



LARIMER COUNTY
OFFICE ON AGING

Area Plan

2024 – 2027

1501 Blue Spruce Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(970) 498-7750

[Larimer.gov/seniors](https://larimer.gov/seniors)



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INTRODUCTION

The following document is the Larimer County Office on Aging's response to the State Unit on Aging Policy Directive 22-05 to submit an area plan for state fiscal years 2024-2027 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2027). Each Area Agency on Aging in Colorado is required to submit an area plan using the instructions and required elements provided from the State Unit on Aging for purposes of uniformity and continuity. The area plan will be used to inform the development of the State Plan on Aging for federal fiscal years 2024-2027.

Area Agencies on Aging form part of an aging network led by the U.S. Administration on Community Living and the Colorado Department of Human Services State Unit on Aging. Area Agencies on Aging are responsible for providing leadership in identifying gaps and weaknesses in the delivery of services, while fostering expansion of programs for older residents, as well as providing direct funding for public and private agencies that provide services for older residents. The Older Americans Act, originally enacted in 1965, authorizes an array of community services which are funded and coordinated through regional Area Agencies on Aging. Services include nutrition programs, transportation services, in-home services, caregiver support, case management, information and assistance, evidence-based health promotion and education programs, legal assistance, and elder justice.

The designated Area Agency on Aging for Region 2A in Larimer County is the Larimer County Office on Aging. The Office on Aging is located within the Larimer County Department of Human Services under the governing board of the Larimer County Board of County Commissioners. The Larimer County Office on Aging Advisory Council is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and provides additional input for the Agency. Funding for the Office on Aging is primarily through federal and state funds, allocated by the State Unit on Aging using an approved funding formula. Larimer County provides the required match for the grant funds.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Larimer County Office on Aging is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Larimer County and in this role oversees and administers federal and state funds for the provision of services in our community in accordance with the Older Americans Act mandates. The Office on Aging advocates, plans, coordinates, and delivers services for older residents, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers so they may experience their highest quality of life characterized by empowerment, dignity, health, and independence. The Office on Aging proudly dedicates efforts in the following areas:

- We engage and collaborate with internal and external partners in order to find creative solutions to address complex issues.
- We are a trusted source of information for those we serve.
- We engage with marginalized individuals and communities by connecting, breaking down barriers, and creating increased access to resources and services.
- We utilize data and measurable outcomes to plan, develop, and implement programs and services to meet the needs of the individuals we serve.
- We strive to provide leadership and advocacy to help guide our community to effectively meet the opportunities and challenges of an ever-increasing aging population.

The Area Plan is an opportunity to share some of the achievements made in the community by the Office on Aging staff, services, and its partners, highlighting the goal to serve older residents and those living with disabilities across Larimer County. It also gives the Agency a chance to look to the future and focus on areas for growth and innovation that will help meet the needs of our aging population.

Larimer County is a lively and appealing region, providing unique opportunities for older residents. In 2021, adults 60 and older comprised 23.8% of the total Larimer County population. By 2030, this is expected to increase by approximately 17% with over 101,000 adults over 60. To meet the demands of a population that is aging, the Office on Aging must look at local concerns and trends and anticipate what changes need to be made to existing programs, as well as how the Larimer County Office on Aging can enhance service delivery through collaborative efforts, innovative new programs, and evaluation of funding priorities.

To gather feedback on the need for our Area Plan for the future, the Office on Aging sought input from older residents through community conversations that were conducted across the region, key stakeholder focus groups, surveys, input from staff, and the results of the 2022 Community Assessment of Older Adults which was funded through SB21-290 ([Senate Bill 290](#)) dollars.

As the Office on Aging looks forward into what the next four years may bring, staff and leadership are committed to continued support of vital programs for older residents and the development of new programs and service delivery models to meet the evolving needs of the community.

The Larimer County Office on Aging recognizes that the landscape of aging and the role of Area Agencies on Aging is changing as the nation adapts to the demographic shifts of an aging America. Some of these changes include increasing food insecurity, more emphasis on the social determinants of health, and the importance of community-based services in the overall well-being of older residents. Trends continue to prove that now more than ever, there is a need to strengthen and continue to build upon partnerships and funding opportunities that assure the Office on Aging and community partners are prepared to provide and enhance the delivery of community-based services, which has been a key role of the Office on Aging since its inception in 1973.

The Office on Aging recognizes and prioritizes the importance of collaboration and partnerships in serving an increasing number and diversity of older residents. The Larimer County Office on Aging staff and partners remain committed to working with community organizations toward the collective goal of nurturing a community that is a great place to grow up and grow old.

The Office on Aging staff and volunteer advisory council members are actively involved with the Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging, USAging, the Colorado Commission on Aging, and the Colorado State Unit on Aging. By working closely with these advocacy groups, the Office on Aging will be able to help provide input into policies and procedures, enhance services, and position itself to take advantage of opportunities for innovation and change within the Office on Aging as well as externally with our partner organizations.

Due to many factors, but in particular the events that have taken place over the last three years, the need of our older residents is more visible and more prevalent across our community. It is an exciting time to be in aging services given the increased opportunities to examine the services and supports needed by older residents. The Office on Aging is committed to building upon its strong network of community partnerships and its leadership in the community to address the needs of older residents. The Larimer County Office on Aging will work diligently to carry out the key themes in this area plan so that older residents in the region may benefit from a coordinated and person-centered aging network.

The Larimer County Office on Aging proudly follows the Larimer County Department of Human Services mission and values, as well as the Larimer County Guiding Principles.



VISION

We are an inclusive community where everyone thrives.



MISSION

Human Services is responsive, providing timely resources in partnership with our community so individuals and families are healthy, supported, and safe.



STAFF STATEMENT

Our staff is the foundation of our vision and mission. We are committed to the professional development and wellbeing of our staff. We strive for excellence, promote resilience, and encourage our staff to contribute, learn, and grow.

VALUES

Our **values** are the foundation to Human Services and guide us in everything we do. These values influence our attitudes and behaviors.



EXCELLENCE

We seek to be the best we can be. We challenge the status quo and strive to innovate and improve our work in the community we serve.



PARTNERSHIP

We partner with individuals, families, and stakeholders in the community to create inclusive and equitable processes. We seek out and incorporate ideas and input to define shared goals, plans, and outcomes.



INTEGRITY

We take responsibility for our actions. We communicate transparently, regularly, and honestly. We solicit feedback and follow through on our commitments.



EQUITY

We aspire and advocate for the intentional elimination of discrimination in all its forms, at all organizational levels and in our programs, policies, and practices.



DIVERSITY

Diversity in race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physicality, experience, and thought in all staff, volunteers, and partners is paramount. We are committed to full and diverse participation in all programs, processes, and decision making.



RESPONSIVENESS

We listen to find a need or opportunity. We respond to what we learn. We evaluate to understand the impact.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Larimer County will add value to the lives of its citizens today, and in the future, by:

BEING GOOD STEWARDS OF PUBLIC RESOURCES

PROMOTING INNOVATION, ADAPTABILITY, AND COMMITTING TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

PROVIDING CONSISTENT QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

CULTIVATING INCLUSIVE AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

BEING A FULFILLING, ENJOYABLE, AND INCLUSIVE PLACE TO WORK

PUBLIC INPUT

A key component of our area plan is the voice of the community in which services are provided. It is the input of stakeholders like older residents, caregivers, providers of aging services, and key partner organizations that help guide opportunities and activities of the area plan. To that end, the Office on Aging created several opportunities to gather input from stakeholders.

Over the course of four weeks, the Larimer County Office on Aging held six community conversations (or focus groups) with the general public (see Appendix A). The meetings, held in Estes Park, Loveland, Berthoud, Fort Collins, Wellington, and on Zoom, provided an opportunity for residents to share their thoughts and concerns regarding the provision of services for older residents in Larimer County and provide input into the development of the Area Plan. A survey (see Appendix B) was also conducted at each meeting to gather general data on key interest areas of the Larimer County Office on Aging and four discussion questions (see Appendix C) were used to facilitate small group discussions. Approximately 90 participants attended the community conversations, and 132 total surveys were completed (78 from in-person community conversations, 28 from the Larimer County Office on Aging meetings in the Red Feather and Bellvue communities, and 26 completed online from people that were unable to attend a session or attended the Zoom session).

Two additional stakeholder meetings were convened to collect input from professionals and organizations who are providing direct services to older residents and caregivers in the Larimer County community. The survey was administered and conversation was facilitated around the needs of Larimer County utilizing the same small group discussion questions as with the community conversation.

The first meeting was with community partners that receive funding from the Office on Aging to provide services in Larimer County, and the second with the Office on Aging Advisory Council. The Office on Aging Advisory Council is a 17 member council, appointed by the County Commissioners, to advise the Department of Human Services and the Office on Aging on the objectives and intent of the Older Americans Act and other matters that pertain to plans for older residents living in Larimer County. The Advisory Council includes older residents and professionals who are interested in and have experience with the needs of the population served. In addition to Advisory Council members present for the second stakeholder meeting, a county commissioner also participated.

The community conversations were facilitated through a partnership with Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation and its Director, Professor Martin Carcasson. Graduate students worked closely with the Larimer County Office on Aging staff to create the survey and discussion questions. Students were utilized to facilitate the small group discussions to help keep each conversation focused and on-task while allowing participants to share their thoughts and feelings with an impartial party.

In the key stakeholder meetings, attendance ranged from 12-20 participants with the conversations lasting approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. Important themes emerged during both the community conversations as well as in the key stakeholder meetings.

Community Conversations Themes

The analysis of all the data collected through the community conversations (surveys and discussion) identified eight primary themes including:

- Increasing community awareness
- Improving transportation
- Needs and role of caregivers
- Importance of senior centers
- Addressing social isolation
- A call for respect
- Role of technology
- Additional programs and services

Each primary theme is expanded below. For more detailed information on the specific data and comments that sparked these themes, please see the full report (Appendix D).

Key Theme 1: Improving communication

The need for improved communication, particularly about available programs, but also about needs and opportunities, was the most consistent topic of conversation in the small group discussions by a rather significant margin. The results from the initial survey clearly connect the need for improved communication: people are unaware of the different programs available for older residents provided by the Larimer County Office on Aging, and generally, they are seeking better ways to connect to programs and events.

Key Theme 2: Improving transportation

The second most common theme across the small group discussions focused on the importance of improving transportation options. In many cases, numerous participants simply mentioned transportation as a critical issue without much additional commentary. It was identified as a “huge need” and a “massive gap.” The importance of quality transportation to avoid social isolation and public health were particularly emphasized. The need for improved transportation between communities (such as between Estes Park and Fort Collins, and to Boulder and Denver) and at night were mentioned often. Community resources such as VIA, SAINT, and Dial-a-ride were mentioned positively, but overall, the results reflected the need for more options.

Key Theme 3: The critical need and role of caregivers

Overall, participants were clear about the growing importance of caregivers and caregiver support, especially for in-home care. Comments expressed concern about the ability to connect with caregivers, the need to improve the training of caregivers, and hopes about connecting with younger generations. Several participants also had experience as caregivers and discussed the need for more assistance such as support groups, respite care, and self-care.

Key Theme 4: The importance of senior centers

Senior centers were identified by some as the most important hub for information and activity. Discussions linked the senior centers to many of the key topics in this report, such as access to information, connection and addressing isolation, health care and exercise, and transportation. Perhaps the most passionate comments during the discussions were made in Estes Park and Berthoud, where both communities are working to create a collaborative senior network for the residents.

Key Theme 5: Addressing social isolation

Social isolation was a topic prompted by one of the four discussion questions, and when participants were asked for the most important issue, it was mentioned often. Social isolation was also mentioned in conjunction with other key themes, such as the lack of information and transportation options. Many also connected social isolation to volunteerism, both in terms of older residents serving as volunteers, and volunteers helping keep seniors connected. Aging in place, particularly when a spouse has passed and transportation options become limited, can certainly increase the likelihood of isolation.

