

THE ART OF AGING

THE 2016-2020 AREA PLAN AND COMMUNITY REPORT

SONOMA COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING
MAY 2016



The Sketchbook

Executive Summary

The Art of Aging, the focus of the 2016-2020 Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Plan and Community Report, reflects the vibrancy and creativity of Sonoma County's growing, diverse senior population. This report is designed to reflect the multiple ways that Sonoma County seniors continue to express their creativity and artistic endeavors throughout their lifespan. To honor the importance of the arts among Sonoma County seniors, the major sections of this report have the following titles that align with visual art terms:

- **Section 1 is The Sketchbook:**
An overview of the highlights of this report
- **Section 2 is The Palette:**
A description of the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging
- **Section 3 is The Composition:**
The characteristics of Sonoma County's senior population
- **Section 4 is The Frame:**
An analysis of the trends impacting Sonoma County seniors
- **Section 5 is The Perspective:**
A description of the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging strategic priorities
- **The Canvas:**
The appendices and listing of the data images contained in this report

People over 60 now comprise a larger proportion of the population of the county, state, and country than ever before in history. Sonoma County's senior population comprises 118,951 individuals, representing 24% of the county's total population. The number of seniors in Sonoma County represents a growth of 5.7% since 2012 and 25% since 2008.¹ This growth in Sonoma County's senior population has major implications for both individual and community life by enriching the county with increasing wisdom and a wealth of inter-generational connections. It also is challenging families and community organizations to provide the support that seniors need to stay healthy, safe, engaged, and independent.

This report from the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging (AAA):

- Describes AAA and its tapestry of services available to county seniors (Page 11).
- Provides a demographic snapshot of Sonoma County's growing senior populations (Page 21).
- Identifies significant social, economic, and infrastructure trends impacting Sonoma County seniors and their implications to seniors' independence, health, and wellbeing (Page 31).
- Describes AAA's four-year plan to strengthen the local framework of services to meet the needs of Sonoma County seniors (Page 47).

The Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Senior Service System

The Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging (AAA), under the leadership of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and administered by the Adult & Aging Services Division of the Sonoma County Human Services Department, is part of a national system of Area Agencies on Aging created by the Older Americans Act. AAA's mission is to *provide leadership, services, and advocacy to promote the dignity, independence, and quality of life for seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers*. AAA and its Advisory Council plan, coordinate, and allocate Older American Act funds for services for persons 60 years of age and older in Sonoma County.



Regionally located senior service providers form the nucleus of diverse agencies serving seniors, caregivers, and adults with disabilities. These agencies and other community partners are the backbone of senior services delivery. AAA builds on this foundation to promote the independence and wellbeing of both current and future Sonoma County seniors. Major components of the AAA service system include the following:

- **Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council** – Planning and advocacy for the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and their caregivers
- **Outreach and Education** – Activities to enhance access to timely and accurate information to seniors, caregivers, and families and friends of seniors, and expand points of information dissemination
- **Evidence-Based Health Programs** – Proven health education and behavior change programs to promote health, prevent injury through fall prevention programs, and help individuals living with disabilities and chronic diseases
- **Caregiver Support** – Counseling services, respite, and support groups
- **Supportive Services** – Services that help seniors remain independent at home
- **Food and Nutrition Services** – Supporting congregate and home-delivered meal programs that include nutrition counseling and education and connecting seniors with the CalFresh program (formerly known as Food Stamps) and Farmers' Market Coupons
- **Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)** – Free, expert peer counseling to assist seniors in navigating the complex Medicare and private insurance systems
- **Elder Justice Coalition** – Information on abuse prevention and education, training, and advocacy activities on behalf of seniors at-risk for or experiencing abuse or neglect
- **Behavioral Health Initiatives** – Direct services, education and collaborative leadership to promote positive mental health
- **Transportation and Mobility Initiatives** – Information and education to promote safe driving and advocacy for expanded transportation options for non-driving seniors and people with disabilities
- **Housing Initiatives** – Supporting initiatives focused on assisting seniors to obtain appropriate housing to age in place

“We need to change the culture about how people think about the senior population.”

—Focus group member from
a community-based senior
services provider in Santa Rosa

“When one has been independent, we often don’t know what services are available when we begin to lose our independence.”

