments, or to social or civic events. Public transit is frequently inconvenient or perceived as not safe, and paratransit services such as Access are perceived as not timely, inappropriate, or too expensive.

The free Mountain View Community Shuttle route links downtown and the San Antonio Shopping Center with a stop at the Mountain View Senior Center in addition to 50 other stops around the City. At the time of this report, the Shuttle operates from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekends. It connects with the light rail and Caltrain systems at the Castro Street station transit hub. Another major transfer point is near Walmart on Showers Drive, and a third major transfer point is at the Palo Alto Caltrain station.

As good as this service is for many, it does not serve the three assisted living facilities within the City. Upon inquiry, it was determined that none of these senior resident locations has been contacted with an offer of inclusion on its route. In the 2019 State of Mountain View Seniors report, the comment was made that "...free Shuttle service does not necessarily travel to important destination areas where seniors reside." Reportedly, this approach has not changed but should for the benefit of the growing community of which we all will become part of. Hopefully, shuttle management will be open to offering their service to assisted living residents and to periodically using its resources to determine what parts of the City house a significant number of seniors that would benefit from a similar offer and availability of transportation for 60+ residents.

For a senior fee, Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) primary local routes in Mountain View include service along San Antonio Road, Rengstorff Avenue, Charleston Road, Shoreline Boulevard, Castro Street, Miramonte Avenue, Grant Road, El Camino Real, Central Expressway, California Street, Montecito Avenue, and Middlefield Road.<sup>14</sup>

VTA sells senior discount tickets and Clipper cards online. To qualify for the senior/disabled/Medicare fare, seniors must present one of the following: a Medicare card, a Regional Transit Connection (RTC) discount card or valid care from another California transit provider, or a DMV disabled license plate registration, DMV disabled parking placard printout, or proof of age (65 or older). VTA's ticket vending machines accept cash, credit cards, and debit cards as payment.

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<sup>14</sup> [www.vta.org/seniorguide](http://www.vta.org/seniorguide)

VTA also has a paratransit service called VTA Access that provides door-to-door service for a fee. Additionally, fixed-route service on regular buses and light rail is free to those qualified individuals with a paratransit picture ID card. Assistance animals (on leash or harness) may ride with their handlers.

It is important and appropriate to note that, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, all transportation service providers within the City have followed, and continue to enforce, Federal guidance requiring that masks be worn by everyone while onboard one of their vehicles.

## **COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

RoadRunners continues as a transportation program provider operated by El Camino Hospital (ECH), benefiting underserved seniors and the disabled. Volunteers use vehicles owned by ECH to get senior participants to and from medical appointments at ECH and nearby medical offices. They also provide transport to the Senior Center, banks, and beauty shops. Fees start at \$8 and go up to \$22 each way, depending on origination and destinations. Both locations must be within a 10-mile radius of ECH. For enrollment and more information, call 650-940-7016, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

In addition to its numerous health services previously described, CSA also provides free transportation services within the City limits to older adults, 60-plus years of age, who are residents of Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills and who require an advocate to go with them. For more information, call 650-968-0836, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Beyond these services, a typed computer inquiry for “Senior Citizen Transport Services in Mountain View” will yield access data to GoGo Grandparent, Gidy, Seniors Helping Seniors, and BrightStar Care, among many other local transportation resources.

## **OTHER TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES**

- The Senior Resource Guide is available on the City’s website and provides an abundance of service information and descriptions of transportation services: [www.mountainview.gov/depts/cs/rec/senior/seniorresourceguide.asp](http://www.mountainview.gov/depts/cs/rec/senior/seniorresourceguide.asp).
- For VTA information, call 408-321-2300 or view the VTA Senior Mobility Guide, which is available to download online at [www.vta.org/seniorguide](http://www.vta.org/seniorguide).

## **SENIOR NUTRITION**

In Mountain View, CSA sponsors the lunch program. Lunch is served at the Senior Center, Monday through Friday, to an average of 225 seniors per day. The cost for lunch is a suggested donation of \$3 for ages 60 and up and \$8 for ages 59 and younger. Sign-in is at 11:15 a.m. Monthly menus can be seen at [www.mountainview.gov/seniors](http://www.mountainview.gov/seniors).

In March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Senior Center closed, and CSA began “grab and go” lunches, in which seniors were able to pick up bagged lunches at the Senior Center. The current average of grab-and-go lunches as of November 2021 is 220 lunches per day.

In addition to the CSA Lunch Program, the Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB) Brown Bag Program continued to run the first through fourth Tuesdays of the month with a drive-through operation at the Senior Center. Beginning July 2021, they moved to a “park and pick up.” These bags of free food are distributed to preregistered seniors to take home. Also, from July 2020 to July 2021, SHFB used the Senior Center as a distribution center for volunteers to make home deliveries for homebound seniors.

