

VISION

Long Beach . . . the Best City to Live in for a Lifetime.

MISSION

To improve the lives of Long Beach's diverse older adults by supporting and improving safety, transportation, housing, health, and quality of life.

GUIDING VALUES

The Plan embraces the following values that will guide City leaders, stakeholders, and policymakers in future decision-making for older adults:

Collaboration: Long Beach incorporates a strong sense of teamwork and partnership to meet the needs of older adults.

Compassion: Long Beach is a caring community that is sensitive to the growing needs and concerns of older adults.

Diligence: Long Beach is aware of older adult issues and is creative and thorough in responding to their needs.

Diversity: Long Beach embraces and celebrates the differences that enrich our entire community.

Respect: Long Beach values residents of all ages and takes pride in fostering an environment that honors and appreciates older adults.

PLANNING METHOD

In response to a directive from the City Manager's office to address Goal N3.4, Long Beach Strategic Plan 2010, the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) undertook and completed a three-year process to develop and implement a plan to assess the needs of the elderly in the areas of health, safety, housing, transportation, and quality of life. In February of 2001, the DHHS, as lead agency, convened a broad-based community collaborative, the Strategic Plan for Older Adults Planning Task Force, to participate in the development of the Long Beach Strategic Plan for Older Adults. The Task Force for the Plan was comprised of more than sixty representatives from: City Departments including Fire, Police, Housing, Community Development, and Parks, Recreation and Marine; public and private sector health, human, and social service provider agencies; local hospitals; the Chamber of

Commerce; the local university and community college; key stakeholders including decision makers, elected officials, and volunteer organizations; faith-based organizations; and older adults. During the initial two-year planning phase, the Task Force met monthly to identify and prioritize the needs of older adults in Long Beach, and to develop goals and action steps to meet the expressed concerns.

The development of the Strategic Plan for Older Adults incorporated extensive participation and input from numerous sources, including Task Force discussions, work groups, a multicultural panel discussion, focus groups, key informant interviews, stakeholder meetings, a community survey, various community reports, and Census data. Secondary research data were also obtained from various sources on aging and related issues. Although Census data define older adults as individuals who are 65 or older, for the purposes of this Plan, older adults are 55 or older because many public and private providers recognize age 55 as the benchmark for providing services to older adults.

(See Appendix section A for a detailed description of all methods utilized in the planning process).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The City of Long Beach has been in the forefront of planning for the well-being of older adults. The Social Security Act emerged in the 1930s from the pressure of a large national movement in response to the distribution of a letter to the editor of the local paper from former Iowa physician Francis Townsend.

The National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA) was founded in 1947 in Long Beach by Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus. Shortly thereafter, NRTA's second Institute for Lifelong Learning was opened in Long Beach and remained a dynamic force for many years. In 1958, Dr. Andrus also founded The American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), patterned like NRTA to make permanent group health insurance affordable to a larger audience of elders. In 1982, the two organizations merged to become AARP, which continues to represent middle age and older adults, especially Baby Boomers and their elders.

A Population Profile

Since its founding in the 1880s, Long Beach's location by the ocean and its warm climate have made it an attractive community in which to live and retire.

Historically, there were two major waves of immigration into the City of Long Beach. The first wave occurred from the 1930s through the 1960s, especially during and after World War II, when white, middle-class veterans and their families, many from the Midwest, relocated to Long Beach. This population of first wave immigrants created a mostly homogeneous, white population that comprises the current majority of our City's older adults. The positive post-war economic conditions from the 1950s through the 1970s created by the growing aircraft and aerospace industries, the Navy shipyard, the

Pike area, and the housing boom began to change during the 1980s and 1990s. The second wave of immigrants occurred between 1970 and 1990, when people from Asia, Latin America, and Oceania began arriving in Long Beach in large numbers. As these younger Hispanic and Pacific Rim immigrants started their families, the youth population of the City quickly increased, significantly reshaping its population profile.

These changing economic and social conditions have given Long Beach a rich mix of classes, cultures, and languages. The cultural and ethnic differences between the two major waves of migrants into Long Beach pose a special challenge to the City to bridge this important gap when advocating for older adults to become active participants in the communities.

Additionally, accelerated demographic shifts, increased traffic, and overcrowded living conditions in socio-economically depressed areas have gradually resulted in a dramatic transformation in living conditions for many older adults. The recent revitalization of downtown Long Beach as a major tourist attraction and a high-cost housing district has made many older adults in the region express feelings of exclusion and displacement from a core area that had traditionally provided housing and vital services for them.

