

# Creating *la Vida Buena*: Strengthening Livability in San Antonio



REFERENCES:  
1. City of San Antonio  
2. City of San Antonio  
3. City of San Antonio  
4. City of San Antonio  
5. City of San Antonio  
6. City of San Antonio  
7. City of San Antonio  
8. City of San Antonio  
9. City of San Antonio  
10. City of San Antonio  
11. City of San Antonio  
12. City of San Antonio  
13. City of San Antonio  
14. City of San Antonio  
15. City of San Antonio  
16. City of San Antonio  
17. City of San Antonio  
18. City of San Antonio  
19. City of San Antonio  
20. City of San Antonio

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CITY OF  
**SAN ANTONIO**  
BEXAR COUNTY TEXAS  
1871

REFERENCES:  
1. City of San Antonio  
2. City of San Antonio  
3. City of San Antonio  
4. City of San Antonio  
5. City of San Antonio  
6. City of San Antonio  
7. City of San Antonio  
8. City of San Antonio  
9. City of San Antonio  
10. City of San Antonio  
11. City of San Antonio  
12. City of San Antonio  
13. City of San Antonio  
14. City of San Antonio  
15. City of San Antonio  
16. City of San Antonio  
17. City of San Antonio  
18. City of San Antonio  
19. City of San Antonio  
20. City of San Antonio

**AARP**<sup>®</sup> Real Possibilities in

# Texas



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MAYORAL LETTERS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
COMMUNITY PROFILE	3
INTRODUCTION	5
COLLABORATORS	9
RESIDENT INPUT & FEEDBACK	10
KEY TAKEAWAYS	11
IMPLEMENTATION & INFORMATION	12
TARGETED CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS	14
CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 1	15
CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4	16
CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5	17
BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION	18
TRANSPORTATION	21
HOUSING	23
EMPLOYMENT / ENGAGEMENT	25
HEALTH	28
CONCLUSION	30
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	31

# MAYORAL LETTERS

## MAYOR JULIÁN CASTRO 2009-2014

LETTER DATED MARCH 27, 2014



San Antonio is excited about the opportunity to join with AARP Texas and the World Health Organization (WHO) to become an Age-Friendly Community. Along with other selected communities in the nation, San Antonio is committed to promoting policies to make American cities friendly to aging populations.

San Antonio's population consists of 1.3 million people and over one third are age 50+. The 50+ population is expected to grow by 16 percent over the next five years. In addition, San Antonio is known for its diverse population. Amongst those ages 50+, 48 percent are Hispanic/Latino, 7 percent are African American/Black and 2 percent are Asian.

In 2011, our community adopted SA2020, a citywide plan to build a better San Antonio. The SA2020 vision areas and the eight domains of an Age-Friendly Community complement one another. In partnership with AARP Texas, the City of San Antonio, and SA2020, our goal is to ensure that San Antonians of all ages have the resources to be healthy, independent, and integrated into community life.

As a participant in the national network of communities, it is the intent of the City of San Antonio to:

- Provide mechanisms to enhance the active engagement of older adults
- Secure a city council resolution to work toward becoming age-friendly
- Establish a Plan of Action that responds to the needs identified by adults 50+ in the community
- Commit to measuring activities, reviewing action plan outcomes and reporting them publicly

We look forward to working with AARP Texas staff and volunteers to ensure that our community has the appropriate infrastructure in place so we can all age with dignity.



## MAYOR RON NIRENBERG 2017-PRESENT

LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

San Antonio is excited to be part of the AARP Texas and the World Health Organization (WHO) Age Friendly Communities network. Along with other selected communities in the nation, San Antonio remains committed to promoting policies to make American cities friendly to aging populations.

San Antonio's population consists of 1.3 million people and over one third is age 50+. San Antonio is known for its diverse population amongst those ages 50+, 48 percent are Hispanic/Latino, 7 percent are African American/Black and 2 percent are Asian.

In 2016, the City Council adopted SA Tomorrow, a 25-year framework that guides the future growth and development of San Antonio. It addresses a wide range of topics that affect how we experience the city. These topics include land use, economic development, housing environmental protection, cultural and historic preservation, transportation and more. In partnership with AARP Texas, City of San Antonio, and SA Tomorrow, our goal is to ensure that San Antonians of all ages have the resources to be healthy, independent, and integrated into community life.

As an active participant in the national network of Age Friendly Communities, it is the intent of the City of San Antonio to:

- Provide mechanisms to enhance the active engagement of older adults
- Secure a city council resolution to work toward becoming age-friendly
- Provide input and support implementation of a Plan of Action that responds to the needs identified by adults 50+ in the community
- Commit to support AARP in measuring activities, reviewing action plan outcomes and reporting them publicly

We look forward to continuing our work with AARP Texas staff and volunteers to ensure that our community has the appropriate infrastructure in place so we can all age with dignity.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**San Antonio: a growing city with a beautiful skyline.**

This summary will:

- State the vision of the Age-Friendly San Antonio Plan,
- Outline the rationale for the development of the plan, and
- Provide a reason for the plan's focus on specific city council districts.

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan envisions that San Antonio lives *la Vida Buena* together and that the city ensures that San Antonians of all ages have the tools and resources to live their best lives possible. To develop the framework for this future, AARP members and nonmembers provided input through listening posts, focus groups, and community and housing surveys. Next, an analysis of existing efforts (e.g. SA2020, SA Tomorrow, and the Successfully Aging and Living in San Antonio, or SALSAs) found that none of these current plans focused on the 50+ community throughout the city. To provide such a focus, the outreach responses were compared to the existing efforts to identify overlapping areas of concern.

Four common issues were identified:

1. Transportation,
2. Housing,
3. Employment/Engagement, and
4. Health.

From there, selected goals and strategies from the existing plans were adopted into as the basis for an age-friendly action plan.

Lastly, research conducted by the Economic Innovation Group (EIG) in their 2016 Distressed Communities Index found that San Antonio ranks in the top ten cities with the largest number of residents living in distressed zip codes. Moreover, when evaluated for spatial inequality, EIG identified San Antonio as the most unequal city of 100 largest American cities.

As such, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan focuses its implementation in the city council districts 1, 4 and 5, which include some of San Antonio's most vulnerable and underserved residents.