—Senior center focus group participant from Petaluma

Sonoma County’s Senior Population

Sonoma County seniors are living longer, represent 24% of the total population,² and comprise an expanding number of subpopulations differentiated by age, ethnicity, and economic status. Sonoma County senior population highlights include the following:

- Women age 60 and older (55%) significantly outnumber men (45%).³
- The number of individuals in Sonoma County age 60-69 represents 56% of the senior population; people age 70-79 represent 25% of the senior population; people age 80-84 represent 8% of the senior population; and people age 85 and older represent 10% of the senior population.⁴
- The Sonoma County Latino life expectancy averages 85.3 years, while the life expectancy for Sonoma County residents who are white is 80.5 years.⁵
- Sonoma County Latinos and all other non-white ethnicities/races age 60 and over comprise 14% of the population, an increase of 11.5% over 2012 and 24.2% over 2008. Specifically, this population includes 8% Latino and 6% other ethnicities/races.⁶ By 2030, Latino and all other ethnic groups will represent 25% of the total senior population in Sonoma County and Latinos will continue to be the largest group at 16% of the senior population.⁷

While many Sonoma County seniors are able to live independently in their communities, share their lives with friends and family, and enjoy a vibrant quality of life as they age, some seniors need support to maintain their independence. The AAA four-year plan identifies senior groups that face a greater risk of decreased

independence and wellbeing and outlines strategies to strengthen community-based essential long-term services and supports for those who need them most.

These vulnerable senior groups include seniors with disabilities, low-income seniors, seniors age 85 and older, and seniors who are geographically isolated. Being part of two or more of these groups puts seniors at even greater risk for decreased quality of life, loss of independence, and poor health outcomes. Characteristics of Sonoma County vulnerable seniors include the following:

- **Disability:** 29% (34,757) of Sonoma County seniors report having a disability due to some type of physical, mental and/or emotional condition, compared to 12% (60,722) of the total population.⁸
- **Poverty:** 21% (24,583) of Sonoma County seniors age 60 and older live in poverty. For seniors 75 and older, the figure is 26% (8,617)⁹ compared to 11.3% of the total population.
- **Advanced Age:** Sonoma County is currently home to 12,434 (10%) seniors age 85 and older.¹⁰
- **Geography:** Of the total senior population, 49,651 (42%) live in unincorporated towns and rural areas, 17,953 of whom (15% of seniors) are considered geographically isolated based on the definition in the Older Americans Act.¹¹

Framing the Future: Trends Impacting Sonoma County Seniors

Planning for and responding to the needs of a growing and changing senior population requires vision,

enhanced collaboration among public and private sector stakeholders, and a long-term commitment to make Sonoma County a place where seniors achieve optimal health and wellbeing throughout their lives. The trends that will frame the quality of life of Sonoma County seniors include the following:

- Continuing growth, longevity, and changing characteristics of senior populations, including ethnicity and gender identity;
- The need for economic security;
- The ability to access affordable healthcare;
- The need for affordable housing and the ability to remain independent at home;
- The need for flexible transportation options;
- Increased demand for senior services;
- Support for family caregivers;
- The need for paid caregivers to assist the growing senior population;
- Insufficient government funding for much-needed programs;
- Changes in technology;
- The need for greater cultural competence in the delivery of services and the implementation of government policies;
- Increased need for veterans services; and
- The need for greater public awareness of available services and supports.