Key Theme 6: Call for respect

The final discussion question asked participants “What is the most important thing you want us to understand about older adults living in Larimer County?” While the question generally was written as a final chance to capture what issue was most important to them, it is clear from the discussion that many connected the question more to how older residents should be viewed by the broader community. Several participants talked about how the broader community doesn’t care about older residents. Specific word choices here included disregarded, ignored, overlooked, dismissed, invisible, and forgotten. Others talked about the need to be seen, appreciated, valued, and deserving of dignity, and most importantly, respect.

Key Theme 7: The role of technology

Technology is a critical tool to pass on information and keep people connected, but for older residents, it was clear in the discussions that significant barriers exist for the use of technology. Many participants expressed their preference to not rely on technology, or that they are not comfortable using technology. Several participants called for more computer training options. Overall, the community participants concluded that alternatives to relying on technology will always need to be considered and supported.

Key Theme 8: Additional programs and services

Participants indicated a need for many different services over the next five years to remain in their homes. Beyond those services and themes already discussed, additional input includes small chore assistance, respite care for caregivers, programs that support aging in place, friendly visitor program, money management assistance, additional social activities, and more.

Staff Input

The staff of the Larimer County Office on Aging offered their unique perspectives based on their day-to-day work in providing services to our community. This included two intensive retreats over the period of two days. These sessions were focused on the status of the 2020-2023 area plan goals and objectives, as well as service gaps, needs, opportunities, trends, and areas for improvement. Further discussion was held on specific topics including barriers, challenges, and solutions. The discussion areas included:

- How to utilize volunteers
- Working with providers and community organizations
- Raising awareness and being out in the community
- How to better utilize technology
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Increasing intergenerational opportunities

Some identified challenges include COVID precautions and fears, transportation, education and/or awareness, resistance to change, funding, and time. Below are more details in each focus area and solutions or suggestions for improvements.

Volunteers: Many volunteer programs were halted due to COVID, and now the expectations of volunteers have changed. Creative thinking around what volunteers can do and what their work can look like post-COVID is necessary. The Larimer County Office on Aging will work with our partner resources in the Human Services Department to identify processes to expand our current volunteer pool. The Larimer County Office on Aging staff also shared the importance of building or coordinating with a provider to start a friendly visitor program; this could be an area where volunteers are utilized.

Technology: Technology advancements for better utilizing data have been made over the past few years. Continued training on the importance of data collection is needed. More technology for staff to utilize in the field are needed, and more communication and shared data between programs could be beneficial.

Working with providers and community organizations: The county request for proposal process, data collection requirements, required matching funds, and staffing shortages all create unique challenges for community organization partnerships. It is important to balance the administrative challenges with positive outcomes that can be achieved through partnerships. Especially with the smaller or more rural communities in Larimer County, inviting key community members to learn more about rural residents and their needs can spark collaboration and new partnerships through creative solutions.

Raising awareness: Increasing the awareness within the community of the Office on Aging's role and the resources provided to the community is a challenge and opportunity that will never fade. More outreach at community events, with partners and medical facilities is needed. The team's new Outreach Specialist will help develop a more robust plan for sharing resources with the community.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion: The Larimer County Human Services Department is currently working with the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) on an equity, diversity, and inclusion organizational assessment. The APHSA will provide technical assistance to the team in the development of a roadmap of strategic activities that can help the agency to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion both internal to our organization and external in our services to older residents. In tandem with this work, the Larimer County Office on Aging can explore partnerships with organizations reaching marginalized and vulnerable communities or groups and continue to work with current providers on removing any barriers to services.

Increasing intergenerational opportunities: Staff will continue conversations with partner agencies, local school districts, universities and other groups to collaborate on projects and activities to unite the generations in ways that enrich participants' lives and help address vital social and community issues while building on positive resources that young and old have to offer each other and their communities.

During the second retreat, discussion was focused on areas for service improvements as identified from the Community Assessment of Older Adults results which were: employment, mental health, housing, and independent living. For more details on the Community Assessment for Older Adult results see the summary starting on page 15. Below is an outline of the discussion and ideas suggested for each service area.

Employment: Partnerships with the Larimer County Workforce Center, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Veteran Readiness and Employment Program will be considered to support the services already provided. Growing volunteer opportunities for older residents with the Partnership for Age Friendly Communities as well as outreach to employers to highlight the value of older residents in the workforce will also assist in furthering work in this area.

Mental health: Larimer County is committed to increasing access to mental health services in the area. Older residents with dementia, however, still have difficulty accessing appropriate services, specifically in-patient services. The Office on Aging is committed to improving this access and is working with community partners to explore creative solutions. Staff also sit on the advisory council for our Larimer County Behavioral Health Services department to provide input to services and needs of older residents as part of the County's sales tax initiative.

Housing: The Larimer County Office on Aging will serve as an advocate for affordable housing through involvement in city and county committees, as well as continuing to provide and grow programs that help older residents age in place.

Independent living: A number of services are needed to help people to stay in their own home, including transportation services, homemaker and personal care, chore assistance, home modifications, etc. Working with partners to provide these services and provide more peer-to-peer support is vital. More case management and agencies that have programs to help combat social isolation are also needed.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2020 Census results showed that Colorado’s resident population (as of April 2020) was 5,773,141, ranking it 21st in size in the U.S. with a percentage growth of 14.8% over Colorado’s 2010 Census population. Colorado’s 2010-2020 growth percentage was the sixth highest among U.S. states. This growth rate was slower than the past decade, due in part to net migration to the state slowing, as well as births continuing to slow (in both Colorado and the U.S. overall).

From 2010 to 2020, 95% of the population growth in Colorado was along the front range, compared to the previous decade where only 78% of the state’s growth was along the Front Range. Larimer County had the 5th highest percentage of growth with 19.7% and is the 7th largest county by population in the state. Population growth by age group continues to be a defining factor for Colorado due to two primary influences: first, birth rates have been declining since 2007 in both the US and in Colorado, with 43 counties experiencing a decline in the under 18 population. Secondly, the 65+ population is the fastest growing age group in both total numbers as well as growth rates, contributing to 43% of the growth in the state.

Area Agency on Aging, Region 2A, Larimer County

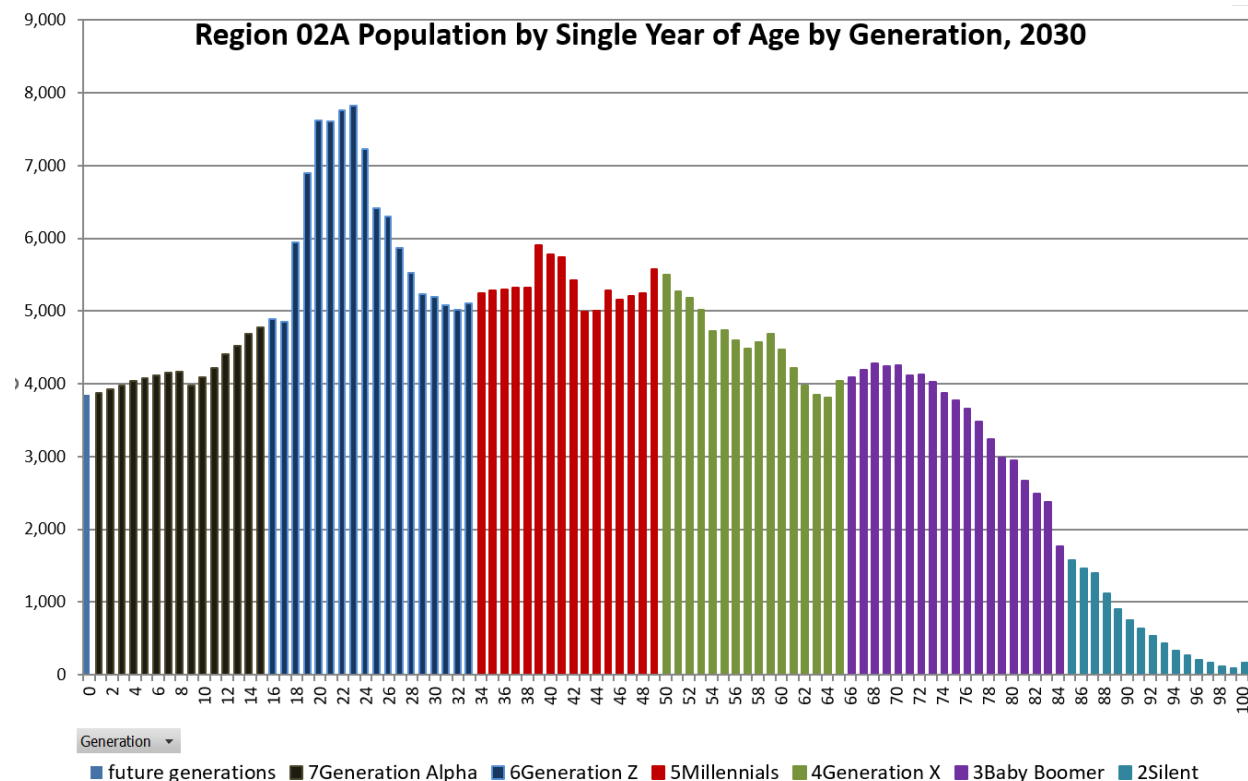
In consideration of service provision to an aging population in the region, it is important to first look at the service area covered by Larimer County. The Office on Aging encompasses Larimer County, one of 64 counties in the state of Colorado. Larimer County is 2,631 square miles located at the northern end of the front range, at the edge of the Colorado Eastern Plains along the Wyoming border. The total population of Larimer County (as of July 2021) is 362,771 with the City of Fort Collins comprising approximately 47% of the region's total population, and Berthoud and Loveland in the southern part of the region comprising another 24% of the total population.

The following table provides a profile of adults 60 and older in Larimer County in July 2021 as provided by the state demographer's office.

COUNTY	POPULATION 60+	POPULATION 75+	POVERTY 60+	MINORITY 60+	RURAL 60+	POVERTY & MINORITY 60+	185% OF POVERTY 60+	DISABILITY 60+	TOTAL POPULATION
Larimer	86,474	24,195	5,480	5,802	12,504	666	15,203	22,015	362,773

In 2021, adults 60 and older comprised 23.8% of the total Larimer County population. By 2030, this is expected to increase by approximately 17% with over 101,000 adults over 60. This growth in older residents is even more profound when you look at adults over the age of 75. In 2021, this population made up only 6.7% of the population, but by 2030, this demographic is expected to see 64% growth to almost 40,000 people. As individuals age, their functional

disabilities increase. This increase correlates to an increasing need for supportive services, long term services, and supports. Below is a graph showing the forecasted population by age of people living in Larimer County.



Since 1900, the percentage of Americans age 65 and older nearly quadrupled (from 4.1% in 1900 to 16% in 2019), and the number increased more than 17 times (from 3.1 million to 54.1 million). The older population itself has become increasingly older. In 2019, the 65-74 age group (31.5 million) was more than 14 times larger than in 1900 (2,186,767); the 75-84 group (16 million) was 20 times larger (771,369), and the 85+ group (6.6 million) was more than 53 times larger (122,362). In 2019, persons reaching age 65 had an average life expectancy of an added 19.6 years (20.8 years for women and 18.2 years for men).

Data gathered from the 2020 Census (The American Community Survey) shows high estimated percentages of those 75 and older have difficulty with ambulation, living independently, and difficulty hearing. It is estimated 6.5 million Americans 65 and older (or 1 in every 9 individuals) are living with Alzheimer’s or dementia in 2022, with 73% being 75 or older.

These increases in functional and cognitive disabilities will have a direct impact on the type and amount of services needed to keep individuals independent and able to maintain a high quality of life. A focus on services that help support individuals in their homes at the lowest cost will remain a priority.