According to U.S. Census 2000 data, the City of Long Beach is the most diverse large city in the nation. The City's growing complexity offers a great opportunity to use this diversity as an asset. Mayor Beverly O'Neill has demonstrated leadership in revitalizing the City's economy and recognizes that older adults would like to be included in the decision-making process.

Older Adults as a Vital Resource to the Community

Older adults are valuable as resources and assets to the community. They are an integral part of the interdependence that all generations provide in enriching and strengthening our community. We all benefit when older adults share their lifelong wisdom, skills, experience, energy, time, patience, knowledge, and expertise. Older adults should be encouraged to participate in all public and private sector opportunities including social, recreational, economic, employment, and volunteer opportunities. Active participation of older adults prevents social isolation, supports good physical and mental health, and increases longevity.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC SEGMENT

The following sections describe key demographic profiles about our current and future older adult population:

“Baby Boomers”

Nationally, older adults are living longer and increasing in numbers and as a percent of the population. Locally and nationally, the “Baby Boomer” generation, persons born

between 1946 and 1964, represents the largest segment of the overall population. U.S. Census 2000 indicated that the Long Beach Baby Boomer population size was estimated at over 107,000 residents, or about 23 percent of the population. The sheer size of the Baby Boomer population coupled with increasing longevity and economic strength will create a much different aging path compared to the current “Greatest Generation” of older adults who were influenced by the events of the Great Depression, and the Dust Bowl of the 1930s by World War II.

Baby Boomers currently have a great impact on society as a whole, and their influences on social and political trends will continue to grow as they age. They are recasting traditional views of aging and retirement and will likely become vocal and active advocates for issues that impact older adults. It is predicted that the Baby Boomer population will be more concerned about their future and the resources made available to them. It is therefore important for Long Beach to continue to plan for the unique challenges and opportunities the Baby Boomers will generate as they age, as well as to recognize the benefits that they and current older adults bring to the community today.

Local Focus

The City’s Strategic Plan 2010 focused primarily on the needs of youth. The Strategic Plan for Older Adults’ Task Force members, focus groups and key informant interview participants also observed that the present distribution of resources and services is not adequate to meet the current and future needs of the growing older adult population. Older adults deserve a more equitable distribution of the community’s resources and services. Several of the City’s elected officials and key informants interviewed for the Plan viewed the lack of attention to older adults as an oversight and the result of an inadequate advocacy.

The vision of this Strategic Plan for Older Adults is that Long Beach will be the best city to live in for a lifetime.

Enriching the well-being of the City’s older adults creates an environment that embraces and benefits all ages and generations.

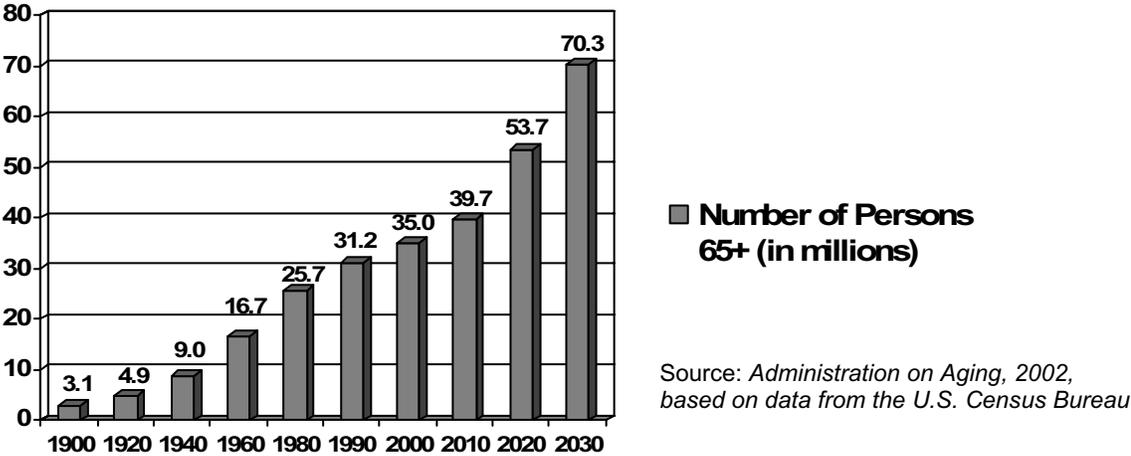
Many of the City’s ethnic populations and providers that serve them have appealed for language access and increased cultural sensitivity in all programs and services. Currently, the larger portion of Long Beach’s older adult population is white and English speaking, however, the City is experiencing a growth in the number of non-English speaking older adults. Since the Census 2000 showed Long Beach to be the most diverse city in the nation, it is crucial to prepare not only for the demands of the Baby Boomer population, but also for the increasingly large number of families and older adults who do not read or speak English and who may be culturally isolated.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Older Adult Population as a Whole: Numbers and Percentages