# COMMUNITY PROFILE



**San Antonio's rich history includes the Mission San José, a World Heritage Site.**

Early settlers founded the San Antonio de Béxar presidio in 1718. The city's unique history, in large part, comes from the settlement of many different groups of people: Native Americans, Spaniards, Canary Islanders, Anglos, Germans and Mexicans. In addition to being the capital of former Spanish Texas, San Antonio has several Spanish missions and includes the Spanish Governor's Palace as well as San Fernando Cathedral, which the Canary Islanders founded in 1731 under the name of the villa of San Fernando de Béxar. Perhaps more well-known, Anglo Texas traces its roots to the Texas Revolution. San Antonio was the site of many battles in this war of independence from Mexico, including the popularized battle at the Alamo.

In 1837, the city became the seat of the Republic of Texas. Germans also left their mark on San Antonio. Located in Texas's German belt, the city was a destination for many. The King William Historic District

and other spaces, like Beethoven Hall, are examples of their influence. Finally, after 1910, San Antonio's Mexican population exploded. The Mexican Revolution was a springboard for this immigration, and the city continues to see growth among its Mexican-American residents.

San Antonio has a population of 1,436,697. It is the seventh largest city in the United States and second in Texas. As of 2015, per the Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the city is 63.8% Hispanic or Latino. White non-Hispanic is 24.8%, Black or African American is 6.7% and Asian is 3.9%.

San Antonio is business-friendly. Business interests align with its policies on tax abatement, pollution control property and freeport exemption. Likewise, the city is a major tourist destination. Attractions, like the River Walk and Alamo, bring visitors from everywhere. Finally, San Antonio is

a hub for the military: It is the home of Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base and Randolph Brooks City-Base as well as neighbor to Camp Bullis and Camp Stanley. In recent years, the local economy expanded to include cybersecurity, technology, a larger health industry and a burgeoning financial services industry. Thus, San Antonio, with a more diverse economy, now attracts more in-state and out-of-state migration.

The City of San Antonio has a manager-council form of government. There are 10 city council members, who receive election per their respective districts. Likewise, the mayor receives election on an at-large basis. The city council votes for the city manager and reports to that person. The mayor and city council make policy decisions while the city manager implements policy and performs day-to-day operations. San Antonio is the only large city to maintain a manager-council form of government. Until

2015, the city council received payment of \$20.00 per weekly meeting while the mayor received \$50.00 per weekly meeting. Two years ago, voters elected to pay city council members \$45,000 per year and the mayor \$65,000 per year. A city council member may serve up to four two-year terms (eight years) as well as the mayor.

Prior to 1977, the city council received election on an at-large basis as well. The result was a limited number of people of color on the city council. The city's current single-member city council districts came from a petition for a voting rights act. San Antonio voters preferred these kinds of districts, and the first city council, under this system, gave way to a majority-minority city council, which better represented the city's population. In 1981, voters elected Mexican-American Henry Cisneros as the Mayor of San Antonio.



**No trip to San Antonio is complete without a stroll along the renowned River Walk.**

# INTRODUCTION



**As we plan for San Antonio's future, we must focus on residents to ensure they always live *la Vida Buena*.**

## VISION

San Antonio is living *la Vida Buena* together and assuring that all San Antonians, 50+ and their families, have the tools and resources to live their best lives possible.

## VALUES

The values underlying *la Vida Buena* and the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan are:

- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Community
- Equality
- Fitness
- Job Opportunity
- Nutrition
- Preservation
- Safety

## METHOD

In *The Upside of Aging: How Long Life Is Changing the World of Health, Work, Innovation, Policy, and Purpose*, former San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros declared that San Antonio was ready to become “A City for All Ages.” The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan aims to fulfill this promise.

To do so, an analysis of existing city plans was conducted. These plans include: SA2020, SA Tomorrow, and the Successfully Aging and Living in San Antonio (SALSA) Initiative. Rather than duplicating efforts to improve livability, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan seeks to build on these efforts by targeting and tailoring particular plans to the 50+ community.

## FRAMEWORK

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the framework for defining the features that make a city age-friendly. These features were categorized into eight domains of livability and a five-year process was created for cities to earn the age-friendly designation. AARP, as the U.S. affiliate of the WHO's global network, has tailored that process for the United States and this San Antonio Age-Friendly Action Plan has selected and focuses on those domains that best align with existing plans and needs for the 50+ community of San Antonio.

## SA2020

In 2010, the City of San Antonio rolled out its SA2020 initiative, which was designed to transform San Antonio into a city of the 21st century. Bringing together an unprecedented number of engaged citizens from various ages and economic backgrounds, SA2020 is a measurable outlook for the future. The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan took inspiration from selected metrics from SA2020 in forming its own unique goals, strategies and measurements. The selected metrics are identified in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: SA2020 METRICS**

Selected Cause(s)	Indicator(s)	2010 Baseline(s)	2020 Target(s)
Transportation	A) Increase Complete Streets B) Increase Use of Public Transit C) Decrease Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	A) 2100 streets B) 41 million C) 20.9 VMT avg. per person	A) 6200 streets B) 2,126,058,000 C) 18.8 VMT avg. per person
Neighborhoods	A) Improve Housing and Transportation Affordability Index B) Increase Walkability C) Improve Access to Parks and Green Spaces	A) 800 B) 44 Walk Score C) 32%	A) 994 B) 53 Walk Score C) 50%
Health & Fitness	A) Increase Access to Healthcare B) Reduce Rate of Diabetes C) Reduce Rate of Obesity	A) 75.2% B) 13.5% C) 35.1%	A) 82.9% B) 12.2% C) 31.6%
Civic Engagement; Economic Competitiveness; and Family Well-Being	Increase Volunteerism	23.3%	28.4%
Arts & Culture	Increase Attendance for Arts and Culture	1750	3600
Community Safety	Increase Attendance at Community Safety Meetings	1009	3438

## SA TOMORROW

By 2015, population estimates were indicating that San Antonio would nearly double in size by 2040 with an additional million San Antonians for the city to serve. To prepare for this anticipated growth and build upon its SA2020 plans, San Antonio developed its SA Tomorrow initiative. SA Tomorrow is comprised of three plans:

- A comprehensive plan that addresses land use, urban design, and municipal policy to ensure that city resources and incentive programs can accommodate for growth while maintaining a high level of service to residents.
- A sustainability plan that focuses on economic, environmental, and social issues to develop the roadmap for both city government and the community toward a sustainable San Antonio.
- A multi-modal transportation plan to provide a strategy for a dynamic, balanced, and forward-thinking strategy covering all modes of transportation.

Between the selected age-friendly domains of livability, SA2020's causes and indicators, and the comprehensive plan elements of SA Tomorrow, the San Antonio Age-Friendly Action Plan began to focus on the overlapping areas of concern as reflected in Table 2.