The 2020 Census confirms that Colorado is among the fastest growing states in the last decade, including a more diverse population. The [diversity index](#) of Colorado shows an

increase, currently at 61.1% in 2020 (up from 54.9%). The breakdown of racial/ethnic identity across the state is as follows:

- Black alone 12.4%
- Hispanic 18.7%
- Asian alone 6%
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone 1.1%
- Native Hawaiian and the Pacific Islander alone 0.2%
- Some other race alone 8.4%
- Two or more races 10.2%

Larimer County has a current diversity index of 36.2%, and it is predicted to increase over the next decade.

In addition to the increasing diversity of the aging population due to race and ethnicity, there is also recognition of the population of older residents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQ+). While the U.S. census has never measured how many LGBTQ+ people live in America, reports estimate that there are currently around 3 million LGBTQ+ adults over age 50. That number is expected to grow to approximately 7 million by 2030. LGBTQ+ older residents face unique challenges as they age.

An increase in the diversity of the aging population will have a profound impact on service delivery and the workforce. The Office on Aging will continue to reach out with increasing intentionality to assure services are provided in a culturally competent manner to all older residents being served.

As stated earlier, the County, the State, and the nation are experiencing a profound demographic shift. It is well known that the majority of older residents want to remain in their own home or community as they age. The Office on Aging is committed to working with community partners, policy makers, and older residents themselves to assure that high quality services are available, especially for the most vulnerable in the community.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF OLDER ADULTS

The Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults provides a statistically valid survey of the strengths and needs of older adults as reported by older adults themselves. The objectives of the Community Assessment of Older Adults were to identify community strengths to support successful aging, articulate the specific needs of older residents in the community, estimate contributions made by older residents to the community, and develop estimates and projections of resident needs in the future. The full Larimer County report can be found at larimer.gov/seniors.

The Community Assessment of Older Adults instrument and its administration are standardized to assure high-quality survey methods and comparable results across communities. Households with an adult member 60 years or older were selected at random. Multiple outreach contacts gave each household more than one prompt to participate. A total of 6,000 older resident households were randomly selected to receive the survey. These households first received a half-page postcard inviting them to complete the survey online, followed by a mailed hard copy survey packet which included a cover letter, a copy of the questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. A total of 1,449 completed surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 25.61%.

In addition to the random sample probability survey, an open participation survey was conducted in which all adults 60 years or older were invited to participate. The open participation survey instrument was identical to the probability sample survey. This survey was conducted entirely online. A total of 51 surveys were completed by open participation survey respondents. The open participation survey results were combined with responses from the probability sample survey for a total of 1,500 completed surveys.

The Community Assessment of Older Adults report summarizes how older residents view their community and its success in creating a thriving environment for older residents. Aspects of livability are explored within six community dimensions:

- Community design
- Employment and finances
- Equity and inclusivity
- Health and wellness
- Information and assistance
- Productive activities

Overall community quality was assessed, within the six domains and 17 topics of livability. Summary scores of community livability were created through the aggregation of a series of resident ratings within each of these different livability aspects and domains. Of the 17 aspects of livability, the aspects found to be strongest in the region related to areas of safety (average positive score of 79%), physical health (71%), and social engagement (71%). The areas showing the greatest need for improvement were related to housing (23%), employment (32%), and independent living (33%). More detailed information about each livability domain follows.

Overall Community Quality

Measuring community livability for older adults starts with assessing the quality of life of those who live there and ensuring that the community is attractive, accessible, and welcoming to all. Exploring how older residents view their community overall, and how likely they are to recommend and remain in their communities, can provide a high-level overview of the quality and livability of the community.

- About 85% of older residents living in the region rated their overall quality of life as excellent or good. Most of the older respondents scored their communities positively as a place to live and would recommend their communities to others. About 82% of residents planned to stay in their community throughout their retirement.
- Positive scores (as defined in the report) were given to their communities as places to retire by 73% of older residents.

Community Design

Livable communities (which include those with mixed-use neighborhoods, higher-density development, increased connections, shared community spaces, and more human-scale design) will become a necessity for communities to age successfully. Communities that have been planned and designed for older adults tend to emphasize access, helping to facilitate movement and participation.

- Sixty percent (60%) of respondents rated the overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in their community as excellent or good. In many communities, ease of travel by walking or bicycling is given lower ratings than travel by car. Here, ease of travel by car was considered excellent or good by 76% of respondents, while ease of travel by walking and bicycling was considered excellent or good by 73% and 72% of respondents, respectively.
- When considering aspects of housing (affordability and variety) and community features of new urbanism (where people can live close to places where they can eat, shop, work, and receive services), relatively lower scores were given by older adults compared to many other items on the survey. Only 16% of respondents gave a positive score to the availability of affordable quality housing in their communities, and only about 28% of older adults gave excellent or good ratings to the availability of mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Thirty five percent (35%) of older residents in the region reported experiencing housing needs and 18% reported mobility needs.

Employment and Finances

The life expectancy for those born between 1940 and 1960 has increased dramatically due to advances in health care and lifestyle changes. While this is a very positive trend overall, it also highlights both the importance of communities providing employment opportunities for older adults and the need for older adults to plan well for their retirement years.

- Seventy nine percent (79%) of older residents rated the overall economic health of their communities positively, although the cost of living was rated as excellent or good by only 18%.

- Employment opportunities for older adults (quality and variety) received low ratings (28% and 24% positive, respectively), and the opportunity to build work skills also was found to be lacking (24% excellent or good).
- Twenty seven percent (27%) older adults reported financial challenges and 17% reported employment needs.

Equity and Inclusion

A community is often greater than the sum of its parts. Having a sense of community entails not only a sense of membership and belonging, but also feelings of equity and trust in the other members of the community.

- Sixty six percent (66%) of older residents rated the sense of community in their towns as excellent or good, and neighborliness was rated positively by 62% of residents.
- Fifty seven percent (57%) of the respondents positively rated their community's openness and acceptance toward older residents of diverse backgrounds, and 51% indicated that their community valued older residents.
- Inclusion challenges were reported by about 18% of older residents and equity challenges by 8%.

Health and Wellness

Of all the attributes of aging, health poses the greatest risk and opportunity for communities to ensure the independence and contributions of their aging populations. Health and wellness, for the purposes of this study, included not only physical and mental health, but issues of safety, independent living, and health care.

- Eighty five percent (85%) of older residents in the region rated their overall physical health as excellent or good and 90% rated their mental health as excellent or good.
- In most places, opportunities for health and wellness receive higher ratings from older adults than do health care ratings. Here, community opportunities for health and wellness were scored positively by 76% residents, while the percent giving ratings of excellent or good to the availability of physical health care was 52%, to mental health care 33%, and to long term care options 38%.
- Health-related problems were some of the most common challenges listed by older adults in the survey, with 30% reporting physical health challenges and 23% reporting mental health challenges. Health care was also a challenge for about 35% of older residents.

Information and Assistance

The older adult service network, while strong, is under-resourced and unable to single-handedly meet the needs of the continuously growing population of older adults. Providing useful and well-designed programs, as well as informing residents about other assistance resources, is an important way that government agencies can help residents age in place.

- The overall services provided to older adults in the region were rated as excellent or good by 63% of survey respondents.

- Sixty eight percent (68%) of survey respondents reported being somewhat informed or very informed about services and activities available to older adults. The availability of information about resources for older adults was rated positively by 43% of older residents and the availability of financial or legal planning services was rated positively by 45% of older residents.
- Thirty four percent (34%) of older adults in the region were found to have information access challenges.

Productive Activities

Productive activities outside of work (such as volunteerism and social activity) promote quality of life and contribute to active aging. This domain examines the extent of older adults' participation in social and leisure programs and their time spent attending or viewing civic meetings, volunteering, or providing help to others.

- Seventy two percent (72%) of older adults surveyed felt they had excellent or good opportunities to volunteer, and 54% participated in some kind of volunteer work.
- The caregiving contribution of older adults in the region was substantial. About 35% of older residents reported providing care to individuals 55 and older, 15% to individuals 18-54, and 24% to individuals under 18.
- Older adults in the region reported challenges with being civically engaged 22%, being socially engaged 16%, and caregiving 12%.

Through the survey, more than 40 challenges commonly facing older adults were assessed by respondents. Overall for Larimer County, the largest challenges were in the areas of healthcare, housing, and information about older adult services. At least 35% of older residents reported at least one item in these categories was a major or moderate problem in the 12 months prior to taking the survey.

The Office on Aging has shared the Community Assessment of Older Adults results through targeted emails to community partners and by posting the report to the Office on Aging website.

VOLUNTEERS: CURRENT AND FUTURE PROGRAMS

While many organizations depend on volunteers and could not accomplish their stated missions without them, it has become increasingly important to recognize the physical, mental, and emotional benefits volunteering can have for those who volunteer. Research has found that volunteers among adults age 60 and over report better physical health than non-volunteers. Volunteering has proven to lower rates of depression and anxiety, especially for people 65 and older. By spending time in service to others, volunteers report feeling a sense of meaning and appreciation, both given and received, which can have a stress-reducing effect.

The Larimer County Office on Aging currently does not utilize volunteers in our direct service programs. However, many community partners and organizations use volunteers to deliver the vital services across the region that help older residents maintain their independence. Some examples include the 18,224 hours that volunteers contributed to deliver meals to older residents through the Loveland Berthoud Meals on Wheels program; the 10,050 rides that volunteer drivers provided to individuals for medical appointments and congregate meals through SAINT; and the 2,030 hours of respite provided to the caregivers of older residents through the Volunteers of America caregiver companion program (from July 2021- June 2022).

The Larimer County Office on Aging staff has started conversations with community partners and providers to collaborate on a county-wide “volunteer fair” where both volunteers and agencies can connect. The work that volunteers provide is essential to everyday activities, which gives volunteers a sense of purpose, especially when volunteering in the areas they find meaningful. Older volunteers experience greater increases in life satisfaction and self-esteem.

Through the Family Caregiver Support Program, the Larimer County Office on Aging provides support and training for four to five volunteers each year who facilitate the Powerful Tools for Caregivers training. The intent is to offer additional train-the-trainer classes to increase the pool of available volunteers for both Powerful Tools for Caregivers and the Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers. Currently there are nine volunteers who are trained to lead the Powerful Tools for Caregiver classes, with three master trainers who can train others. In addition, each year, the caregiver program uses many volunteers to help with Caregiver Pampering Day, a special event with a purpose of providing support and encouragement to caregivers in the community.

The Larimer County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program uses volunteers to maximize available resources to benefit residents and make connections with residents more effective. Currently, the Ombudsman Program has one volunteer who lives and works in Estes Park, which has one assisted living and one transitional care unit at the Estes Park Medical Center. The volunteer ombudsman is required to visit their assigned facilities at least once a month and during the last fiscal year the volunteer gave 36 hours of volunteer time.

During the course of this area plan, the Ombudsman Program plans to explore additional resources through the use of social work interns and volunteers. Our goal is to add at least one

new volunteer and one social work intern (each academic year) to help manage visit requirements and address resident concerns in a timely manner. Adding a social work intern will also assist with a growing need to ensure our social work and health academic partners are helping grow the gerontology field for the next generation of workforce. Along with initial certification training and 18 hours of yearly training required, the program will also facilitate monthly team meetings which will include the volunteer and interns, offer technical assistance, and offer an annual volunteer recognition event to promote retention and honor the work of the volunteers in the community. Performance review and shadowing will also be completed annually.

A crucial and active group of volunteers for the Office on Aging is the Office on Aging Advisory Council. Appointed by the Larimer County Board of County Commissioners, this group of 17 volunteers contributes their time to provide outreach, education, and advocacy. Staff will continue to provide the support and recognition needed to assure that the Council remains a strong and committed body that will assist the Office on Aging in meeting its goals.