Although closed for 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Seniors’ Farmer Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) provides low-income seniors with check booklets to be used to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables, cut herbs, and honey at Certified Farmers’ Markets (CFM). This program is administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Services Agency and in California by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Locally, CDFA has partnered with Sourcewise, the Area Agency on Aging of Santa Clara County, to distribute SFMNP check booklets which include 10 checks redeemable for \$2 each. Sourcewise administers senior programs for the communities in Santa Clara County, either directly or through affiliations with other senior organizations and centers.

## **THE SENIOR CENTER**

The Mountain View Senior Center is a recreational facility for adults 55 years and over. The Senior Center provides programs and services that meet the individual needs of seniors, promote personal growth, and foster feelings of achievement, companionship, and well-being. It provides a space for older adults to build community, socialize, and stay active. The Senior Center is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., for regular programming. The Senior Center is also available for private rentals Friday evenings and on the weekends.

A variety of classes and activities are held each day at the Senior Center. These programs are offered through partnerships with volunteer instructors, independent contractors, Stanford Health Care, Foothill College, and Mountain View-Los Altos Adult Education. The classes and activities cover a wide range of interests, such as arts and crafts, computer classes, dance classes, enrichment programs, exercise classes, music classes, and even a senior garden. There are also several drop-in amenities the Senior Center offers, including the game room, the exercise room, the technology room, and a weekly movie program.

The Senior Center also has a wonderful lobby where people can gather and socialize, read books, do puzzles, play board games, or enjoy a cup of coffee. Throughout the year, the staff at the Senior Center set up special events for seniors to participate in, such as a talent show, ice cream

social, fairs, conferences, orchestra performances, seasonal dances, ping pong tournaments, and an annual holiday gala.

Health services, social services, and food/nutrition services are a few of the programs the Senior Center currently provides. Health professionals offer scheduled blood pressure checks and hearing testing. The VTA provides bus schedules and Clipper Card applications. American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) volunteers donate hundreds of hours helping people prepare their taxes and also offer driving classes for seniors throughout the year. The Health Insurance Advocacy Program (HICAP) offers insurance counseling. On-site free legal services are offered by Senior Adult Legal Assistance (SALA). In addition, notary services and mobile phone assistance are provided. Each month, the Senior Center provides a variety of free workshops led by outside professionals that cover a wide range of interests from health-related topics to educational discussions to culture and entertainment. The Mountain View Senior Center is the center point for seniors in the community. It can act as a safety net and a resource for seniors to use in all aspects of their lives.

In March 2020, the majority of senior programming paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the closure, Senior Center staff offered a variety of virtual, drive-through, and grab-and-go programming. Workshops moved to a virtual format via Zoom and had three to 20 participants per workshop. Every Tuesday consisted of puzzle and book swaps where seniors could grab a new book or puzzle to enjoy. Large amounts of puzzles and books were donated to the Senior Center by the public throughout the pandemic. Staff hosted multiple drive-through events to lift seniors' spirits during an uncertain time. Social services provided by SALA, HICAP, and Apple Assistance continued via phone and Zoom during the closure.

The Senior Center safely reopened on July 12, 2021, with reduced hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with limited classes and programming, all requiring a reservation. On August 9, 2021, the Senior Center was able to extend hours from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and bring back additional programming. Daily attendance has not reached prepandemic numbers, but more and more seniors are slowly returning to classes and drop-in programming daily. The Senior Center is hopeful special events and evening hours will start in 2022.

### **Senior Advisory Committee**

The Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) was established in 2009 to advise the City Council regarding matters about broader senior issues and operations of the Mountain View Senior Center. Through the SAC, the City may obtain an enhanced awareness of senior issues with a diverse community, increase outreach, and ensure the greatest quality of service possible. The SAC consists of seven voting members and meets on the third Wednesday, at 2:00 p.m., 10 months out of the calendar year (no meetings in August and December).

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers provide many of the functions that allow the Senior Center to operate economically. If you are interested in volunteering or for more information, contact the Senior Center directly at 650-903-6330.

## **Parking**

The Senior Center parking is most impacted during the midday hours when the lunch program is in operation. These impacts continued through the pandemic. Many seniors come early for classes, stay for lunch, and participate in classes or other programs after lunch. By about 2:30 p.m. or 3:00 p.m., parking becomes more available, and there is usually no problem in the late afternoon or evening.

While many seniors use VTA Paratransit, El Camino Hospital's RoadRunners Transportation, and City shuttles to reach the Senior Center, many more still drive their own cars, although some carpool with other seniors.

## **FUNDING FOR SENIOR PROGRAMS**

Seniors in California are entitled to services from a very wide range of Federal, State, County, and private nonprofit agencies. Some of these agencies live from budget year to budget year; others are built into budgets as "entitlements," such as the Senior Nutrition Programs, Medicaid, or hospice programs, and tend to survive budget fluctuations, although not without some adjustments.