## SALSA INITIATIVE

The Successfully Aging and Living in San Antonio (SALSA) Initiative is developing a plan that focuses on an age-friendly city for senior (60+) residents. However, to be more inclusive and age-friendly, SALSA should also include residents 50+ and their families. Some collaborators on this Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan also serve on the SALSA's steering committee and various subcommittees and will use these roles to influence the development of SALSA.

According to the SALSA initiative, its workgroups include the following:

1. Cross-workgroup
2. Socialization, Engagement, Health, and Nutrition
3. Caregiver Support and Service Providers
4. Transportation
5. Housing and Built Environment

As a partner with SALSA, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan seeks to work in tandem with these workgroups.

Moreover, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan seeks to integrate SALSA's efforts along with those efforts of SA2020 and SA Tomorrow to most effectively ensure an age-friendly outcome and a cooperative endeavor.



The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan seeks to foster collaboration with other planning initiatives.

<b>Table 2: SA TOMORROW ELEMENTS &amp; SA2020 METRICS</b>			
<b>JOB &amp; ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS</b>	<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH &amp; WELLNESS</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>TRANSPORTATION &amp; CONNECTIVITY</b>
Increase Volunteerism	Increase Access to Healthcare	Improve Housing & Transportation Affordability Index Scores	Increase Complete Streets
	Reduce Rate of Diabetes	Increase Walkability	Increase Use of Public Transit
	Reduce Rate of Obesity	Improve Access to Parks and Green Spaces	Decrease Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

# COLLABORATORS

## ADVISORY BOARD & VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

<b>Don Castellano-Hoyt</b>	<b>Irma Mireles</b>
<b>Julia Castellano-Hoyt</b>	<b>Lupita Montez</b>
<b>Alex Davila</b>	<b>Ray Montez</b>
<b>Gloria Davila</b>	<b>John Vasquez</b>
<b>Carlos Gonzalez</b>	<b>Maria Vasquez</b>

## KEY COLLABORATORS

### Henry Cisneros

Former Mayor, San Antonio; Former Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Contributing Author of *The Upside of Aging: How Long Life Is Changing the World of Health, Work, Innovation, Policy, and Purpose*.

### Roberto Treviño

Councilman, San Antonio City Council District 1

### Rey Saldaña

Councilman, San Antonio City Council District 4

### Shirley Gonzales

Councilwoman, San Antonio City Council District 5

### Ron Nirenberg

Mayor, San Antonio; Former Councilman, San Antonio City Council District 8

### Ruben Lizalde

Former Assistant, Former Mayor Ivy Taylor

### Ron Garza

Former Director, Nutrition Centers, City of San Antonio

### Rebecca Pacini

Senior Transportation Planner, Vision Zero Initiative, Department of Transportation and Capital Improvements, City of San Antonio

### Nicki Ramos

Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation, City of San Antonio

### Leroy Alloway

Director, Government and Community Relations, VIA Metropolitan

## PLANNING COMMITTEES & WORK GROUPS

### SALSA Steering Committee

San Antonio Area Foundation

### SALSA Housing Work Group

San Antonio Area Foundation

### SALSA Transportation Work Group

San Antonio Area Foundation

### Mayor's Housing Task Force Work Group, Special Populations

Office of Mayor Ron Nirenberg

### San Antonio Housing Authority Board

San Antonio Housing Authority

### SA Tomorrow, Sustainability Committee

City of San Antonio

### Joint Commission on Elderly Affairs

City of San Antonio & Bexar County

### Vision Zero Committee

City of San Antonio

### Cristina Balli

Executive Director, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center

### Molly Cox

Director, SA2020

### Michelle Lugalía-Hollen

Programs Director, San Antonio Area Foundation

### Jennifer Moriarty

Consultant, Successfully Aging and Living in San Antonio (SALSA) Initiative

### Clarissa Ramon

Community Impact Manager, Google

### Ramiro Salazar

Director, San Antonio Public Library System

### Caterina Velasquez

Outreach Coordinator, Bibliotech of Bexar County

### Barbara Witte-Howell

Chair, Joint Commission on Elderly Affairs

# RESIDENT INPUT & FEEDBACK



Resident input and feedback was a critical component of the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan.

## RESIDENT COLLABORATORS

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan is a culmination of efforts to convene. Specifically, listening sessions, focus groups and surveys encompass the input from residents throughout the city.

## FOCUS GROUPS DATES & LOCATIONS

08/16/2014	Frank Garrett Community Center
09/18/2014	Mission Library
11/18/2014	St. Vincent DePaul
08/07/2015	Studio One
09/14/2015	Sul Ross Middle School
10/27/2015	San Antonio OASIS

## LISTENING POSTS DATES & LOCATIONS

03/05/2014	San Fernando Cathedral	03/28/2015	Cesar Chavez March
03/30/2014	Síclovia near Rosario's Restaurant	03/29/2015	Síclovia off Alamo Street
04/24/2014	PacFest	04/13/2015	San Antonio Food Bank
05/17/2014	Rosedale Park	04/16/2015	Regal Cinema Cielo Vista
07/28/2014	Majestic Theater	04/23/2015	Palo Alto College
09/28/2014	Alamo Plaza	05/16/2015	Rosedale Park
10/04/2014	Traders Village San Antonio	06/25/2015	San Antonio Food Bank
10/09/2014	George Gervin Center	06/30/2015	City Base Cinema
10/18/2014	AT&T Center	08/15/2015	Woodlawn Theater
10/24/2014	Regal Cinema Cielo Vista	10/11/2015	Traders Village San Antonio
12/04/2014	Alameda Theater	11/01/2015	Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center
12/13/2014	Guadalupe Theater	11/07/2015	AT&T Center
01/08/2015	McCrealles Mall	12/02/2015	AT&T Center
01/23/2015	Regal Cinema Cielo Vista	12/12/2015	Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center
01/31/2015	AT&T Center	12/19/2015	Regal Cinema Cielo Vista

# KEY TAKEAWAYS



Residents age 50+ provided input in various ways.



Consensus was easy to find in among residents.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The focus groups and listening points allowed residents to provide valuable input and feedback about the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan. The key takeaways from the focus groups and listening posts were as follows.

## FOCUS GROUPS

Participants listed their four top priorities for San Antonio: Transportation, Housing, Employment/Engagement, and Health. This aligns with the top priorities identified in the AARP Livability Survey for San Antonio.

## LISTENING POSTS

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Residents from San Antonio's poorest areas (all located in the inner city) identified the lack of accessible routes as their most important concern. However, residents from the wealthier areas of the city felt that the most important issue was the timing of routes.