Finally, the need for volunteers and more direct care workers continues to increase in Larimer County and is affecting service delivery in some areas. For example, home care agencies that the Office on Aging contracts with have challenges finding and retaining qualified staff, which at times, has led to gaps in services. Multiple providers have seen a significant turnover in their workforce and volunteer base, creating lapses in institutional knowledge and the opportunity to retrain individuals on best practices.

COVID-19/ PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Throughout the pandemic, the Larimer County Office on Aging worked closely with our internal sister programs (Adult Protective Services and our Options for Long Term Care SEP) and with a number of providers on supporting clients' food security, safety, and mental health. Whether it was delivering shelf stable food ("blizzard boxes"), reaching out with a phone call, or setting up Zoom meetings to check in on people, this extra touch for a homebound individual during a time of exacerbated isolation was necessary and important to maintain relationships with clients and ensure their well-being. The Larimer County Office on Aging is committed to ongoing support in this way as funding allows.

The Larimer County Ombudsman Program initiated a program to help combat isolation for some of Larimer County's most vulnerable citizens. The team purchased and distributed 167 tablets to long-term care facilities throughout Larimer County for residents to stay connected with their loved ones and their advocates at the Ombudsman Program via video conferences. Also during the pandemic, the Ombudsman Program and Office on Aging Advisory Council members worked together to send postcards and valentines to residents in long-term care facilities to help reduce isolation and bring a small bit of joy through the mail during the holidays.

Many of our internal services switched to online/virtual methods to reach and connect with clients. Many innovative activities and solutions were created by staff and providers to keep in touch with clients and continue providing services to the community. Virtual environments for support groups, classes, and counseling programs help providers reach more remote clients or those that previously could not attend due to transportation issues. Having in-person and remote options moving forward has helped remove some of the barriers people had when using these types of services.

Services most affected most were the nutrition programs, especially congregate meals. All congregate meal sites had to change their procedures to maintain a safe environment for clients while still meeting their nutritional needs, like changing food service from a buffet style to individual plated meals. A grab-n-go model for meals was implemented and is still being used at a few sites. The option for people to come get a nutritious meal and choose whether they stay to eat or take their meal home has provided clients with more options. Furthermore, the removal of the homebound requirement for home delivered meals was appreciated by contracted meal providers. This gave them the ability to serve clients who in the past would not have qualified for the home delivered meal program but are now receiving nutritious meals.

The Larimer County Office on Aging received additional pandemic funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. These dollars were used in a creative way to help older residents in Larimer County combat the increased social isolation they faced during this unprecedented time. In total, 151 clients in the community received either a robotic pet, a weighted blanket, or both. This was an effort to foster comfort and companionship and help reduce stress, depression, anxiety, sleeplessness, agitation, social isolation, and loneliness as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both housing authorities in Larimer County received

items to be used at low-income housing for older residents to increase interactions with peers, family, and loved ones. Housing Catalyst received 20 iPads for residents to use to be better connected to their social supports. Aspire 3D received several iPads along with ten Oculus Virtual Reality sets to be used in specific older resident housing complexes. This technology brought residents together over virtual games of chess, checkers, and more.

With additional stimulus funding provided, the Office on Aging was able to work with these additional partners in the community to support their much-needed services through the pandemic:

- Energy Resource Center
- Volunteers of America's - Handyman Program projects
- Volunteers of America's - Smiling Spoons Program
- Catholic Charities
- Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities
- Loveland Public Library
- Healing Warriors Program
- Sound Affects Music
- Colorado State University Extension's Market Days Program
- A Little Help
- Heart and Soul Paratransit
- Fort Collins Meals on Wheels
- Larimer County Food Bank
- Dementia Together
- Estes Park Senior Citizens Center

Along with supporting services offered by the organizations above, the Larimer County Office on Aging worked with multiple providers to improve their infrastructure to create more virtual and socially-distanced program models. Pandemic funds were used in support of purchasing blizzard boxes, as well as a project where several Area Agencies on Aging across Colorado pooled funds for a state-wide COVID-19 vaccine campaign. This media campaign had a mission to help older residents and those at a higher risk be informed when making decisions about their health.

One innovative program that was developed out of the pandemic was the Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities of Larimer County Tech Buddy Program, a program designed to assist those needing help with digital devices, applications, and/or internet access. The program connected older residents with a tech volunteer who offered one-on-one assistance accessing online opportunities. This project helped many residents connect with friends and loved ones, and the volunteers were able to offer assistance over the phone, Zoom conference, or face-to-face.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 had unavoidable ripple effects where some services have been closed or permanently stopped as a result of the pandemic.

- Stepping Stones, an adult day services provider was unable to reopen their doors.

- Multiple congregate meal sites have not been able to reopen for different reasons, but most commonly because the space that was previously used for the meals was reallocated to other programs.
 - A Berthoud site is renovating the facility to accommodate other city needs and therefore will no longer have a kitchen and will discontinue their grab-and-go meal delivery at the end of March 2023.
 - Northside Aztlan Community Center did not reopen for congregate meals.

Finally, the pandemic brought to light the need for organizations to ensure the well-being of their employees and provide a healthy work environment for all if they want to retain their staff. Larimer County has put a high priority on staff work-life balance and benefits including mental health support, building a positive organizational culture, creating pathways for growth, and recognizing employees' contributions.

Human Services (as our broader agency) implemented our Partnership for Employee Engagement and Retention (PEER) program aimed at increasing wellbeing and retention resources for staff. The support offered to all Human Services employees (the Office on Aging staff included) includes tools and resources for self-care and mental health, confidential discussions to help cope with the stress of difficult situations, and assisting in the creation and maintenance of a healthy work-life balance. Executive leadership has supported and implemented a well-being app called SigBee to help staff feel more valued and supported with routine check-ins during their tenure.

During the pandemic, there was a lot of turnover in providers' volunteer base, which created both a challenge and opportunity to redefine volunteer positions and retrain new individuals. Rewriting tasks that could be done by volunteers and making sure volunteer opportunities provide personal growth and fulfillment was key to attracting and retaining volunteers. While there is still a sense of hesitancy for some to volunteer, the need is great and the Larimer County Office on Aging has multiple goals focused on redeveloping a volunteer base and strengthening community resources by incorporating volunteers in new ways.

EQUITY

The Larimer County Office on Aging is included in broader equity, diversity, and inclusion work that is happening in our Human Services Department through several strategic planning committees. Additionally, we are committed to working with community partners to ensure high quality services throughout Larimer County to those with the greatest need in an equitable and inclusive manner. The Human Services Department is working with the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) on an organizational assessment and receiving additional technical assistance to develop a targeted plan with measurable goals and outcomes. Additionally, one of our Human Services strategic plan committees is aimed at increasing access and outreach for our programs to all of our region's communities. The Larimer County Office on Aging will continue targeted outreach to the most vulnerable and underserved individuals in the community and intentionally provide services in a culturally competent manner to all older residents being served.

In addition to our agency's overall plan, here are some areas that the Larimer County Office on Aging has been and is continuing to work on to build equity and inclusion in the community:

- Increasing participant-directed or person-centered training with staff.
- Invest staff time in building strong, trusting relationships with various community groups, institutions, and agencies representing varied racial, ethnic, geographic, socioeconomic, and LGBTQ+ groups.
- Continue Project Visibility training with staff and community partners, which focuses on support of the aging LGBTQ+ community.
- Work with nutrition providers to serve medically and culturally tailored meals. Evaluate current meal offerings for opportunities to add more consumer choice, specifically additional meal options, days, or times to meet community needs.
- Continue to support providers who utilize the arts to engage underserved adults in their larger community.
- Target outreach efforts to more rural, vulnerable, or underserved communities in Larimer County. The Larimer County Office on Aging will track the number of clients served in these communities through data collection.
- Reestablish a relationship with Northside Aztlan Community Center and the Hispanic population in the community.
- Expand delivery of Spanish resource guides to more Latinx gathering places. Ensure more educational materials are published and disseminated in Spanish.
- Invest staff time in building strong, trusting relationships with various community groups, institutions, and agencies representing different racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ+ groups.
- Bridges Out of Poverty (strategies for professionals and communities) training was offered to all Human Services staff along with several community partners. This is an ongoing mandatory training for all new HS employees across the agency.

FUNDED SERVICES

Funding is allocated for services delivered directly by the Office on Aging and through a countywide network of Office on Aging-contracted service organizations and providers. Service providers located throughout the region form a diverse agency network serving older residents, persons living with disabilities, caregivers, and families of older residents. This local service delivery model allows the Office on Aging to contract for a continuum of integrated services that best serve particular groups of older residents in the County. These agencies and other community partners are the backbone of service delivery in our region.

The Older Americans Act provides for a range of services and supports that help older residents remain as independent and productive as possible in their own homes and communities. The Office on Aging references Volume 10 Older Americans Act Revised February 1, 2016 for guidance on the type of services that are authorized through the Older Americans Act funding. While eligibility requirements can vary slightly depending on service type, typically individuals 60 years of age and older are eligible for services through the Older Americans Act and the State Funding for Senior Services. Services are offered at no cost to participants with the option of making voluntary contributions to further the reach of the programs and services.

Federal and state funding for the Office on Aging is based on an allocation formula set by the Colorado Department of Human Services State Unit on Aging; we follow federal, state and county guidelines in procurement and contracting with providers to ensure a transparent and competitive funding process. The Office on Aging works closely with the Advisory Council to monitor programs regularly to assure that the services provided are effective, efficient, and required to meet the needs of the identified population.

Over the years, how programs are delivered or modified has often been based on the changing needs of the community and those who use the services. One example is the use of voucher programs. Office on Aging vouchers for services such as homemaker, chore, and respite allow for more choice and flexibility for both the client and the Larimer County Office on Aging in providing services in a timely and cost-effective manner.

During the four years that the Area Plan is in place, it is common for funding priorities to change based on a number of factors such as increases or decreases in state and federal funding, waitlists or 'unable to serve' lists that may develop in certain service categories, grant opportunities that may allow the Office on Aging to expand services, or an identified need or change in the region that requires the Office on Aging to reprioritize its services. Currently, in the region, nutrition and transportation are prioritized services for older residents. The Larimer County Office on Aging understands the need for nutritious meals being available for the most vulnerable populations. Food insecurity is a factor many older residents live with across the area. The Larimer County Office on Aging partners with agencies to offer both congregate and home delivered meals for those age 60 and above. Accessible, reliable transportation is the solution to maintaining a high quality of life and healthy living. For older residents living in

Larimer County, this means access to healthy food, access to grocery stores, medical appointments, social supports, and more.

It is anticipated that the current services being funded and delivered by the Office on Aging will remain stable during the Area Plan. Areas for future innovation and/or expansion of services will be more fully discussed in a section below.

The following outlines services funded by the Office on Aging with the Older Americans Act and the State Funding for Senior Services funds in state fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). Those with an asterisk indicate programs or activities administered directly through the Office on Aging.