The Senior Center, for example, is 100% funded through the City's General Fund. Other senior programs are funded through specific programs that can be Federal, State, or County-originated.

## **IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program is a Medicaid-, State-, and locally funded program designed to assist those eligible aged, blind, and disabled individuals who, without this care, would be unable to remain safely in their own homes. IHSS provides services according to the IHSS recipient's ability to perform daily activities and can include feeding, bathing, dressing, housekeeping, laundry, shopping, meal preparation and cleanup, respiration, bowel and bladder issues care, moving in and out of bed, rubbing the skin (to prevent skin breakdown), accompaniment to medical appointments, paramedical services, and protective supervision. For more information, visit: [www.sccgov.org/sites/ssa/daas/ihss/Pages/ihss.aspx](http://www.sccgov.org/sites/ssa/daas/ihss/Pages/ihss.aspx).

## **ELDER ABUSE**

Elder abuse is defined by California law to include physical abuse, neglect, financial abuse, abandonment, isolation, abduction, or other treatment resulting in physical harm, pain, or

mental suffering to a person 65 years of age or older.<sup>15</sup> Indicators of financial elder abuse include investments in unsuitable financial products, larger-than-necessary loans, unusual financial gifts, adding caregivers to accounts, and hurried changes to a will, trust, or deed.<sup>16</sup>

Elder abuse occurring in Santa Clara County is investigated by Adult Protective Services (APS), which is part of the Department of Aging and Adult Services and/or the appropriate law enforcement jurisdiction. More information about APS can be found at: [socialservices.sccgov.org/protective-services/adult-protective-services](http://socialservices.sccgov.org/protective-services/adult-protective-services).

## **INFORMATION FOR SENIORS**

Dialing 2-1-1 lets anyone access free, nonemergency community, health, and disaster information, including specialized local information relevant to seniors. Callers receive personalized information from a live phone specialist who can answer questions about a variety of nonprofit services and agencies. Their online database is searchable as well.

## **MOUNTAIN VIEW'S AGE-FRIENDLY CITY DESIGNATION**

Early in 2017, the City of Mountain View, acting on the recommendation of the Senior Advisory Committee and work by Santa Clara County, applied for and was granted the status of Age-Friendly City by the World Health Organization (WHO). The designation means that Mountain View has some elements of a city environment that supports people aging in place safely and in relative comfort.

The WHO Guidelines list essential features to address when promoting an environment that is "Age-Friendly."

The interest in pursuing certification as an Age-Friendly City has increased with efforts under way around the country, throughout the continent, and internationally. Evidence of this is apparent, for example, by the increased membership in the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities which "was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities, and organizations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in." It can also be seen in the articles and dialogue postings that appeared from 2003 to 2010 on the City Mayors' Society website.

There have been many conferences, much university-level research, increased grant funding, and publications developed making information more available. In Mountain View, the Center for Age-Friendly Excellence (CAFÉ) was established in Los Altos with the mission of assuming "a leadership role in advancing our understanding and creation of Age-Friendly cities and communities by applying research and best practices of academic gerontology to the task of advancing livable communities for all generations."

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<sup>15</sup> California Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 15610 and following.

<sup>16</sup> CANHR Elder Financial Abuse Fact Sheet: [canhr.org/factsheets/abuse\\_fs/PDFs/FS\\_FinanElderAbuse.pdf](http://canhr.org/factsheets/abuse_fs/PDFs/FS_FinanElderAbuse.pdf)

In Santa Clara County, the Senior's Agenda project seeks to support the coordination of efforts among cities trying to achieve certification. Some of this has been referenced in this report, and some work has been accomplished by the actions of the Senior Advisory Committee and other committees/commissions in Mountain View.

The following are the eight essential features of an Age-Friendly City identified by WHO and discussed below:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

### **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings**

Mountain View has a history of attention to the environment and green spaces, which continues as evidenced in the work plans of the Environmental Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Downtown Committee. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee has been attentive to sidewalks, pathways, traffic, and signage, which are among the recommended targets specifically mentioned in the WHO documents.

Great Streets Mountain View was established as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Its mission includes working "towards people-friendly streets that are safe, accessible to all, and beautiful public spaces" and striving to:

- Build a diverse network of people and organizations to effectively advocate for a network of Great Streets throughout Mountain View.
- Plan and implement complete street designs for all ages so everyone can walk and bike safely.
- Incorporate beautiful public space as a functional element of our streets.

- Promote transportation improvements that improve healthy and more active living.
- Educate Mountain View residents about the benefits of Great Streets.

The Mountain View Police Department continues to demonstrate commitment to public safety, as does the Mountain View Fire Department, in response times and public education campaigns.