### **HOUSING**

Residents found a major needs gap in housing rehabilitation, especially for those living in older housing stock and expressing a desire to age in place.

### **EMPLOYMENT/ENGAGEMENT**

Residents considered training and assistance accessing information as top priorities for San Antonio's 50-plus community.

### **HEALTH**

Inner-city residents expressed that their neighborhoods lacked safe, accessible spaces for exercise and activity.

# IMPLEMENTATION & INFORMATION

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will be implemented throughout the city with a particular focus in San Antonio City Council Districts 1, 4 and 5.

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will require the coordinated efforts of the city along with partners in the nonprofit sector and community-based organizations. As this plan supplements existing plans, most of the implementation has already been assigned.

## OTHER INFORMATION

The AARP Livability Index measures housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity characteristics. For each category, the Index evaluates current conditions using a diverse set of metric indicators, and considers policies and programs that can enhance community livability over time. Taking a multifaceted approach to assessing livability at the neighborhood level, AARP developed this ground-breaking tool to jump-start community conversations about livability and encourage action by consumers and policymakers alike.

## LIVABILITY DEFINED

A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life.

— The Policy Book: AARP Public Policies

According to the AARP Livability Index, San Antonio's Livability Score is 49.

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan uses the livability scores of our selected domains (transportation, housing, employment/engagement, and health) as baselines.

From there, the collaborative efforts of the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will increase these metrics for San Antonio.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a white floral-patterned shirt, is smiling broadly with her eyes closed. She is standing in a field of bright yellow flowers, with a blurred background of greenery and pinkish-red flowers. Her arms are raised behind her head.

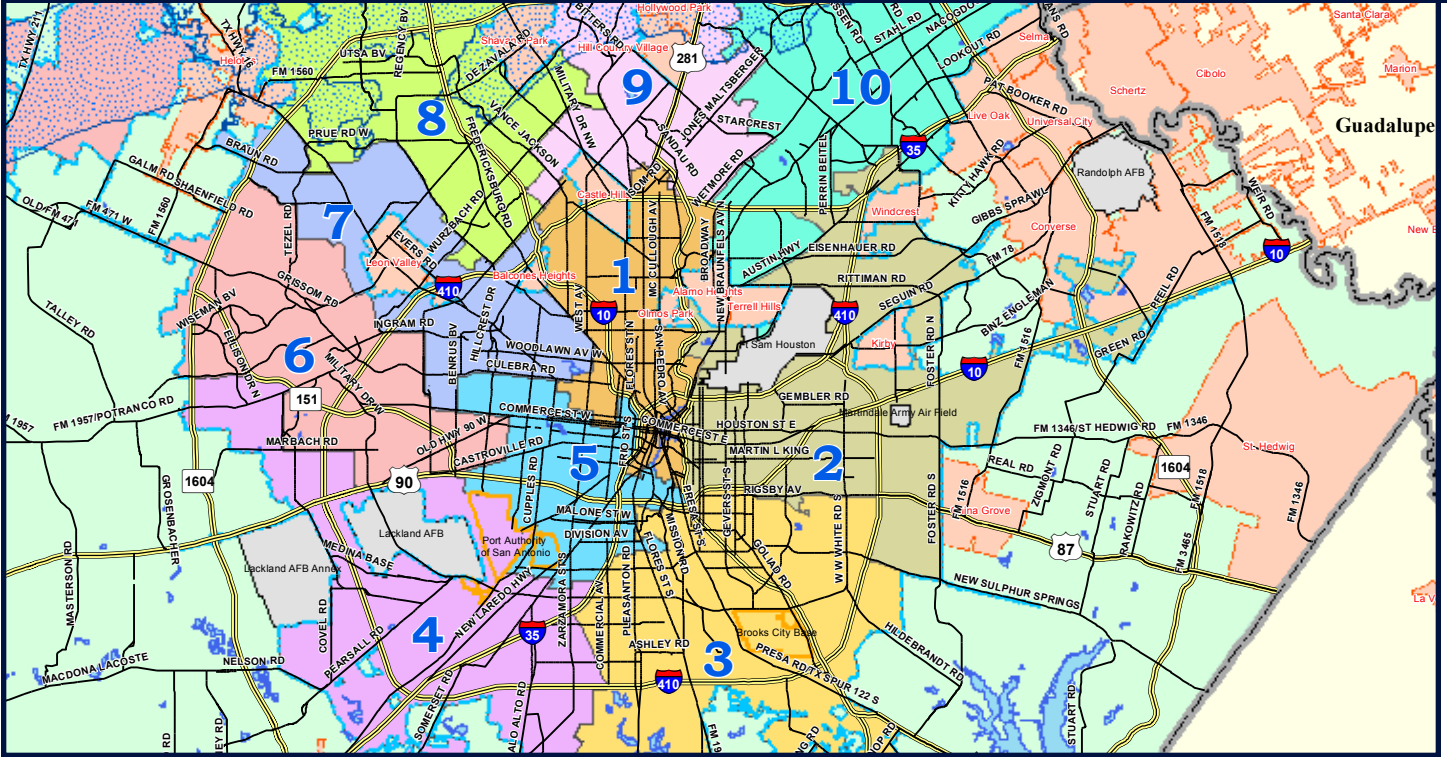
“

**In 1900 average life expectancy was forty-seven. Today it's seventy-eight, and if you make it to age sixty-five, you can expect to live about nineteen years more.**

”

— Jo Ann Jenkins, CEO of AARP  
and author of *Disrupt Aging* (2016)

# TARGETED CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS



**Targeting focuses our efforts to be more effective and have an equalizing impact across San Antonio.**

As we make recommendations to improve our city, we must decide where those improvements take place. In assessing the city of San Antonio, we must also confront the reality that inequality exists between neighborhoods.

As such, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan targets three San Antonio City Council Districts: Districts 1, 4, and 5. These districts represent the most vulnerable, distressed, and underserved communities in the city.

Targeting these districts also informed the decision to focus efforts on the selected domains of livability (transportation, housing, employment/engagement, and health). Since these efforts will have the greatest impact on the targeted districts, they will also have a positive impact in the disparities and spatial inequality between neighborhoods.

We intend to form a cooperative effort to make San Antonio more equitable in the following ways:

1. Collaborate with existing efforts on the collection of data and identification of baselines and targets regarding common goals and strategies,
2. Work together with these efforts on the creation of a more livable city,
3. Incorporate this work into the city's and districts' approaches towards livability and
4. Include as many 50+ residents through an emphasis on effective community engagement.