Supportive Services

- Transportation The Office on Aging funds transportation services for medical appointments and other rides to promote self-sufficiency. Services are available in Berthoud, Fort Collins, Loveland, and Wellington.
- Outreach* The Office on Aging through the Aging and Disability Resource Center conducts outreach through the following sources:
 - Publication and distribution of 27,000 Answers on Aging Resource Guides (including Spanish guides starting in 2022)
 - Monthly column in a regional publication
 - Community health fairs
 - Presentations and forums
 - Radio spots
 - Podcast (collaboration with Loveland Public Library)
 - Participation in collaborations and community networking groups
 - Publication and updates of housing guides (assisted living residences, independent living communities, skilled nursing communities, and senior affordable housing list)
 - Caregiver toolkits (for community partners, clients, family members, and caregivers)
- Information and Assistance* The Office on Aging through the Aging and Disability Resource Center provides:
 - Certified information and assistancesSpecialists
 - Person-centered Options counseling
 - Application assistance (Long-Term Care Medicaid/ Medicare Savings Programs)
- In-Home Services* Includes assessment and management of internal voucher programs. In-home services include homemaker and personal care.
- Material Aid* Dental vouchers are distributed through a partnership with the Health District of Northern Larimer County.
- Chore Services* Chore vouchers are designed to provide financial support for individuals who are unable to perform the task that the service provides due to physical limitation.
- Adult Day Services
- Peer-to-Peer Counseling

Elder Rights

- Legal assistance
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman*

Nutrition Services

- Home delivered meals
 - Emergency shelf stable food boxes
- Congregate meals (currently grab-and-go at some locations)
- Nutrition counseling and education

Caregiver Support Services

- Assessments and caregiver consultations*
- Respite vouchers*
- Grandparent vouchers*
- Caregiver Counseling
- Education*
- Community collaborations*
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program

Evidence-Based Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Classes

- Aging Mastery Program
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers*
- Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers*

Low-Vision Services

- Screening
- Education
- Material aid - equipment for older residents with low vision

Direct Service Waivers

Waivers for all Office on Aging programs using the Older Americans Act/ the State Funding for Senior Services funds to provide direct services are allowable to permit demonstrations and to promote innovations or improve service delivery providing the waiver will not diminish services already provided. A direct service is identified as any service funded with non-administrative funding to support the Office on Aging staff.

Waivers to provide direct services were requested by the Larimer County Office on Aging on March 9, 2023 at a public hearing (Appendix E) for the following:

- Family Caregiver Support Program (Caregiver counseling and grandparent caregiver counseling)
- Information and assistance
- Caregiver information services
- Counseling (options counseling)

- Outreach
- Evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion (Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers)
- Public information
- Coordination and advocacy
- Chore
- Material aid

Monitoring

The Grantee Management Team consists of Human Services staff including:

- Two Program Managers
- A Program Coordinator
- Two Program Quality Assurance Coordinators
- An Administrative Specialist
- A Financial Analyst

The review process includes both a programmatic and fiscal review. Fiscal reviews are performed annually and include onsite visits to contractors. The State Unit on Aging has recently updated their guidance, and on-site visits are to be completed by Larimer County's Grantee Management Team at least once every two years. An internal provider risk evaluation has been created to help staff determine the need for either an on-site or desk (virtual) evaluation. A fiscal review packet is sent to each provider for completion along with the program evaluation forms which include a fiscal evaluation form, program evaluation form, provider assurance of Volume 10 compliance form, and any applicable service-specific questionnaire(s). The Financial Analyst reviews the submitted fiscal forms and supporting documentation and makes recommendations regarding any compliance issues or general concerns. In the event of capital expenditures, the Program Quality Assurance Coordinators will track these purchases and execute any necessary assessment during the program evaluation.

Prior to a provider site visit, the Program Quality Assurance Coordinators review all submitted forms and highlight any areas to be addressed at the site review, including issues or suggestions for improvement from the previous year's evaluation or State Unit on Aging audits. On-site visits are conducted with the involvement of the Office on Aging's Advisory Council members with at least one member of the Grantee Management and Evaluation Committee (a committee of the Office on Aging Advisory Council) present to act as team lead and to collect comments and suggestions from the other council members.

Following the site visit, the Program Quality Assurance Coordinators generate a written summary for each provider utilizing information gathered during the site review process including Advisory Council members' input, the Financial Analyst's review, and input from the Grantee Management Team. The follow-up letter to the grantee acknowledges best practices as well as enumerates any compliance or reporting issues. The Program Quality Assurance Coordinators track compliance issues and suggestions for improvement and follow up with providers as needed.

For new providers, within the first thirty (30) calendar days of contracting, the Larimer County Office on Aging Program Manager, Administrative Specialist, and/or the Program Quality Assurance Coordinators will hold a conference call or meet in person to educate on the Older Americans Act – Volume 10, the State Unit on Aging Policy and Procedures Manual, how to count units of service, how to submit requests for reimbursement, State Unit on Aging data management system training, etc. The Financial Analyst and Program Quality Assurance Coordinators will complete the sub-recipient determination process for each new provider and, if necessary, complete a risk assessment. Within ninety (90) calendar days of contracting, the Financial Analyst will conduct a desk review, and the Program Quality Assurance Coordinators and/or Program Managers will conduct an on-site evaluation, and annually thereafter, as guided by the State Unit on Aging.

Throughout the year, the Program Managers and Program Quality Assurance Coordinators review program performance and address indicators of inadequate or poor performance, including such issues as decreased units of service, client complaints, consistent negative client survey feedback, inability to meet contractual requirements regarding expenditures, not getting necessary reports in on time, etc. In addition, the Grantee Management and Evaluation Committee reviews the Office on Aging's unit reports quarterly and provides input and recommendations if there are performance issues or questions.

The Program Managers, Program Quality Assurance Coordinators, and the Grantee Management and Evaluation Committee review the monitoring process following the completion of the annual site reviews with a debrief session. This is a time to gather information on what went well and what might need to be adapted in the next year's cycle. Any needed changes or improvements are noted at that time for implementation the following year. At this time, the Larimer County Office on Aging does not anticipate any major changes to its monitoring process.

Internal voucher programs (caregiver, homemaker/ personal care, chore, and material aid) go through a slightly different process. The Aging and Disability Resource Center Program Supervisor, along with the Larimer County Office on Aging staff, will evaluate each voucher program and then meet with the Grantee Management and Evaluation Committee and Program Manager for a review of the program. This process allows for ongoing assessment of the internal programs and the opportunity to review and update policies and procedures to assure program compliance.

Waitlists

Waitlists are established and monitored per the State Unit on Aging's Policy and Procedure Manual section 205b. When funds are limited and/or the Larimer County Office on Aging or its grant-funded partners are at capacity, all new consumers are screened. If eligibility criteria for applicable program(s) is met, the consumer will be placed on a waitlist.

Prioritization tools are used to determine placement on a waitlist (see Appendix E). Prioritization tools help ensure that Older Americans Act targeted populations are a priority, and that people in emergency situations (where the health, safety, and welfare of the potential client is in jeopardy) will be given priority. If an individual is on a waitlist for a six month period, that individual is contacted to determine if the service is still needed or desired, and they will either be removed from the waitlist or reprioritized.

The Office on Aging consistently strives to address waitlist issues quickly. As a direct result of the pandemic, homecare agencies that the Office on Aging contracts with to provide homemaker services have struggled with staffing. This in turn has resulted in a waitlist for the In-Home Service Voucher program. The Office on Aging addressed this concern by creating a mid-year request for proposal (RFP) with the goal of adding additional homecare agencies to alleviate the waitlist. Unfortunately, no additional homecare agencies applied.

The Chore Voucher program is monitored on an on-going basis for process improvement with attempts to alleviate any period of waiting for those in need of chore services. There has not been a waitlist in this program for the past two fiscal years.

Throughout the year, the Program Managers, Program Quality Assurance Coordinators, and Financial Analyst regularly monitor program expenditures and waitlists. At midyear, budget adjustments are made and programs may submit requests for additional funding to help alleviate or address waitlists or expand programs as funds allow.

Workforce and Volunteer Capacity

The pandemic greatly affected providers' workforce and volunteer base. While labor shortages continue in Colorado the community is also seeing a shift in the general workforce with Coloradan workers over the age of 54 expected to grow from 1 in 5 workers to nearly 1 in every 4 from 2010 to 2040. The demand for a direct care workforce is expected to increase dramatically in the coming years. Larimer County currently employs 29,923 people in Health Care/Social Assistance and Personal Care Services. This is forecasted to grow over 19% (almost 6,000 new jobs) from 2023 to 2033. Finding and attracting this many new workers into to meet the demands of the aging population is going to be an ongoing challenge. Many of the home care agencies that the Office on Aging contracts with have already had challenges finding and keeping qualified staff at times leading to gaps in services.

The community is also seeing a shift in the expectations of volunteers. Volunteers want to be involved in work that has a meaningful impact on the community but do not want to give a long-term commitment. This change makes it harder for volunteer-based organizations to maintain contingency in programming that relies on volunteers. However, even with all these challenges and the turnover in staff and volunteers in Larimer County that has occurred over the past few years, most of the Larimer County Office on Aging's partners are fully staffed with strong teams and have rebuilt their volunteer pool. While more volunteers are always welcome and listed as a need for some organizations the current workforce is meeting the needs of the community.

OMBUDSMAN AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Ombudsman is a Swedish word meaning “one who speaks on behalf of another.” The Office on Aging Ombudsman team advocates for the rights of individuals living in nursing homes and assisted living residences. In the Office on Aging’s previous area plan, the increase in the number of beds in Larimer County, as well as the complexity of complaints and issues, led to the need to increase the number of Long-Term Care Ombudsman and the program now has four full-time Ombudsmen and one volunteer Ombudsman.

By increasing the number of Ombudsman, the Office on Aging will shift some of its work to look at systematic issues and how to support long-term care facilities in Larimer County, effectively changing the focus from reactive to proactive. Each Ombudsman will have more time to reach out and work with facility administration, staff, and residents to address issues before they reach a crisis level. The Ombudsman Program will continue to support person-directed care principles within facilities as they work to address individual and system issues. The Ombudsman Program recognizes that education and training in the area’s long-term care facilities is critical to assuring quality care. In the next four years, the Ombudsman Program will focus energy on the following activities.

Culture Change

The Ombudsman Program will continue to facilitate and promote culture change in long-term care through membership with the Colorado Culture Change Coalition. Goals with the CCCC include providing education resources for providers, consumers, and family members, advocacy for appropriate public policy, and increasing public awareness about the necessity for, and the right approaches to, person-directed care models.

As a part of the program's ongoing work to be resident focused, culture change work will continue, especially around language use and the reframing of services as person-directed and trauma informed, as opposed to program dictated. This will be incorporated into daily work, communication with providers, and ongoing training. The Ombudsman Program is working to add person-centered language and ideas to each of the training templates developed to provide education to facilities and community members. In doing so, this important language will be woven into all of the information The Ombudsman Program provides and serve as a way to encourage similar language use in the community.

Project Visibility

The Ombudsman Program has three certified trainers for Project Visibility. This training works with facilities and elder care agencies to create communities that are informed, sensitive to, and supportive of LGBTQ+ elders. The Ombudsman Program will continue its efforts with facilities to promote and provide training in this area, including adding information to the Office on Aging’s online resource publication to note who has been trained in the area. While it is no guarantee of inclusivity, it does help prospective clients begin the search for an agency or long-term care

facility with some confidence. Additional work is ongoing to improve resources and information to LGBTQ+ elders and their loved ones to support the needs of the community.

Concurrently, staff are working on creating resources and support for LGBTQ+ older residents. With this, older residents in Larimer County will have additional resources to navigate the long-term care and support system.

Community Involvement and Advocacy

In addition to individual advocacy and training, the Ombudsman Program is involved with many committees and groups in the community with a shared goal of quality of life, quality of care, elder justice, and creating connections for older residents. The groups include Larimer County organizations, as well as outside efforts with providers in the community:

Larimer County Organizations: Multidisciplinary Taskforce with the District Attorney and local law enforcement entities, Adult Protective Services Team meetings, the Facilities Planning Best Practices and Collaboration subcommittee, Emergency Preparedness committees, Community Engagement Alignment Effort, and the Inclusion Advisory Council.

Community Services Providers: Sound Affects Music for All, the Nursing Home Innovations Grants Board, the Live Oak Project, the Northern Colorado Equality Board, NoCo Pride Planning Committee, the Transitions Stakeholder Advisory Council, Northern Colorado Healthcare Coalition, and National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) Racial Equity Learning Collaborative, a program through the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

One new committee with a specific focus is the Larimer County Behavioral Health Taskforce. In 2023, the Regional Ombudsman with the Office on Aging was appointed to this important group to assist in exploring concerns with mental health access for older residents, those in long-term care communities, and those with dementia, with the hope of creating more opportunities and specialities for this unique set of individuals in the mental health community.