The Strategic Plan for Older Adults focuses on the population of Long Beach residents age 55 and older. U.S. Census 2000 data indicated that there were 71,451 persons age 55 and older in the City in 2000, representing 15.5 percent of the total population. By the year 2010, 1 in 5 Californians is expected to be age 60 or over.¹ The national percentage of older adults age 65 and older is projected to reach 20 percent of the population by the year 2030. The following chart represents national historical numbers of older adults and projects trends until the year 2030.²

Chart 1: Number of Persons 65+ in the United States, 1900-2030



Based on a review of U.S. Census Summary File 1 (100-percent) data beginning in 1970, many members of the older adult population began to move out of Long Beach. The percentage of adults age 65 and older reduced steadily each decade from 14 percent in 1970 to 9 percent in 2000. Chart 2 illustrates this 30-year decline in percentages of older adults in Long Beach.

Chart 2: Number and Percent of Persons 65+ in Long Beach, 1970-2000

YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	65+ POPULATION	PERCENT 65+
1970	358,633	50,364	14.04%
1980	361,334	50,674	14.02%
1990	429,433	46,463	10.82%
2000	461,522	41,902	9.08%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

California is projected to have a greater than 100 percent increase in the 65 and older population from 1993 to 2020, making it one of only eight states that project a greater than 100 percent growth during this 27 year period.³ California expects an increase of

112 percent of individuals 60 and older from 1990 to 2020, as well as an increase of 143 percent for the 85 and older age group.¹

Chart 3: National and Local Comparison of Persons 60+, Numbers and Percent, 2000

REGION	NUMBER 60+	PERCENT 60+
United States	45,797,200	16.3%
Florida (<i>highest percentage</i>)	3,545,093	22.2%
California (<i>greatest number</i>)	4,742,499	14.0%
Los Angeles County	1,233,436	13.0%
Los Angeles City	472,792	12.8%
Long Beach City	54,239	11.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

California has projected an increase in the number of individuals ages 60 and older from 1990 to 2020, while Long Beach has shown a number and percentage decrease of older adults since 1970. The number of persons 85 and older in Long Beach has increased slightly since 1990, but has decreased in percentage. This decrease is due to the rapid growth of younger age categories, especially the age 20 years and younger groups, and also to the potential undercounts of Cambodian and Hispanic older adult immigrants.

In contrast to Long Beach, Los Angeles County and Los Angeles City have similar diverse demographics and their older adult populations both 65 and 85 and older are growing. This may be due, in part, to a higher ratio of older migrants to recent migrants.

Chart 4: Number and Percent of Persons 65+ By Decade for Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California, and the United States, 1970-2000

65+	LONG BEACH		LOS ANGELES COUNTY		CALIFORNIA		UNITED STATES	
	Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
1970	50,364	14.0	652,399	9.3	1,800,977	9.0	20,065,502	9.9
1980	50,674	14.0	743,005	9.9	2,414,250	10.2	25,549,427	11.3
1990	46,463	10.8	860,587	9.7	3,135,552	10.5	31,241,831	12.6
2000	41,902	9.1	926,970	9.7	3,586,794	10.6	34,991,753	12.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

Chart 5: Number and Percent of Persons 85+ By Decade for Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California, and the United States, 1970-2000

85+	LONG BEACH		LOS ANGELES COUNTY		CALIFORNIA		UNITED STATES	
	Year	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
1970	4,518	1.3	53,780	0.8	142,691	0.7	1,510,901	0.7
1980	6,050	1.7	70,456	0.9	218,017	0.9	2,240,067	1.0
1990	5,426	1.3	85,427	0.9	299,107	1.0	3,080,165	1.2
2000	5,676	1.2	105,581	1.1	415,735	1.2	4,239,587	1.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

Gender

According to U.S. Census 2000 data, females comprise 59 percent of the age 65 and older group and 71 percent of the age 85 and older group for Long Beach. Women represent almost three-quarters of the population for the age 90 years and older group.

In general, women live longer than men not only in Long Beach, but also around the world. A report on international aging by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2001 indicated that women have a higher life expectancy in most nations because they have a lower mortality rate than males in each age group and for most causes of death.ⁱ The report also stated that at older ages, male mortality rates were consistently higher than female mortality rates.⁴

The Chart 6 utilizes U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 1 (100-percent) data to compare gender and age groups for Long Beach.