The long-term goal is to commit our efforts to these targeted areas so that these communities can share in San Antonio's prosperity.

# CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 1

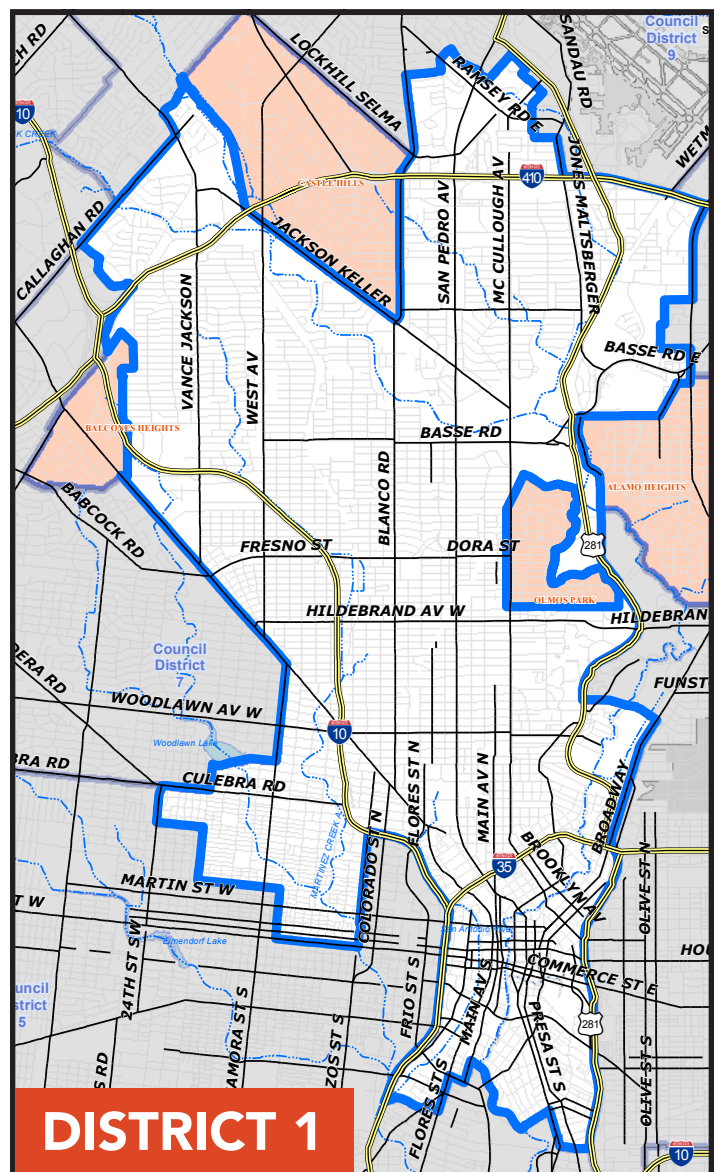


City Council District 1 covers major tourist attractions and much of the city's history.

City Council District 1 spans from downtown to the north central area and includes much of the early history of San Antonio from its founding in 1718. Today, District 1 is 25 square miles, has a population of 145,562 (72.6% Hispanic/Latino, 22.4% White, 2.9% Black), and has a per capita income of \$21,987.

With its rich history, City Council District 1 draws tourists and locals to its various historical sites, a large farmers market, the renewed Hemisfair Park (1968 World's Fair), and renowned River Walk.

For residents, City Council District 1 includes mostly older housing stock with little new, affordable housing. San Antonio's growth has increased development in the area, but like many other distressed neighborhoods this has led to gentrification. Upscale developments either displace poor residents or raise property values to a level that many residents cannot afford. Older residents continue to own or rent the older housing stock, which is now in need of major repair, retrofitting, maintenance and painting.



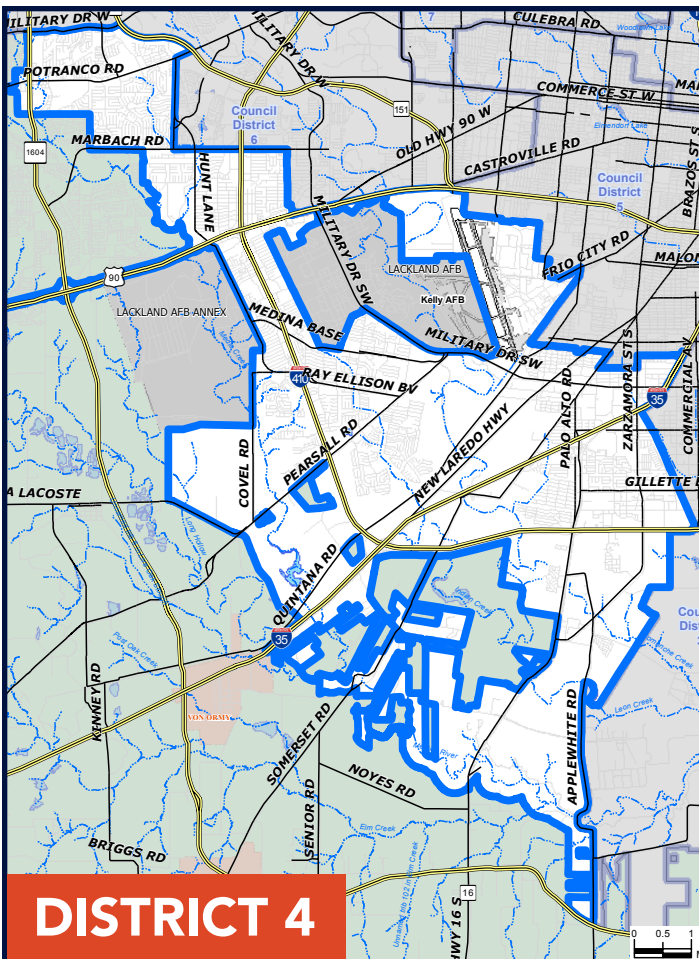
# CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4



Pearsall Park shows the impact a community can have.

City Council District 4 includes a significant amount of federal land, notably Lackland Air Force Base and Port San Antonio (formerly Kelly Air Force Base). District 4 sits at 61 square miles with a population of 168,223 (81.2% Hispanic/Latino, 12.3% White, 4.5% Black), and has a per capita income of \$16,316.

City Council District 4 has a history of social mobility as Kelly Air Force Base was once one of San Antonio's largest employers and was instrumental in lifting many Hispanic San Antonians into the middle class. Today, District 4 includes Palo Alto College, a community college that hosts many city events, and Pearsall Park, a key focus of the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan.