The Senior Advisory Committee has collaborated with staff at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts to improve safety on the theatre aisles and encouraged the City Council to examine steps at City Hall Plaza with the consideration of railings.

### **Transportation**

Concerns about transportation are a long-standing issue recognized by the City Council and agencies serving our area. These issues are discussed regularly at Senior Advisory Committee meetings. Issues related to transportation are discussed earlier in this report. One recommended target for this essential feature addresses driver safety with refresher courses. The Mountain View Senior Center offers AARP courses periodically. Another recommended target addresses age-friendly vehicles which have the attention of local businesses developing driverless cars and providing bicycles for use in the City. Finally, one of the recommended targets addresses the need to provide information regarding how to use public transportation and the range of transport options available. The Outreach Mobility Management Center does frequent presentations at the Senior Center to familiarize seniors with trip planning, buses, and sign-up procedures for their services.

### **Housing**

Considerable information has been presented in the body of this report regarding housing. The SAC has distributed copies of its previous State of Mountain View Seniors reports to Mountain View City Councilmembers, California State legislators, County elected officials, and candidates for offices. The full reports are posted on the City of Mountain View website. As such, these are available not only to elected officials, but also Mountain View residents or, for that matter, anyone visiting the website. The SAC has forwarded recommendations to the City Council about the availability of funds, particularly for seniors, who require modifications to their properties. The City already budgets financial support for the Rebuilding Together program.

### **Social Participation**

This essential feature emphasizes a range of events and activities which are accessible, affordable, and foster community integration. Mountain View has the advantage of having both a Senior Center and a public Library where special events and programs are planned to promote involvement and facilitate interaction. In recent years, the Library offered education sessions about how to use e-books and learn to play the ukulele. Senior Center staff and Nutrition



Program staff plan special events and special holiday meals where attendees can socialize informally.

### **Respect and Social Inclusion**

The first recommended target under this essential feature speaks to respect and inclusive services, which is defined as consultation of older people about ways to better serve them. This has been addressed routinely by the SAC, utilizing surveys/questionnaires at conferences and the recent speaker series (Life in a Senior-Friendly City), as well as the informal conversations one SAC member, continues to do with monthly reports to the full Committee. Senior Center staff regularly solicit input from those utilizing the Center about what courses, workshops, equipment, etc., they would like to have. By inference, accessibility is an element of this essential feature, and it seems worth mentioning here that the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts offers accommodations for the hearing and visually challenged with audio descriptions during select performances. Another recommended target for this essential feature specifies intergenerational and family interactions, which the City previously recognized with the annual Spring Family Parade.

### **Civic Participation and Employment**

Of the eight features on the essential feature checklist, this is the one that appears to fall under other auspices within Mountain View City government addressing employees and retirees. For the purposes of discussion in this document, no information came to light while reviewing the recommended targets about any Citywide situations in Mountain View where options have been compromised, discrimination based on age alone has been violated, workplaces have not been adapted to meet needs, or decision-making bodies in public, private, and voluntary sectors discouraged and/or obstructed membership of older people. Beyond this, residents have the opportunity to apply for appointments to the various committees, commissions, boards, and task-forces as openings become available.

### **Communication and Information**

Considerable attention and resources have been devoted in Mountain View to addressing these concerns not only for seniors but for all residents. In 2019, the Human Relations Commission developed a Civility Roundtable series identifying topics of interest (such as Housing and Prevention of Violence as seen in Ferguson). Both were open to the public and well-publicized, with the latter also being broadcast on KMTV. The SAC has sponsored a Meet and Greet at the Senior Center for five years running when Nutrition Program attendees have the opportunity to speak with members of the City Council and SAC. Another program offered by the City was Thursday Night Live, where representatives of various programs and committees met with the public. City Council meetings are open to the public and broadcast live. Notification of all events/meetings is posted on the City website.

## **Community Support and Health Services**

Mountain View already has policies and procedures in place for emergency planning and care, addressing emergency preparedness, interventions under unusual circumstances (e.g., cooling centers addressed earlier in this report), and public services provided by the Police and Fire Departments. Projects are in development to establish telephone call alerts and online notifications.

### **SUMMARY**

Probably the single most important finding of this report is that seniors will likely want to stay in Mountain View as they age and in their own homes as long as possible. They will want affordable access to medical facilities, transportation, shopping, and entertainment venues, and will continue to appreciate the lively multicultural environment currently prevalent in Mountain View.

With the distinction of being recognized as an Age-Friendly City by the World Health Organization, and partnering with the County of Santa Clara and neighboring communities, the City of Mountain View will continue to use the eight domains of livability for assessment, planning implementation, and evaluation. The County of Santa Clara has added a ninth domain for dementia-related support.