The Ombudsman Program will continue its community training of hospital discharge planners, Colorado State University students in studies that intersect with long-term care, certified nursing assistant programs, and nursing programs on the role of an Ombudsman in long-term care settings.

In 2010, the Elder Justice Act (EJA) was passed and signed into law to address elder abuse. The EJA seeks to prevent, intervene, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Over the past several years, the Ombudsman Program has spearheaded community events to promote elder justice through informational yard signs and events to recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The Ombudsman Program will work with internal and external teams to collaborate on and support World Elder Abuse Awareness forums every other year to promote elder justice work and educate more professionals, family members, and older residents themselves about elder abuse and resources.

With more frequent floods and wildfires, there is an increased awareness of the importance of planning in the event of emergencies. Larimer County is fortunate to have a robust emergency preparedness office that assists all residents in preparing for emergencies. To assure that long-term care facilities are up to date on their emergency plans, the Ombudsman Program will participate in several planning groups for emergency preparedness for long-term care facilities facilitated by the Larimer County Health Department.

Legal Assistance

The Legal Assistance Developer Program works together with the Colorado Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and Area Agencies on Aging to protect and promote the rights of Colorado's older residents and to improve their quality of life. The Legal Assistance Developer Program provides legal advocacy to protect critical needs of older Coloradans, such as preserving housing, assuring access to medical care, and preventing abuse and neglect. These are services that individuals need to live with dignity as they age. The program is administered by Disability Law Colorado through the work of the Legal Assistance Developer for the Elderly under a contract with the Colorado Department of Human Services' Division of Aging and Adult Services. It operates in conjunction with the 16 regional Area Agencies on Aging to coordinate services statewide. The Larimer County Office on Aging is one of these Area Agencies on Aging, and has contracted with Colorado Legal Services to implement the Senior Law Project since July 1, 2016. In order to set priorities for the Senior Law Project, the Larimer County Office on Aging met with a committee of the Office on Aging Advisory Council, the retiring attorney for the Senior Law Project, and referenced guidelines provided by the State Unit on Aging Policy and Procedure Manual. From the discussions in 2015, a set of priorities was established and has continued through ongoing contractual agreements with Colorado Legal Services.

Colorado Legal Services submits regular information on assistance provided through the Legal Assistance Developer Program data report which outlines the types of requests for legal assistance and the number of units of service provided by legal issue. The program data for state fiscal year 22 shows that the following issues were most requested by clients seen by the Senior Law Project provider: housing and consumer issues, health care, and defense of guardianship/ protective services.

Based on the requests for legal services as outlined in the report, as well as types of requests and inquiries through programs at the Larimer County Office on Aging, the following are the priorities for legal assistance being provided by Colorado Legal Services:

Housing and Property Issues - Provide legal advice, brief service, and representation as needed on matters related to evictions in private and subsidized housing. The program also assists with foreclosure, title issues, homeowner associations, and reverse mortgages.

Consumer law issues - Provide legal advice, brief services, and full representation in consumer matters. Consumer matters include general debt collection by creditors and collection agencies, garnishments, collection lawsuits, and utility shut offs.

Public Assistance Benefits - Provide legal assistance related to terminations, reductions and overpayments of public benefit programs. Advice on eligibility for Long-Term Care Medicaid (including community spouse resource allowance and monthly income protection) and basic information about other programs is also provided. The public benefits include Medicaid, Medicare Savings Programs, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income, Old Age Pension, the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Assistance could consist of advice, brief services, administrative representation, and the possibility of appeal on a limited basis for reductions.

Powers of Attorney and Advance Directives - Provide advice regarding general durable power of attorney, medical durable power of attorney, and advance directives. Drafting and preparation of powers of attorney and advance directives, as well as the revocation or limitation of them, will be provided. Provide legal advice regarding issues of elder abuse, exploitation, and neglect while working with appropriate authorities.

To assure that the legal assistance grantee is able and willing to provide representation in the areas described above, the Larimer County Office on Aging has a grantee review process to monitor performance and adherence to state and federal policies and procedures as well as scope of services (see Monitoring on page 28). During the site review, the team ensures that the legal assistance provider can provide the services as outlined above, providing legal assistance program data reports and monthly reimbursement requests. An area of concern from the grantee is the increase in older residents needing services and a limited amount of resources to serve them. The Larimer County Office on Aging is committed to providing financial support over the next four years and will work with Colorado Legal Services to monitor the demand and increase funding as allowable.

OTHER SERVICES

Evidence-based health promotion programs reduce the need for costlier medical interventions. Under the Older Americans Act and State Funding for Senior Services, all expenditures in this area must be for top tier evidence-based programs as defined by the U.S. Administration on Community Living. As the Office on Aging moves into the next planning period, these programs are important to its mission of helping individuals remain independent. Currently, the Office on Aging provides financial and/or staff support for the following evidence-based programs:

Aging Mastery Program The Office on Aging is currently contracted with a community partner to offer the Aging Mastery Program, an evidence-based program that offers fun and engaging education and behavior change incentives for aging well. The Aging Mastery Program core curriculum combines evidence-informed knowledge sharing with goal setting and feedback routines, daily practices, peer support, and small rewards. Classes are led by expert speakers who help participants gain the skills and tools they need to manage their health, remain economically secure, and contribute actively in society. The goal of the 10 core classes is to provide participants with an overview of the challenges encountered while navigating life in old age and offer support to master new skills. The 10 areas taught over the course of the classes are:

- Navigating longer lives: the basics of aging mastery
- Exercise and you
- Sleep
- Healthy eating and hydration
- Financial fitness
- Advance planning
- Healthy relationships
- Medication management
- Community engagement
- Fall prevention

Caregiver Support The Family Caregiver Support Program provides coordination and delivery of two evidence-based classes: Powerful Tools for Caregivers and the Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers. Both programs provide support to family caregivers and assist them in coping with the strain of caring for a loved one. As a result of the pandemic, the team has seen a decrease in attendance, and many classes in 2022 were canceled. The Office on Aging has adjusted its marketing strategy and as a result has seen improved attendance. The survey results continue to be positive for those who complete the classes. The Family Caregiver Support Program will continue delivery of both classes in the next planning cycle with the intent of offering at least one or two train-the-trainer sessions for new volunteers.

Overall, the Office on Aging remains committed to continuing with and increasing the number of, and types of, evidence-based health promotion programs for older residents as a way to maintain health and well-being. Based on feedback from grantees and challenges in expending

health promotion dollars, staff plan to look at creative ways to fund the evidence-based programs to increase access to the classes, expand to rural areas, prevent duplication, build new community partnerships, and decrease administrative burden on grantees and staff.

Transition Services (Options Counseling) Options counseling provides individuals living in skilled nursing homes with Long-Term Care Medicaid benefits through a person-centered approach to explore their options to transition from the nursing home to a home in the community. Options counselors help individuals understand their transition options and community resources in order to make informed choices about moving back to a home in the community.

Additional Sources of Funding

The funding received through the Older Americans Act and State Funding for Senior Services has specific service categories and types of services that can be provided with the dollars granted. Additional grant funding has been secured over the course of several years to enhance the provision of services and meet the needs of the community. Funding streams outside of these include the following:

Transition Services The Office on Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Center has participated in and is a trusted partner with the Transition Services (formerly Colorado Choice Transitions) project, funded through the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. The primary goal is to facilitate the transition of Medicaid recipients living in nursing homes to living in the community using Home and Community Based Services. The Office on Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Center has been the local contact agency for this project and provides options counseling to nursing home residents who request information and enrollment into the program. Federal funding for this program ended in December 2018, and Colorado passed legislation to sustain transition services after the Money Follows the Person funding ended. Currently, the role of Options Counseling and the Aging and Disability Resource Center will remain similar to what it has been in the past, and the Office on Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Center will continue to provide options counseling to those interested in enrolling in the state funded transition project.

Medicaid Administrative Federal Financial Participation The Office on Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Center is currently participating with the State Unit on Aging and Colorado's Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Colorado's General Assembly appropriated additional funding [effective July 1, 2018] which authorized Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. As part of this state funding, the Office on Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Center receives enhanced Medicaid Administrative Federal Financial Participation funding by participating in random moment time studies surveys. These surveys are completed by staff within the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

TARGETING AND OUTREACH

In 2022, we added an Outreach Specialist to our team and are working on targeted strategies to increase community awareness of the programs and resources we offer.

The following are highlights of the Office on Aging's accomplishments in working to improve access and utilization of services over the past three years:

Outreach

- 5,000 Answers on Aging Resource Guides printed in Spanish.
- Newly formed Administration, Communication & Excellence division in the Larimer County Department of Human Services to increase overall outreach to the community including onboarding of a dedicated outreach staff person to engage via events, media outlets, online, print materials, etc.
- Partnership with the Loveland Library to record the Larimer County Office on Aging podcasts to share information with the community.
- The Advisory Council provided support for community education events including resource and candidate forums
- Staff participation in the newly founded Human Services strategic planning committee focused on Community Outreach and Access; with goals of reaching underserved areas and populations.

Services

- Of all the clients surveyed in 2022, 96.2% had a positive response ("Good" or "Excellent") to the Question "How would you rate the services overall?"
- Ninety nine percent (99%) of clients surveyed in 2022 rated their caregiver services as excellent or good
- All staff trained in Bridges out of Poverty along with several community partners
- Increased the number of provider relationships
- Of the clients surveyed who received a dental voucher, 93% reported the services provided by Larimer County Office on Aging as excellent.
- Introduced a new grandfamily voucher program to help give grandparents much needed respite. Seven clients were issued vouchers during the very first voucher cycle.
- On average, 7,115 contacts for information and assistance were received each year
- All staff answering phones were AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) certified with a certification for Community Resource Specialist - Aging/Disabilities (CRS-A/D).
- Of the clients surveyed who participated in a Powerful Tools for Caregiver class, 100% reported the services provided by Larimer County Office on Aging as excellent and learned how to help take better care of themselves.
- All staff completed Project Visibility training.
- Provided support to the efforts of the Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities through staff and council involvement in the health and wellness priority group.

- Staff participated in the Larimer County mobility committee, overseeing the development of the RideNo.co transportation project.
- Ongoing support and coordination of nutrition, transportation, and possible caregiver services targeted in the Red Feather Lakes area.
- Almost ninety nine percent (98.9%) of transportation clients surveyed in 2022 stated the service they received was good or excellent.

The Office on Aging will build upon these successes in the next four years as the demand for services grows based upon the demographic changes in Larimer county's communities. The Larimer County Office on Aging will continue to evaluate programs for effectiveness and efficiency, look at best practices for delivery of services, and listen to the needs of the consumer and the community as the Office on Aging strives to maintain current programs and introduce new services to meet the needs of the community. The Office on Aging recognizes that services for older residents are best achieved when there is collaborative effort that includes providers and the community. Staff will continue its work to reach out and partner with public, private and governmental entities to build upon and enhance services for older residents in Larimer County. This will include renewed efforts to partner with those organizations that serve the most under-served and vulnerable in the community.

Raising Awareness

The Office on Aging works tirelessly to raise awareness about services for older residents in Larimer County. Current activities include: participation in multiple professional networking groups; newly formed relationships with healthcare entities including hospitals and doctors offices; staff volunteering on committees within the community; publication and distribution of a comprehensive resource guide; regular podcasts published by the Loveland Public Library; staff presentations to the public and providers; participation in community health and resource fairs; partnerships with other Area Agencies on Aging across Colorado to share ideas and innovation; monthly articles in a regional newspaper; collaboration with a master's program communications class at Colorado State University focused on a Larimer County Office on Aging media campaign; new caregiver campaign with stickers, postcards, posters, and social media ads; new Outreach Specialist position for the Larimer County Office on Aging; targeted marketing and increased presence on social media.