The local community aims to improve infrastructure and increase private investment. Pearsall Park exemplifies these endeavors in action. Once a land dump for the city, the park bears the fruits of redevelopment: curated green spaces, a playground, a zip line, and a children's water park. Being active is now easier for the community, families have a space to recreate and the private sector has more incentive to invest.

In addition to Pearsall Park, the community is targeting undeveloped lands as opportunities for walkable, mixed-use development and reevaluating suburban-style development, which residents view as a hindrance to livability.

# CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

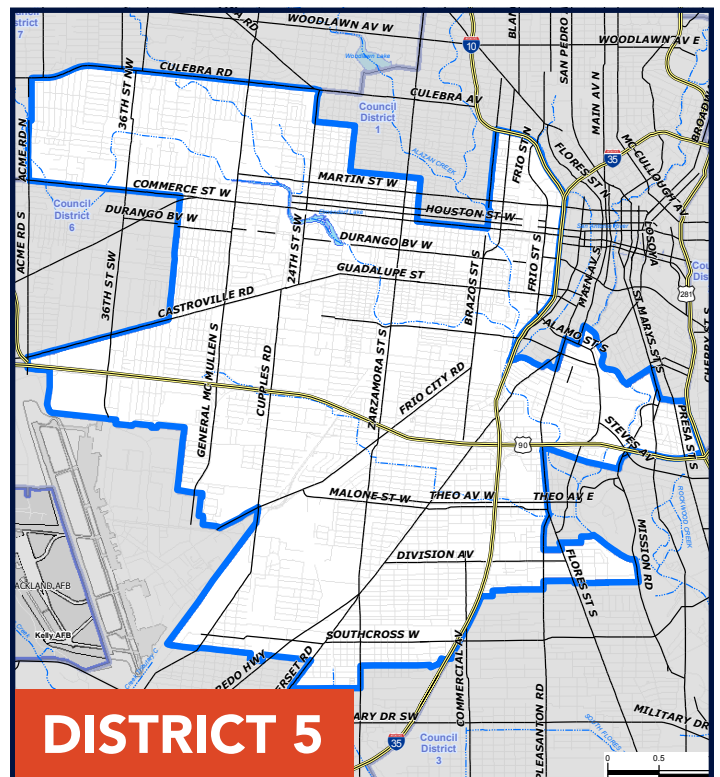


City Council District 5 includes architectural gems like Our Lady of the Lake University.

San Antonio City Council District 5 is home to the city's Westside. Of particular concern, this area includes some of the highest poverty in the city with the district at a 33.5% poverty rate. District 5 is 22 square miles with a population of 149,165 (93.8% Hispanic/Latino, 4.8 White, 0.8% Black), and has a per capita income of \$13,257.

The years of lacking investment in the district has led to several needs to restore the Westside. Currently, a number of recent initiatives are aimed at improving District 5's older housing stock. For example, "Let's Paint D5!" is an effort to paint and repair dilapidation to reveal the Westside's rich heritage while "Let's Light Up D5!" is an effort to install, repair, or replace streetlights.

The Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan seeks to transform District 5 by connecting it with other inner city redevelopment.



# BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION



**Another amazing view of the San Antonio skyline.**

San Antonio has one of the fastest growing populations in the United States. Our population is projected to double by 2040. To accommodate for this growth, the city will have to adapt to an increasing number residents who will include even more residents age 50+. The Age-Friendly San Antonio Plan will convene people, organizations and initiatives to respond this anticipated change.

To create *la Vida Buena* in San Antonio, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will organize four task forces comprised of volunteers. These task forces will focus on our selected domains of livability and partner with relevant stakeholders (e.g. government agencies, non-profits, school districts, faith-based organizations, etc.).

Ensuring citizen participation in the public policy process can be a challenge for any city. Most often, community engagement breaks down when communication systems fail to deliver information to residents or prevent community feedback from reaching city hall. San Antonio strives to keep its residents informed and engaged in the city planning process so that those plans remain aligned with community needs.

AARP has an excellent reputation in keeping residents engaged and communication. As a result, the AARP task forces will oversee ways to disseminate information through the most effective means possible. This will include organizing and sponsoring events with community partners to ensure the exchange of information.

Specifically, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will collaborate with existing initiatives and programs in the targeted City Council Districts. In District 1, we will partner with the “Under1Roof” pilot program. In District 4, we will focus on walkability, economic mixed-land use and Pearsall Park. In District 5, we will advocate for the Vision Zero initiative.

While collaboration will be the initial focus, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan intends these task forces to go even further. They will identify opportunities within the selected domains, forge partnerships, develop strategies, and track the involvement of members on related boards, commissions, committees, etc.

In sum, all these efforts aim to ensure that San Antonio considers the needs and concerns of its 50+ residents in every facet of civic life.



**Tower of the Americas stands 750 feet high.**



“

**Well-designed, livable communities promote well-being and sustain economic growth, and they make for happier, healthier residents—of all ages.**

”

— AARP’s and the World Health Organization’s Shared Vision

# TRANSPORTATION



**Transportation is key to keeping residents age 50+ self-sufficient and engaged in their communities.**

While San Antonio can boast a lower cost of transportation (\$9,743) for its residents in comparison to the median U.S. neighborhood (\$10,791), transportation remains a challenge for San Antonio.

**44** **Livability Index Score**

According to the 2013-2017 Bond by the City of San Antonio, there was a slight increase in the number of complete streets every year between 2010 and 2014, but this rate cannot keep pace with the city's growth nor are these improvements made consistently throughout the city. Ridership on the VIA Metropolitan Transit's bus routes remains stagnant while the per capita vehicle miles traveled daily has increased.

These concerns underlie the need for improving San Antonio's transit system. Some areas for improvement outlined in

the AARP Livability Index are: convenient transportation options, lower speed limits, and accessible system design.

Partnering with the Vision Zero Initiative, AARP and San Antonio hope to further an age-friendly community through emphasis on walking, cycling, and driving safely. SA2020 and SA Tomorrow also provide opportunities for collaboration. In the end, the goal is to advocate for increased awareness and education of transportation options for use among the 50+ population.

