

Measure X – Advocating for Older Adults & People with Disabilities Tips, Talking Points, and Data

How to Publicly Comment

- Join the meeting in person or via Zoom. Addresses, dates, times, and Zoom info for all meetings can be found [here](#).
- Wait until the appropriate agenda item. This will be the item that discusses what funding recommendations to make. If you comment to recommend funding senior services when they are not considering funding recommendations, they may cut you off.
- If joining in person, fill out a comment card to be entered into the queue to comment. If joining via Zoom, use the “raise hand” function under the “reactions” button. When called upon, unmute yourself and begin talking.
- Remember, you will only be given two minutes, so practice ahead of time to make sure you don’t go over time. They will cut you off.

Talking Point Suggestions

- I want to thank the Measure X Community Advisory Board (MXCAB) for all the work you have done to solicit input and consider the community’s needs in a thoughtful and respectful way.
- (Or, if speaking at a Board of Supervisors’ meeting) I want to thank the Board of Supervisors for appointing the MXCAB, and for establishing this community-driven and transparent process.
- Thank you for recommending an allocation of funds to services for older adults in Contra Costa County. While we are grateful for this funding, we also recognize the increasing investment that will be required to keep up with the needs of our aging population.
- We are very lucky to have a strong network of nonprofit service providers in this County and a dedicated staff at the Area Agency on Aging that all work together to do the best they can with the resources available.
- **The current Measure X allocation to senior services represents less than 2% of the overall Measure X dollars while older adults make up 24% of the County’s population and are expected to make up a third of the population by 2030.**
- Federal COVID stimulus funding that allowed many service providers to meet this increased need is going away. The need is still there but the funding won’t be.
- **The Area Agency on Aging will lose \$7.9 million dollars in funding for senior services as of September 30, 2024.** This loss will mean nonprofit providers will be faced with the difficult decision of either rationing or discontinuing essential services such as transportation, food, legal services, day programs, protection for those in long-term care, and more.



Talking Point Suggestions (continued)

- The safety net that was built for older adults during the pandemic was the safety net that already needed to be there and was only made possible through federal stimulus funds. If we hope to keep the safety net intact and not have to take away vital services from seniors, the Area Agency on Aging needs additional funding.
- The poverty rate of California's seniors has already started to rise as a result of expiring COVID stimulus funding. **California seniors are now experiencing a 15% poverty rate, which is higher than the 13% rate for California's ages 18-64.**
- This population is often ignored, discarded, and neglected by a lack of investment in making this County a community that allows us all to age with dignity.
- The elders that rely on our current safety net are facing challenges that they have never faced before.
- Many live on fixed incomes that have not kept up with the rising prices of housing, food, gas, and other basic necessities.
- After three years of sheltering at home, many previously mobile seniors are not as physically able as they were prior to the pandemic and need additional services.
- Many lack affordable, accessible transportation to be able to access the services they so desperately need.
- **These are only suggestions. Please feel free to add, delete, or adjust as you see fit. Personal stories are especially impactful, whether it is about you, your family, what you see in your line of work, etc.**

Helpful Data Points

- The only adult day health program in West Contra Costa recently closed, leaving a gaping hole for older adults with physical, language, and cognitive barriers that need to access critical services.
- Meals on Wheels Diablo Region provided over 700,000 meals last year to older adults, an 88% increase since before the pandemic.
- The need for fall prevention home safety modifications has increased by 150% since before the pandemic. AAA funding for these services typically runs out months before the end of the year.
- Seniors are the fastest growing sub-population of unhoused individuals and the largest population of first-time unhoused in the County.
- 7.5% of people under the age of 65 have a disability.
- Contra Costa has an estimated 132,000 family caregivers whose care is valued at \$2.6 billion.
- The California Department of Public Health estimates that the increase of people 55 and older with Alzheimer's disease will increase by 147% from 2019 to 2040 in Contra Costa.