ⁱ The U.S. Census Bureau's report on international aging reported that the "gender differential in life expectancy" (the number of years that women are outliving men) was greater in developed countries than in developing countries; it projects that this differential will increase for developing countries in the coming decades.⁴

Chart 6: Numbers and Percent of Age Groups by Gender Among Persons 55+ in Long Beach, 2000

Age Group	Men	Percent of Age Group (Men)	Women	Percent of Age Group (Women)	Total Number (Men & Women)	Percent of Population 55+
55-59	8,556	49.7%	8,656	50.3%	17,212	24.0%
60-64	6,061	49.1%	6,276	50.9%	12,337	17.3%
65-69	4,831	46.8%	5,497	53.2%	10,328	14.5%
70-74	4,348	43.2%	5,724	56.8%	10,072	14.1%
75-79	3,815	40.5%	5,612	59.5%	9,427	13.2%
80-84	2,383	36.9%	4,071	63.1%	6,454	9.0%
85-89	1,142	31.2%	2,517	68.8%	3,659	5.1%
90+	506	25.8%	1,456	74.2%	1,962	2.7%
Total	31,642	44.3%	39,809	55.7%	71,451	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

A review of U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 3 (sample) data comparing Long Beach men and women age 65 and older revealed the following social and economic indicators:

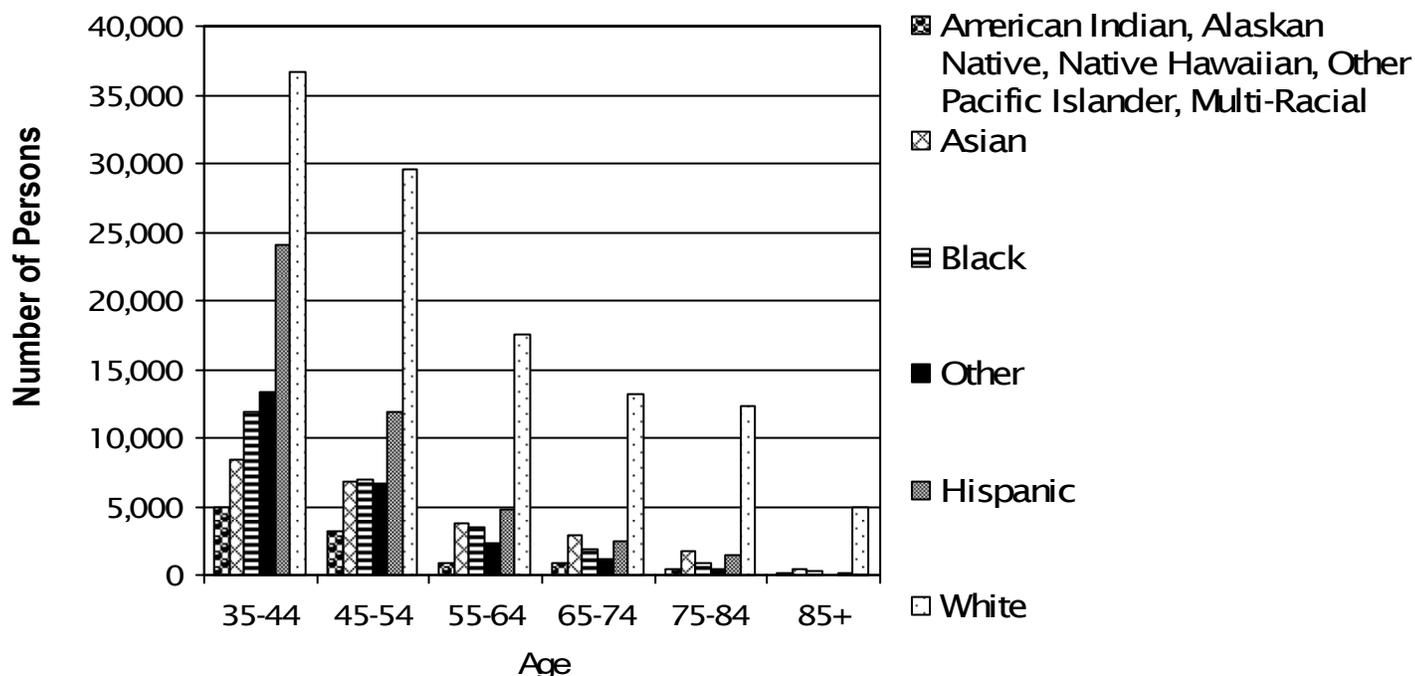
- More than twice as many women (8,294) live alone compared to men (3,626).
- Almost three times as many women (1,230) live alone and live below poverty level than men (422).
- 11,498 women live with a disability compared to 7,067 men.
- More than four times as many women (11,850) are widowed compared to men (2,670).
- More than twice as many women (2,998) live below poverty level than men (1,295).

