

MEMORANDUM

Recreation and Community Services Department



DATE: November 22, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager 

FROM: Renee Lorentzen, Director of Recreation and Community Services

SUBJECT: **Senior Center Saturday Pilot Program**

This Information Memorandum provides an update on the Saturday Pilot Program at the Barbara Lee Senior Center (Center), which was approved by the City Council, based on an initiative from Councilmember Chua, at the January 11, 2022, City Council Additional Workplan Items Prioritization.

Background

The Barbara Lee Senior Center's normal operating hours are Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Center activities, and services include the daily nutrition program, physical and mental wellness education, dancing, arts, book clubs, drop-in fitness (table tennis, pool), meet-ups, social services support and more. On average 120 + seniors attend the Senior Center each day.

In order to implement the pilot, staff launched a survey to over 700+ active Milpitas Senior Center participants and the broader Milpitas senior community, seeking feedback on the type of program offerings, classes, and activities that would appeal to them if offered on a Saturday. An initial 100 surveys were returned, and the data collected suggested strong interest related to enrichment activities, educational presentations, exercise/fitness classes, and social opportunities through group activities. Staff also researched surrounding Senior Centers with weekend and evening programming.

Based on the initial assessment, staff launched the eleven-week pilot program planned and implemented from Saturday, September 10, through Saturday, November 19, 2022.

Program Launch and Outcomes

The Senior Saturday Pilot Program was broadly marketed to the Milpitas community, and the Pilot was officially launched on Saturday, September 10, 2022. The "kickoff" event had a total of 83 attendees on the first day, including current Senior Center members and 15 senior visitors who were visiting the Senior Center for the first time. The successful kickoff event included Senior Advisory Commission volunteers and was highlighted in the Milpitas Post.

Programming, based on initial survey interest, was confirmed with strong participation in exercise classes, educational presentations, and enrichment activities. Highlights include the Age Well, Drive Safe presentation by the California Highway Patrol, game room (table tennis/billiards), cooking/food preparation activities, and exercise/dance classes.

The Saturday Pilot Program, through the first 8 weeks, averaged 61 participants per Saturday. This total is approximately 50% of daily senior participation on an average weekday. Staff notes that the 3-hour program day provided adequate time to host a diverse set of informative presentations, various exercise classes, and an array of enrichment-type activities, after which center members can go about their weekends with a positive and active start.

Next Steps

Given the strong interest and participation in the Saturday Pilot program, staff will extend the pilot program for the remainder of the current Fiscal Year as budgeted resources allow. If one-time funding is needed, staff will bring forward a budget amendment as part of the FY 2022-23 Mid-Year Budget Review.

During the extended Pilot Program staff will evaluate the potential enrichment of the current pilot program based on participants' interests and review program costs and cost recovery consistent with City Council policy. Final recommendations for the program and needed additional ongoing funding will be brought to City Council as part of the FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget.

Starting Tuesday, November 22, the extension of the Pilot Program will be announced, with programs resuming after the Thanksgiving Holiday, on Saturday, December 3.