**Table 3: TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN**

GOALS & PARTNERS	STRATEGIES	METRICS
To advocate for increased funding for transportation options.	A) To address the gap of transportation services provided in the targeted districts.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperatives</li> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• Non-profits</li> <li>• VIA Metropolitan Transit</li> </ul>	B) To champion expanded transportation services.	Yes or No
	C) To coalesce around increased funding at the state and local levels.	Yes or No
To raise awareness and advocate for the expansion of the bicycle sharing program and bicycle safety.	A) To offer courses in bicycle safety.	3 courses per district
	B) To widen the area of availability for resident use of bicycles.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bicycle retailers</li> <li>• Bicycle safety organizations</li> <li>• San Antonio Police Dept.</li> <li>• VIA Metropolitan Transit</li> </ul>		
To reduce the number of accidents and fatalities involving pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles.	A) To advocate for a strengthening in the Complete Streets ordinance of 2011.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP's Drivers Education</li> <li>• Alamo Area Council of Governments</li> <li>• Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization</li> <li>• Call-a-Ride 4 Vets</li> <li>• City of San Antonio's Vision Zero Initiative</li> <li>• Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales</li> <li>• Jefferson Outreach</li> <li>• Lyft, Uber, Taxis</li> <li>• Non-profits</li> <li>• Northeast Senior Assistance</li> <li>• PRESA Community Center</li> <li>• SA2020</li> <li>• SALSA Initiative</li> <li>• San Antonio Police Dept.</li> <li>• Southeast Community Outreach for Older People</li> <li>• Southwest Community Outreach for Older People</li> <li>• VIA Metropolitan Transit</li> </ul>	B) To advocate for improvements in crosswalks, walkways, bikeways, and roadways.	Yes or No
	C) To communicate the importance of safety through drivers' safety courses and administration of the Vision Zero pledge.	3 courses per district; number of administered pledges
	D) To inform citizens through speakers' bureaus, about the Vision Zero initiative and how they can participate.	3 speakers' bureaus per district
	E) To offer information on public and private transportation options.	1 meeting per district
	F) To partner with Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales and the City of San Antonio on the Vision Zero Initiative to raise awareness and find remedies for accidents and fatalities involving pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles.	2 meetings per year

# HOUSING



**For San Antonians to age in place, they must be able to repair, maintain, and modify their homes as they age.**

In San Antonio, roughly two-thirds of the housing stock consists of single family homes while the other third is comprised of multi-family units. While homeownership rates are high even in San Antonio's poorer neighborhoods, much of the housing stock needs costly foundation and roof repairs.

Seniors trying to keep up with living expenses (e.g. healthcare, medicine, food, mortgages/rent, transportation, etc.) often cannot find the funds to retrofit, weatherize, repair, or maintain their homes as they age.

By bringing together various non-profit partners, we can produce a comprehensive catalog of existing services, criteria for eligibility, and service areas covered. Such resources can make home improvements more attainable for all residents.

## **57** Livability Index Score

With widespread consensus that affordable housing needs vastly outstrip investment, city and county leaders have proposed various incentives for public/private partnerships. Now, advocacy is required for affordable housing bonds and an increased commitment to the housing needs residents age 50+ in San Antonio.

Currently, San Antonio needs an additional 153,000 affordable housing units, but that need will grow with the city's population. By 2040, San Antonio will add 1.1 million more residents, doubling its population. Housing must remain a focus for the long-term.

**Table 4: HOUSING ACTION PLAN**

GOALS & PARTNERS	STRATEGIES	METRICS
To increase affordable housing.	A) To advocate for affordable housing and mixed-use neighborhoods for the age 50+ community.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• County of Bexar</li> <li>• For-profit housing agencies</li> <li>• Local Initiatives Support Corporations</li> <li>• Non-profit housing agencies</li> <li>• San Antonio Housing Authority</li> <li>• The National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders</li> </ul>	B) To testify before the City of San Antonio’s committees on the city bond issue.	Yes or No
	C) To testify before the County of Bexar’s committees on the county bond issue.	Yes or No
	D) To identify senior housing developers with whom to meet and discuss affordable housing.	Yes or No
To retrofit and maintain housing for aging in place.	A) To provide information on how to retrofit.	3 informational sessions per district
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Under1Roof” program</li> <li>• Christian Senior Services</li> <li>• City Public Services Energy</li> <li>• Councilman Robert Treviño</li> <li>• Merced Housing</li> <li>• Texas Ramps</li> </ul>	B) To identify agencies, businesses and non-profits that offer retrofitting services.	Yes or No
To amend the United Development Code to consider the needs of the age 50+ community.	A) Attend the Mayor’s Housing Policy Taskforce and advocate for age-friendly housing policies.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP</li> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• Joint Commission on Elderly Affairs</li> </ul>		

# EMPLOYMENT / ENGAGEMENT



***La Vida Buena* includes engaged communities.**

To create *la Vida Buena* for everyone in “a city for all ages,” we must harness the talents, creativity, and contributions of every resident.

By creating opportunities to volunteer at a neighborhood level and identifying the skills, resources, and organizations that are essential spring boards for further involvement, we may encourage greater participation in our city life.

Texas consistently rates last or next-to-last in voting participation. San Antonio, in particular, has low voter turnout in state, municipal, county, school boards, Alamo Colleges board, and other government elections. A consistent effort is necessary to register voters and educate them on the candidates and issues in our city.

As economic opportunities expand in San Antonio, the need for education, training and retraining grows exponentially. AARP offers classes, placement, and training that may assist in acquiring a job. Likewise, partnerships can be formed to offer job fairs

**34** **Livability  
Index  
Score**

and career counseling tailored to age 50+ residents.

Another area where our city can benefit from age-friendly efforts is entrepreneurship. For all the innovative products and services, a person must have some basic knowledge and expertise to establish, launch, finance, and manage their own business. Many different resources are currently available, but we can do a better job compiling those resources in an easy-to-use format that may help a new business owner on the road to success.



**Empowering entrepreneurs keeps San Antonio thriving.**

## CASE STUDY ON OUTREACH

United Way of San Antonio identified a number of retired individuals who were willing to contribute to the city’s well-being, but did not know how to engage in volunteer activities or what the process or expectations were to serve on a board or commission. To foster volunteerism, they created a leadership development program to connect people with volunteer opportunities that matched their interests and to familiarize them with the responsibilities and rewards of volunteerism.

Their program quickly faced a challenge in recruiting the city’s Latino population and other communities of color. Barriers to participation included: a lack of transportation; a lack of finances (many non-profit boards require board members to contribute or raise a large sum of money); or failure to know the elected officials who might appoint them to a city board or commission.

