



**Little Hoover Commission:
Master Plan for Aging Hearing Testimony
Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
8/24/2023 10:00 am**

- Good afternoon Chair Nava, Vice Chair Cannella and members of the Commission. Thank you for inviting me to speak today. I am Sasha Kergan, Deputy Secretary for Housing at the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH).
- Our Agency oversees 12 entities and more than 40 boards and bureaus that work toward a thriving and equitable California where people have access to safe and affordable housing, consumers are protected, and civil rights are safeguarded.
- At BCSH, we collaborate with local, state, tribal, and federal partners to address housing needs for Californians, including older adults and people with disabilities, to create more places for people to call home.
- Today, I am here to reflect on the early implementation of housing and homelessness goals within the Master Plan for Aging, and discuss how BCSH has been involved in the effort.

Background: Challenges and Demographic Changes

- As acknowledged in Governor Newsom's Executive Order and the Master Plan for Aging, California demographics are changing significantly – with our over-60 population projected to grow faster than any age group through 2030. With demographics shifting, we will also see older adults who are more ethnically diverse, more likely to be single, childless, live alone, work longer, and have lower income and less retirement savings.
- Recognizing this shift in population presents new and different demands on state and local services, and Governor Newsom affirmed that bold action to address a challenge of this magnitude requires all hands on deck.
- Meanwhile, the housing crisis is the result of decades of underproduction that has led to the housing shortage and increased the number of people experiencing homelessness in California and nationwide. This Administration has taken bold actions in housing planning, policies, and programs, and we are playing catch up – it will take time to build the housing we need for existing and future households in California.

Selecting Initiatives:

- To ensure the Master Plan for Aging reflects state housing efforts, and that aging is infused in the work of departments in our Agency, BCSH has taken a leadership role in the Master Plan and works closely with the Department of Aging.
- The Plan's initiatives reflect work from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the California Housing Finance Agency, the



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Civil Rights Department, and our coordination effort through interagency councils where we are including opportunities to address senior housing needs.

- As the Commission has heard from others, the Master Plan Goals are informed by stakeholder input, and initiatives are developed in consultation with Agencies, including BCSH.
- Our Agency has been encouraged by the clarity of the Master Plan for Aging, and the focused input from the stakeholders, resulting in the first Goal of the plan: Housing for All Stages and Ages.
- Similarly, we see housing as the top issue of our time, and that making progress on housing, means improving outcomes in many other policy areas, including climate readiness, health, and promoting inclusion.
- In these ways, the Master Plan for Aging is very aligned with housing goals and efforts. The plan is at once aspirational and pragmatic - focused on what is actionable, like increasing and maintaining housing options.
- The Master Plan for Aging's Housing initiatives focus on the most salient examples of work from our sphere of implementation that respond to stakeholder feedback, and connect to actionable efforts where our teams can make progress in support of the Master Plan.
- This has included work to help people age in place, with strategies to increase housing options like accessory dwelling units, and other climate-friendly housing connected to transit and amenities. Our work also includes identifying opportunities to remove barriers to housing production at the local, state, and federal levels.

Progress to date:

- The Master Plan for Aging has deeply influenced our work at BCSH, from inspiring how we designed the Statewide Housing Plan we released last year, to strengthening our partnership with the Department of Aging to make meaningful progress on the plan.
- Additionally, and as reported in the Master Plan for Aging, our teams have launched and refined housing programs that align with Master Plan goals, such as the Accessory Dwelling Unit grant program. Our team published guidance on furthering fair housing, and provided technical assistance to jurisdictions around the state to help them plan for and implement strategies to address the housing needs of older adults and all community members.



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- What we report as progress on the plan is only part of the story. There is other work within BCSH that is focused on addressing needs of older adults, and we will continue working on that front. For example:
 - o Our teams support local jurisdictions as they plan for housing needs statewide.
 - o We are connecting directly with the federal government, in a partnership to reduce unsheltered homelessness, with a particular focus on older adults, veterans, and young adults.
 - o We are furthering our partnership with the Department of Aging, including conversations about how our respective data tools can support our shared efforts.

Conclusion – Looking to the future

- In conclusion, I want to acknowledge that despite our progress to date, we know we have more work to do.
- We continue to look at examples and emerging trends at the local and federal levels to help leverage funding and opportunities that further our effort to support our aging population.
- To achieve this, we know we cannot work alone, and that is part of the power of the Master Plan for Aging – bringing many state teams together to work towards common goals.
- As we look to the future, we will continue to refine our efforts to advance our Master Plan initiatives, respond to public input, and current opportunities.
- Just as the Master Plan for Aging process is a collaborative effort shaped by stakeholders, our Agency continues to root our work in real-life stories and experiences. We take a people-centered approach to policy and programs and look forward to exploring, advancing, and sharing best practices that meet our shared goals.
- As the population of older adults continues to grow and diversify, our Agency will continue to pursue the implementation of these efforts and investments toward a future where all Californians have a place to call home.
- Thank you again for the invitation to speak today, and for your attention to this work.