Even with these activities, the Larimer County Office on Aging recognizes that outreach to raise awareness of services is a continual and evolving process. Results from the Community Assessment Survey of Older Adults and comments at the Community Conversations and focus groups indicate individuals continue to have difficulty accessing information regarding services. There is a need to raise awareness and to reach a broader population, especially for those who are isolated and in rural areas of the region.

The Human Services Department is forming an emergency response team which will play the lead role in responses to situations such as flood, fire, and other situations in Larimer County. Staff from the Office on Aging and Aging and other HS programs serving older residents are on

the committee to ensure our emergency response plans and procedures have the lens of the needs of our older residents.

The Office on Aging's commitment is to continue to use these methods as well as stay open to new ideas while strengthening partner relationships and enhancing the agency's ability to conduct outreach throughout Larimer County.

INNOVATION AND EXPANSION OF SERVICES

The Area Agencies on Aging network is always changing. As the number of individuals eligible for services under the Older Americans Act continues to increase across the nation, it is more important than ever that each Area Agency on Aging, including the Larimer County Office on Aging, look to innovation and the development of new partnerships and funding streams that can support the work done each day that assists older residents in our communities.

It is also critical to recognize the solid foundation and history of the Office on Aging and to support the services that have been in place since the inception of the Older Americans Act that promote independence and quality of life as our communities age. Nutrition, transportation, information and assistance, legal assistance, and supportive services work together through a network of providers brought together by the Office on Aging to assure that the most at-risk and vulnerable can remain in their own home and community.

As we look to the future, it will be important to strike a balance that assures adequate funding and support of the foundational programs of the Office on Aging while also creating room and support for innovative, new programs that will address the needs of a changing demographic and landscape. This includes investment in and support of technology and processes that will increase the ability to communicate and reach out to older residents and their families and deliver services in a cost-effective manner.

During this planning period, the Office on Aging reached out to providers, community members, Advisory Council members, and staff to listen and gather ideas and suggestions on what the office is doing well, and where there might be areas for growth and innovation.

Themes that emerged include:

- Increase participation of older residents in health promotion and disease prevention opportunities in Larimer County.
- Strengthen partnerships with community organizations and providers to meet the needs of older residents, especially in rural areas.
- Continue to prioritize outreach and marketing efforts to raise awareness with an emphasis on reaching out to rural areas and minority populations. This includes increased communication and collaboration with community partners and organizations.
- Prioritize the issues of social isolation and mental health needs of older residents.
- Look at ways the Larimer County Office on Aging can support and share the importance of senior centers in local communities.
- Increased presence of staff and volunteers at locations in the community including senior centers and community centers, as well as investing staff time in building strong, trusting relationships with various community groups, institutions, and agencies representing the diversity of our community.

- Support the establishment of new congregate meal sites, especially in rural communities, as well as increasing programming at congregate meal sites that foster social engagement and education.
- Increase efforts to engage volunteers to increase capacity of services including intergenerational activities.
- Continue to keep a lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all efforts. Help others value and respect older residents in the community.
- On-going assessment and evaluation of the Office on Aging business practices, including staffing, technology, and innovative ways to expand services and serve our neighbors today and looking ahead.

In looking ahead and as part of the planning process, the Larimer County Office on Aging developed a series of broad goals and strategies to serve as a framework to help guide the Office on Aging now and into the future.

While the goals and strategies will help guide the work of the Office on Aging, it is also important to recognize that opportunities or threats may arise that could potentially alter the direction or focus of the stated goals. Staff will regularly review the goals and strategies and evaluate for adjustments or changes based on funding, input from clients, input from the Advisory Council and potential partnerships that may present themselves in the changing landscape of aging services. The Office on Aging will need to remain nimble and prepared to act in the event of issues that may arise that impact the current plan.

Measuring Success

As stewards of public money, it is important to measure the effectiveness, efficiency, and outcomes of the programs being delivered. This is an area of continued focus and growth for the Office on Aging as it works towards increasing capacity to meet the needs of an aging population.

Outcomes are the measured level of performance or achievement that occurs because of the activity or services an organization provides. Currently, the Office on Aging monitors and tracks outcomes for internal and external programs using the following tools:

- Grantee monthly reports/ requests for reimbursement
- Units of service tracker
- Aging and Disability Resource Center monthly and quarterly reports (call center, SART/Semi-Annual Reporting Tool, etc.)
- Program surveying (State Unit on Aging and agency surveys)
- Legal Services quarterly report (State Unit on Aging and Disability Law Colorado)
- Ombudsman program monthly reports to both the state Ombudsman's office and the Board of Social Services (top 3 complaints, contact information)
- Monthly financial reports from Fiscal Analyst
- Ombudsman volunteer in-kind quarterly report

The Office on Aging is working with the State Unit on Aging in the new State Unit Data System to learn the capabilities and explore new methods of monitoring and evaluating programs. Members of the Larimer County Office on Aging staff have been an integral part of the onboarding of this new state-wide data system for all of Colorado's Area Agencies on Aging. Staff volunteered for data testing, report building, and system testing. These combined efforts will assist in helping to better determine the effectiveness of programs.

Effectiveness can best be described as the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result, and the degree to which a program achieves its goal. Currently, the Office on Aging uses the following to measure effectiveness and how well the programs are doing in meeting the stated goals and overall mission of the Area Agencies on Aging.

- **Feedback.** While this type of qualitative measurement is not given weight in measuring program effectiveness, it should not be overlooked, particularly unprompted and recurring commentary about a service or program, either positive or negative.
- **State Unit on Aging performance measures.** Under the current performance-based contracting, the Office on Aging and its programs participate in a yearly survey with questions specific to the type of service provided. The recurring process is controlled (same time of year, same wording of questions, same methods for disseminating the surveys, etc.) and has been utilized across the state since state fiscal year 16.
- **Surveys.** This is currently one of the many methods that the Office on Aging uses to help measure program effectiveness. The surveys provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback. Surveys tend to appeal to and engage the polarized groups (the very unsatisfied and the very satisfied), often missing those in the middle. Thus, survey results should be used with other forms of evaluation and assessment.

Efficiency is often subjective and is difficult to measure. When considering efficiency in technical terms, it can be thought of as the ratio of useful work performed within a defined process to the total effort expended. When considering efficiency, an internal agency priority will be process improvements. While many current operational processes are working, it is important to revisit them periodically and ask, "how can we make this function better?" The first step is to analyze current procedures, understand a process, and set realistic improvement objectives. The following will be considered in process improvement:

- What in the process is broken?
- Are there existing pain points or areas with vocalized complaints?
- Which steps in the process create roadblocks?
- Which steps require the most time to complete?
- Which steps cause the most delays?
- Are there any steps that cause costs/resources to go up?
- Are there any steps that cause quality to go down?
- What risks are there in the current process?

The State Unit on Aging conducts a yearly evaluation of the Office on Aging, and through this review, areas for improvement including changes in how services are delivered, including areas that may impact efficiency, are highlighted for attention.

As stated earlier, as stewards of public funding, the Office on Aging is committed to assuring that the services provided are meeting the needs of the community in a transparent and cost-effective manner.

Worksheet A: Direct Service Waiver Request

Attachment A

REGION: 2A

DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST

We hereby request approval of a Waiver to provide the direct services listed below.

1. Family Caregiver Support Program (Caregiving Counseling and Grandparent Caregiver Counseling)
2. Information and Assistance/I&A
3. Caregiver Information Services
4. Case Management
5. Counseling (Options Counseling)
6. Outreach
7. Evidence-Based Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Stress Busting Program for Family Caregivers)
8. Public Information
9. Coordination and Advocacy
10. Chore
11. Material Aid

Please attach documents describing the direct service to be provided including organizational structure and planned methods of program services delivery.

PLEASE NOTE: If the Waiver Request is incomplete, this may result in a delay of the approval of the Area Plan.

Worksheet B: Meal Sites

Attachment B

REGION: 2A

Nutrition Services (Material Aid - Food/Congregate/Home Delivered Meal Programs) As of March 2023

Locations		Which programs operate out of this location?*			Which days of the week are meals served? <u>LIST DAYS OF THE WEEK AS FOLLOWS</u> <u>SEPARATED BY A COMMA:</u> M, T, W, TH, F, SA, SU		
		CONGREGATE	HOME DELIVERED	GRAB-N-GO	CONGREGATE	HOME DELIVERED MEALS	GRAB-N-GO
Site Name	Volunteers of America		X			T, W, TH (make-up deliveries can occur on M, F as well)	
Address	405 Canyon Ave						
City	Fort Collins						
Zip	80521						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	mclift@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Fort Collins Senior Center	X			M, T, F		
Address	1200 Raintree Dr						
City	Fort Collins						
Zip	80526						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Chilson Senior Center	X			M, T, F		
Address	400 E. 7th St						
City	Loveland						
Zip	80537						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Bellvue Grange	X			TH		
Address	2929 N County Road 23						
City	Bellvue						
Zip	80512						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						

Site Name	Sanctuary Place Apartments			X			W
Address	3732 Kunz Ct						
City	Fort Collins						
Zip	80526						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Oakbrook I	X			M, W, F		
Address	3200 Stanford Rd						
City	Fort Collins						
Zip	80525						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Oakbrook II	X			M, W, F		
Address	3300 Stanford Rd						
City	Fort Collins						
Zip	80525						
Phone	970-472-9630						
Email	jliken@voacolorado.org						
Site Name	Meals on Wheel of Loveland and Berthoud		X			M, T, W, TH, F	
Address	437 N. Garfield Ave.						
City	Loveland						
Zip	80537						
Phone	970-661-0311						
Email	Jeffrey@lovelandmealsonwheels.org						

* None of Region 2A Meal Sites run material aid services

Worksheet C: Community Focal Points and Senior Centers

Attachment C

REGION: 2A

COMMUNITY FOCAL POINTS AND SENIOR CENTERS

LIST ALL FOCAL POINTS AND SENIOR CENTERS INCLUDING NUTRITION SITES IF IT IS A FOCAL POINT

		CHECK IF FACILITY IS:		
		A FOCAL POINT	A SENIOR CENTER	FUNDED THROUGH TITLE III-B or SFSS
Site Name	Bellvue Senior Center		X	
Address	2929 N. CR 23			
City	Bellvue			
Zip	80513			
Phone	(970) 482-0406			
Email	N/A			
Site Name	Chilson Senior Center		X	
Address	700 E 4th Street			
City	Loveland			
Zip	80537			
Phone	(970) 962-2783			
Email	chilson@cityofloveland.org			
Site Name	Estes Park Senior Citizens Center		X	
Address	1760 Olympian Lane			
City	Estes Park			
Zip	80517			
Phone	(970) 581-2195			
Email	rvpapineau@gmail.com			
Site Name	Fort Collins Senior Center		X	
Address	1200 Raintree Drive			
City	Fort Collins			
Zip	80526			
Phone	(970) 221-6644			
Email	recreation@fcgov.com			

Site Name	Oakbrook I	X		
Address	3200 Stanford Road			
City	Fort Collins			
Zip	80525			
Phone	(970) 226-5060			
Email	N/A			
Site Name	Oakbrook II	X		
Address	3300 Stanford Road			
City	Fort Collins			
Zip	80525			
Phone	(970) 223-1356			
Email	N/A			
Site Name	Sanctuary Apartments	X		
Address	3732 Kunz Ct			
City	Fort Collins			
Zip	80526			
Phone	(970) 225-2116			
Email	tdixon@voacolorado.org			
Site Name	Wellington Senior Center		X	Yes
Address	3800 Wilson Avenue			
City	Wellington			
Zip	80549			
Phone	(970) 586-7402			
Email	wellington.wsrc@gmail.com			

Worksheet D: Regional Advisory Council Membership

Attachment D

REGION: 2A

REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

List all persons presently serving as members of your Regional Advisory Council.