A national report on older women by the Administration on Aging supports this data, finding that older women are almost twice as likely to live in poverty as older men, also citing that almost 80 percent of all older persons living alone are women.⁵

Ethnic Distribution

As revealed by U.S. Census 2000, the mix of races and ethnicities in Long Beach is remarkable at every age. Long Beach's adult population, age 65 and older, is 66.5 percent White, 10.9 percent Asian, 8.9 percent Latino, and 6.7 percent Black and 7.0 percent Other, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, and Multi-Racial. Chart 7 illustrates the diversity of Long Beach's population in 2000.

Chart 7: Ethnic Distribution for Long Beach by Age, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, Summary File 3

(See Appendix B for a breakdown of the Long Beach older adult population by gender and age.)

Life Expectancyⁱⁱ

In part, as a result of advances in science, technology, and medicine, people are living longer not only in the United States, but also around the world. Chart 8 illustrates preliminary current life expectancies at birth and at age 65 for males and females in the U.S., for the year 2001.⁶

ⁱⁱ The Administration on Aging defines life expectancy as a statistical projection of how long a person is expected to live with the consideration of living conditions, advances in medicine, natural disasters, etc., also citing that once surviving childhood, a person's chances of living longer increase when compared to the average member of their birth cohort.⁸ Life expectancy at birth projects the total number of years a person is expected to live from birth, while life expectancy at age 65 projects the number of additional years a person is expected to live beyond 65 years of age.

Chart 8: National Life Expectancy at Birth and at Age 65, 2001

2001 Life Expectancy	At Birth	At Age 65
Males	74.4	16.4
Females	79.8	19.4
Both	77.2	18.1

Source: CDC, *National Center for Health Statistics*

Nationally, life expectancies are projected to increase for both genders to 86 years for males and 92 years for females by the year 2050.⁷ Although estimates for longevity increases are unavailable for Long Beach, it is reasonable to expect parallel gains.

Social and Economic Indicators

U. S. Census 2000 Summary File 3 (sample) data revealed the following social and economic indicators for Long Beach residents ages 65 or older:

- 10,772 (44 percent) live with annual incomes of less than \$25,000.
- 4,293 individuals (10.2 percent) live below the poverty level.
- 913 households (24.9 percent) own their homes and live below poverty level while, 1,753 households (6.8 percent) rent and live below poverty level.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 4,508 (11.0 percent) are employed.
- 10,298 (2.4 percent) only speak a language other than English, and 6,493 (1.5 percent) speak English less than “very well.”
- 2,981 (4.9 percent) live in linguistically isolated households.
- 5,858 households (23 percent) have no vehicle available.
- Although grandparent age is unknown, 4,099 grandparents (33 percent) are responsible for their grandchildren.

Income and Poverty

U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 3 (sample) data for Long Beach indicate that the median income for householders ages 65 to 74 years is \$33,066 and \$25,700 for householders ages 75 years and older.

The national poverty level for persons 65 and older living alone in the year 2002 was measured at an annual income of \$8,628. The poverty level for two persons 65 and older living in the same household was measured at an income of \$10,874 annually.⁹

ⁱⁱⁱ Eligibility for medical and other poverty programs exempts the value of one’s home and car. It is probable that the majority of these older homeowners raised and launched their families in these homes.

The following chart compares U.S. Census 1990 and 2000 Summary File 3 (sample) data for Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California, and the United States, and reveals that Long Beach has the highest percentage of residents age 65 or older below the poverty level.

Chart 9: National and Local Comparison of Percentage of Persons Age 65+ Below Poverty Level with Percentage of Persons Age 65+, 1990 & 2000

REGION	PERCENT 65+ BELOW POVERTY LEVEL ^{iv}		PERCENT 65+	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Long Beach	9.1%	11.0%	10.8%	9.1%
Los Angeles County	9.2%	10.5%	9.7%	9.7%
California	7.6%	8.1%	10.5%	10.6%
United States	12.8%	9.9%	12.6%	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

A population report from the U.S. Census Bureau in 2003 indicated that the national poverty rate for persons 65 and older in 1959 was 35.2 percent, and has steadily declined to a historic low of 9.7 percent in 1999, then increasing slightly to 9.9 percent in 2000, 10.1 percent in 2001, and 10.4 percent in 2002.¹⁰ Although national poverty rates for older adults have generally been declining in recent decades, the Census revealed that Long Beach's poverty rate for persons age 65 or older has increased from 9.1 percent in 1990 to 11.0 percent in 2000.

iv The official definition of "poverty" is revised at each data collection point.