**Table 5: EMPLOYMENT / ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

GOALS & PARTNERS	STRATEGIES	METRICS
To increase volunteerism.	A) To create speakers’ bureaus that will provide information and education on civic issues, community services and potential resources as well as train with corresponding materials in relevant spaces.	2 informational sessions per district on bond issues, fraud protection, livable cities plan, and retrofitting for aging in place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP San Antonio</li> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• San Antonio City Clerk</li> <li>• District Attorney</li> <li>• Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Merced Housing</li> <li>• SA2020</li> <li>• SALSA Initiative</li> </ul>	B) To create committees focused on the selected domains of livability to inform, track, evaluate, and champion the stated goals, strategies, and metrics.	Yes or No
	C) To encourage members to participate on city, county, and civic boards and commissions.	1 presentation per district
	D) To host an event that shows appreciation for volunteers.	Yes or No
	E) To increase members’ participation in events sponsored by AARP and community partners.	Yes or No

Table continued on next page.

GOALS & PARTNERS	STRATEGIES	METRICS
<p>To foster a culture of responsible citizenship through voter education.</p>	<p>A) To disseminate information on policy platforms of local, state, and federally elected officials.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP</li> <li>• AARP of San Antonio</li> <li>• AARP Texas</li> <li>• Bexar County Elections Dept.</li> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• League of Women Voters</li> <li>• Neighborhood Associations</li> <li>• Palo Alto College</li> <li>• SA2020</li> </ul>	<p>B) To host a mayoral and bond-issue forum.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
	<p>C) To increase the number of deputized voter registrars.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
	<p>D) To increase voter registration in the targeted City Council Districts.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
<p>To increase opportunities for education, training, and employment for the age 50+ community.</p>	<p>A) To gather information and develop an asset map to show available resources.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
	<p>B) To host a job fair in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission for the age 50+ community.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP San Antonio</li> <li>• Alamo Colleges</li> <li>• Texas Workforce Commission</li> </ul>	<p>C) To host AARP job search structured workshops.</p>	<p>4 workshops per district</p>
	<p>D) To host AARP TEK workshops.</p>	<p>8 workshops per district</p>
	<p>E) To sponsor a Senior Community Employment Program.</p>	<p>1 per district</p>
<p>To assist entrepreneurs in locating resources.</p>	<p>A) To develop a collection of resources on AARP of San Antonio's website.</p>	<p>Yes or No</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of San Antonio</li> <li>• Launch</li> <li>• List Fund</li> <li>• Maestro Center People's Fund</li> <li>• SA2020</li> <li>• Small Business Association</li> <li>• The University of Texas at San Antonio Business Development</li> </ul>		



In many ways, *La Vida Buena* begins with the health of our residents and our community.

Among many health indicators, obesity and diabetes remain especially relevant in San Antonio.

The city is on track to meet SA2020's goal of 31.6% for the rate of obesity. Although this rate has fluctuated from 28.5% to 35.1% over the past few years, efforts like *Síclovia* and the Bexar County Health Improvement Plan remain critical.

Regarding diabetes, SA2020's goal is a rate of 12.2% despite a slight up-tick in recent years. A positive endeavor is the YMCA of Greater San Antonio's Diabetes Prevention Program, which is doing good work and provides signs of hope.

**52** **Livability  
Index  
Score**

AARP of San Antonio must partner with SA2020 on these health issues. Specifically, increasing walkable, complete streets, making accessible parks and green spaces and facilitating accessible, affordable healthcare are all opportunities for partnership. Improving San Antonio's health requires redoubled efforts to provide healthy alternatives around diet, exercise and healthcare.

**Table 6: HEALTH ACTION PLAN**

GOALS & PARTNERS	STRATEGIES	METRICS
To help reduce obesity by making healthy options available.	A) To encourage the establishment and expansion of bicycle trails, bikeways and parks.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization</li> <li>• Chef Adan</li> <li>• Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center</li> <li>• Health Collaborative</li> <li>• H-E-B</li> <li>• La Avenida Guadalupe</li> <li>• SA2020</li> <li>• San Antonio Housing Authority</li> <li>• San Antonio Area Food Bank</li> <li>• San Antonio Public Library</li> <li>• Walkability Institute</li> <li>• Young Men’s Christian Association</li> <li>• Young Women’s Christian Association</li> </ul>	B) To expand Síclovia into Districts 4 and 5 (already in District 1).	Yes or No
	C) To increase access to fruits and vegetables as well as other healthy foods through farmers, mobile, and monthly markets.	Yes or No
	D) To offer more opportunities for dance-oriented exercise.	Yes or No
	E) To promote walkable communities.	2 classes per district on walkable communities through the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
To help reduce diabetes.	A) To educate on nutrition at events hosted by AARP of San Antonio or community partners.	Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetes Association</li> <li>• Diabetes Institute of South Texas</li> <li>• Health Collaborative of Bexar County</li> <li>• San Antonio Metropolitan Health District</li> <li>• University Health Center</li> </ul>	B) To invite organizations that offer diabetes testing and referral to events hosted by AARP of San Antonio or community partners.	Yes or No
	C) To offer healthy alternatives for food and cooking at AARP of San Antonio events.	Yes or No
	D) To partner with organizations to offer education on diabetes.	Yes or No



**Creating *La Vida Buena* involves city planning with an engaged community.**

Regular, accessible and meaningful communication must be embedded as a mission component in San Antonio and lies at the heart of the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan.

Ultimately, the action plan focuses heavily on engagement given its San Antonio's lowest scoring domain of livability on the AARP Livability Index. AARP of San Antonio plans to sponsor more events and initiate more correspondence with residents age 50+ through various means, including:

- Publishing events in other organizations' calendars
- Distributing our calendars at said events
- Requesting that partners inform their networks of our activities

- Conducting outreach at churches
- Continuing public service announcements on the radio and television
- Mailing brochures, postcards and monthly bulletins to our membership

Concerning evaluation and measurement, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan will use tools that SA2020 and partners use to implement and collect data on common goals and strategies. Likewise, where resources are lacking, we will develop our own tools to evaluate and measure success.

In the end, the Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan is a community effort to empower every volunteer to be an ambassador in creating *la Vida Buena*.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



AARP of San Antonio.

We would like to acknowledge our staff and volunteers:

- **Lisa Rodriguez**, Associate State Director for Advocacy and Outreach
- **Joe Sanchez**, Associate State Director for Advocacy and Outreach
- **Virginia Elliot**, Senior Programs Assistant
- **Rosie Castro**, Consultant
- **Matthew Rodriguez**, Volunteer, Age-Friendly San Antonio Action Plan





Age-Friendly  
**San Antonio**