NAME	ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION
Stacy Bernard	Citizen Volunteer
David Born	Citizen Volunteer
Colleen Conway	Citizen Volunteer
Jill Couch	Better People Care LLC & Safe Senior Driver LLC
Megan Finnerty	Special Education
Joe Glomboski	Citizen Volunteer
Lee Green	Citizen Volunteer
Lisa Hays	Fort Collins Senior Center
Alan Kress	Elevated Health and Rehabilitation Services & Covell Care and Rehabilitation
Margaret Long	Citizen Volunteer
Colleen Meyer	A Little Help
Jacque Penfold	Citizen Volunteer
Annie Scott	Encompass Home Health
Janet Seeley	Citizen Volunteer
Stephen Smith	Citizen Volunteer
Sharon Thomas	Citizen Volunteer
Kim Wermers	North40 Rides Transportation Services

Please indicate on the chart below how many members are low income, minority, or over 60

LOW-INCOME	MINORITY	60 +
1	0	11

* 3 members declared that they lived in a geographically isolated area

**Only 14 members of the council shared this information to be reported

Worksheet E: Statement of Intent

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Area Plan

Is hereby submitted for

LARIMER COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

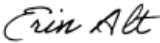

REGION 2A


For the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027

This Area Plan includes all assurance plans under provisions of the Older Americans Act during the period identified. The Area Agency on Aging identified above shall assume full responsibility to develop and administer the Area Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Older Americans Act and related State regulations and policies. In accepting this authority, the Area Agency on Aging assumes responsibility to promote the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of community services and to serve as the advocate and focal point for older persons in the planning and service area.

The Area Plan has been developed in accordance with the rules and regulations specified under the Older Americans Act and Staff Manual Volume 10, and is hereby submitted to the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services for review and approval.

SIGNATURES:

	<u>3/10/23</u>		<u>3/10/23</u>
Director, Erin Alt	DATE	Chairperson, Jill Couch	DATE
Area Agency on Aging		Area Agency on Aging	
		Advisory Council	

	<u>3/30/2023</u>
Larimer County Human Services,	DATE
Director, Heather O'Hayre	

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Community Conversations Flyer



The flyer features a header with a mountain landscape and the text "LARIMER COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING". Below this is a yellow banner with "COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS" in large blue letters, accompanied by a photo of a diverse group of people. The main body contains a paragraph about the purpose of the conversations, a table of dates and locations, and a registration section with a QR code, a link, and contact information for Larimer County.

LARIMER COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Aging is a reality, but how should that reality look? How will your community support you as you age? Join us to discuss these questions and more at our Community Conversations hosted by the Larimer County Office on Aging. These dynamic conversations will allow you to share your vision for the future, concerns and suggestions about how to make Larimer County a great place to grow up and grow old. Thoughts shared will be utilized in the development of the Office on Aging's Four Year Plan. Let your voice be heard!

Mon., Sept. 19th	12:00-1:00pm	Estes Park Senior Citizen Center
Wed., Sept. 21st	12:30-1:30pm	Wellington Senior Center
Tues., Sept. 27th	10:00-11:00am	*Chilson Senior Center (Loveland)
Thurs., Sept. 29th	1:00-2:00pm	Berthoud Senior Center
Mon., Oct. 3rd	6:00-7:00pm	Zoom (register to get link)
Thurs., Oct. 6th	3:00-4:00pm	**Fort Collins Senior Center

*Spanish translation & interpretation will be available at this site
**Spanish translation & interpretation, as well as ASL interpreter available at this site

Space is limited so registration is required. Please use this link
<https://col.st/jwIDq>
or the QR code to register.

Refreshments will be served.

LARIMER COUNTY
1501 Blue Spruce Dr.
Fort Collins, CO 80524
970.498.7750

Note: Community Conversation at the Wellington Senior Center had to be reschedule to Wednesday October 12

Community Conversations Participant Worksheet

1. Where do you go to find information about aging and available services?

(Mark all that apply)

- Internet Radio
 Senior Center Friends
 Newspaper Area Agency on Aging/Office on Aging
 County Department (Health & Human Services, Public Health, Social Services, etc)
Other: _____

2. What are the key obstacles for you and others you know from utilizing services and participating in classes/events? **(Mark all that apply)**

- a. Program/services not known b. Program/services not available
 c. Program/services too expensive d. Program/services not convenient
 e. Program/services use technology I don't have or don't know how to use
 f. Other _____

3. What services/assistance do you see yourself needing over the next five years to remain in your home as you age? **(Mark all that apply)**

- a. Home delivered meals
 b. Chore support outside of the home (ex. lawn care or snow removal)
 c. Ordinary housework (ex. cleaning, laundry)
 d. Personal care assistance (ex. bathing, dressing)
 e. Managing paperwork (ex. bills, finance/mail)
 f. Health care needs (such as medication management)
 g. Transportation
 h. Remaining socially connected
 i. Technology/Support in how to use technology
 j. Other: _____

4. What types of technology do you currently use? **(Mark all that apply)**

- Internet Tablet or computer (example: iPad)
 Smartphone Social Media (example: Facebook, Twitter, etc)
 Email Telehealth
 Other: _____

5. Respond to the following statements:

Currently, there are sufficient supports & services for older adults who are LGBTQ+.

Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Currently, there are sufficient supports & services for grandparents who are raising grandchildren.

Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Currently, there are sufficient supports & services for older adults regarding mental health.

Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Currently, there are sufficient supports & services for caregivers of older adults.

Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

The current support and services available to me are helping me to age in place in my home. Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree

Don't know N/A

6. Sometimes funding for programs is uncertain and we have to decide between starting new programs that may not have future funding to be sustained or continuing with only the tried-and-true same programs. Select which statement below best describes your response to what services should be provided

- a. Strongly prefer to see new services that may go away in 6-12 months
- b. Somewhat prefer to see new services that may go away in 6-12 months
- c. No preference
- d. Somewhat prefer to know that the same service will be available
- e. Strongly prefer to know that the same services will be available
- f. Don't have enough information

7. What recommendations do you have for additional older adults and/or caregiver services that don't exist that you'd like to see?

Appendix C: Community Conversations Small Group Discussion Questions

Larimer County Office on Aging Community Conversations Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What resources, education, or support do we need to focus on more to help people be more effective caregivers?
2. Social isolation and loneliness are associated with higher mortality risk in older adults. How might older adults in the community become more socially active? How can we support these activities?
3. Based on results for Question 2 in the survey.... How can we better address these obstacles? How can we share/make people more aware of available resources?
4. What is the most important thing you want us to understand about older adults living in Larimer County?

Appendix D: AAA Client Prioritization Worksheet

AAA CLIENT PRIORITIZATION WORKSHEET

Client Name: []

Date: []

Address: []

Service Type: []

Phone Number: []

Date of Birth: []

<p>Activities of Daily Living 5 points each (25 points maximum combined ADL/IADL)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility <input type="checkbox"/> Transfers</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>		<p>Instrumental Activities of Daily Living 5 points each (25 points maximum combined ADL/IADL)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meal Prep <input type="checkbox"/> Medication <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping <input type="checkbox"/> Money Management <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Using a Telephone</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>	
<p>Monthly Income Single</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$1,215 or less (25 points) <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,216 or more (15 points)</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>		<p>Monthly Income Married</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$1,643 or less (25 points) <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,644 or more (15 points)</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>	
<p>Low-Income Minority (25 points: must be poverty-level <u>AND</u> minority)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>		<p>Frail/Disabled (25 points only if Frail <u>AND</u> Disabled)</p> <p>Frail (2 or more ADL's): <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Disabled (Self-Identified): (Note in comment section) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Total Score: []</p>	
		<p>Grand Total (from all sections): []</p>	
<p>Comments: []</p>			

AAA CLIENT PRIORITIZATION WORKSHEET INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose:

The purpose of the AAA Client Prioritization Worksheet is to prioritize which clients receive priority when there are limited funds to pay for the services needed. These instructions ensure consistent prioritization to the highest degree possible, regardless of who completes the worksheet. Clients must score a minimum of 25 to be placed on a waiting list.

Activities of Daily Living (25 points maximum for combined ADL/IADL):

Enter the number of ADL's which the client reports that they are unable to complete "without substantial human assistance." Multiply the number of ADL's by 5 points. Enter the total up. Combined ADL/IADL total not to exceed 25 points.

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (25 points maximum for combined ADL/IADL):

Enter the number of IADL's which the client reports that they are unable to complete "without substantial human assistance." Multiply the number of IADL's by 5 points. Enter the total up. Combined ADL/IADL total not to exceed 25 points.

Monthly Income (25 points maximum):

Score this section based on the monthly income information provided by the client.

Frail/Disabled (25 points maximum):

Score the client for frail (2 ADLs or more) and/or disabled (self-identified). Client must be frail AND disabled to score 25 points.

Low-Income Minority (25 points maximum):

Score this section only if client meets lowest income criteria (poverty level) **and** one of the minority categories (Race/Ethnicity).

Grand Total:

Transfer the points calculated from each scoring section. Each scoring section has a maximum total listed.

NOTE: Consideration will be given for amount of time on a waiting list and total number of points. Programs may move clients up on list if staff deem appropriate and there is a safety concern. Otherwise, clients on the list will be a first on, first off.

Appendix E: Affidavit of Publication From the Reporter Herald

The Larimer County Office on Aging is holding a Public Meeting to receive input on the Area Plan and approval of a direct service waiver for Aging Services in Larimer County.

Public input will be taken on Thursday, March 9 from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. at 2513 Midpoint Drive, Suite 100, Room 124 in Fort Collins. The Area Plan is posted on larimer.gov/seniors.

For more information, please contact Nicole Limoges at (970) 498-7759.
Published: Loveland Reporter Herald February 26, 2023-1954359

Prairie Mountain Media, LLC

PUBLISHER'S AFFIDAVIT

County of Larimer
State of Colorado

The undersigned, Agent, being first duly sworn under oath, states and affirms as follows:

1. He/she is the legal Advertising Reviewer of Prairie Mountain Media LLC, publisher of the *Loveland Reporter Herald*.
2. The *Loveland Reporter Herald* is a newspaper of general circulation that has been published continuously and without interruption for at least fifty-two weeks in Larimer County and meets the legal requisites for a legal newspaper under Colo. Rev. Stat. 24-70-103.
3. The notice that is attached hereto is a true copy, published in the *Loveland Reporter Herald* in Larimer County on the following date(s):

Feb 26, 2023

2023 MAR -6 PM 4: 08
REC'D
LARIMER COUNTY
DEPT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Melissa Napra
Signature

Subscribed and sworn to me before me this
27th day of February, 2023.

Shayla Najera
Notary Public

(SEAL)

SHAYLA NAJERA
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF COLORADO
NOTARY ID 20174031965
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES July 31, 2025

Account: 1107173
Ad Number: 1954359
Fee: \$10.73

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Larimer County Office on Aging Staff

Erin Alt, PROGRAM MANAGER

Nicole Limoges, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Tiffany Ballew, ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST

Jordan Dunn, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Amber Franzel, OMBUDSMAN SUPERVISOR

Mark Sleeter, ADRC SUPERVISOR

Carol Seest, ADRC CASE MANAGER

Carolina Quiñonez, ADRC CASE MANAGER

Jennifer Lynn, ADRC CASE MANAGER

Tori Wimmer, ADRC CASE MANAGER

Wendy Schleppy, ADRC CASE MANAGER

Brittany Goldman,
FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT STAFF

Dani Martin,
FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT STAFF

Kara Marang, OMBUDSMAN

Kate Poppenhagen, OMBUDSMAN

Shilo Christiansen, OMBUDSMAN

Larimer County Office on Aging Advisory Council

Stacy Bernard

Margaret Long

David Born

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Annie Scott

Megan Finnerty

Janet Seeley

Joe Glomboski

Stephen Smith

Lee Green

Sharon Thomas

Lisa Hays

Kim Wermers

Alan Kress



LARIMER COUNTY

Office on Aging

1501 Blue Spruce Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(970) 498-7750

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