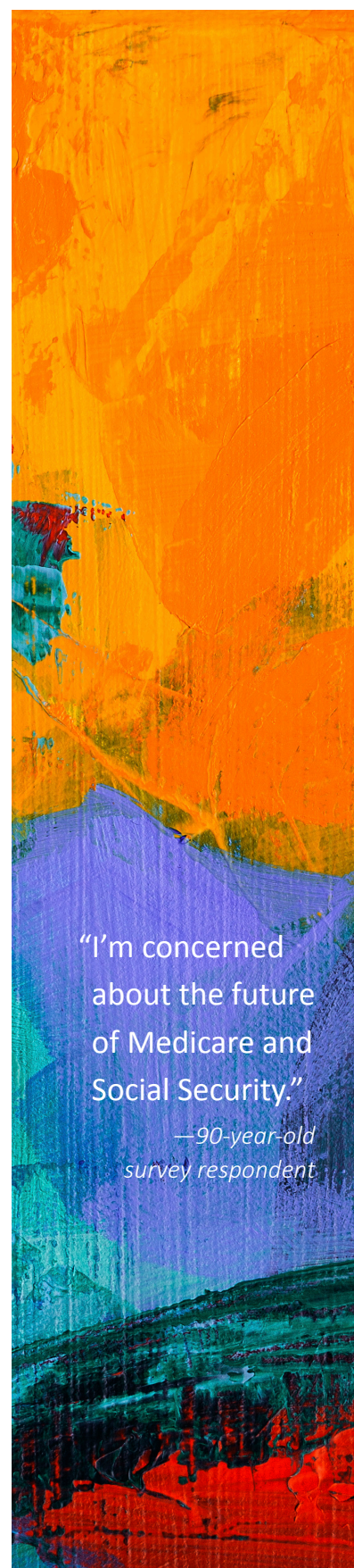
Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging Four-Year Plan

The following goals represent AAA's strategic priorities for achieving its mission.

Goal 1: Expand awareness of and access to available services and supports for seniors, their families and caregivers.

AAA will build upon its strong network of community partnerships to inform seniors and their families of existing and new services. AAA will continue to advocate for a comprehensive outreach system prioritizing those most at need. Focus group participants mentioned the AAA's *Senior Resource Guide* as a helpful source of information on services.

AAA is developing an Aging and Disability Resource Center of enhanced care management, information and assistance through the Linkages program. AAA's community partners will continue efforts to develop a community wide, integrated, senior service information system, accessible by telephone and Internet, which will be critical to helping seniors and their families in locating supports appropriate to their needs and resources. Expanded outreach to linguistically and geographically isolated populations, seniors with disabilities, and the frail elderly will help connect these at-risk groups to services and enhance their ability to get assistance when needed. An active public information campaign, highlighting the availability of long-term services and supports, helps all Sonoma County residents in planning for and meeting the challenges of aging.



"I'm concerned
about the future
of Medicare and
Social Security."

—90-year-old
survey respondent



Goal 2: Enhance the safety, mental and physical health, and wellbeing of seniors of all ages, emphasizing healthy aging throughout the lifespan.

AAA funds senior supportive services, including nutrition, adult day programs, and case management, as well as health promotion programs to encourage healthy aging. AAA's experience implementing evidence-based programs can be expanded to include collaboration with additional healthcare and community agencies. Volunteers have been effective in providing education and training to health care professionals, service providers, and the community. A Matter of Balance and Healthy IDEAS programs have been implemented in Sonoma County with success and promoted an increase in collaboration with healthcare agencies throughout the county. Additionally, AAA continues to build upon community relationships to increase elder abuse prevention activities and awareness.

Goal 3: Strengthen the community's capacity to assess, plan for, and respond to the increasing needs of Sonoma County's senior population.

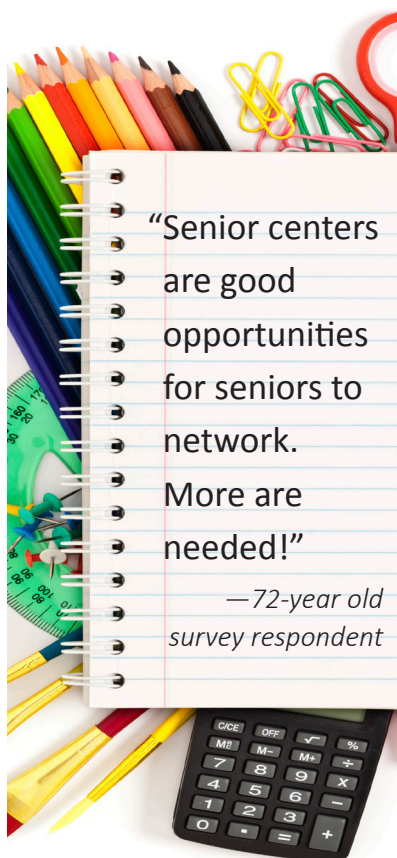
AAA collaborates with healthcare and community partners to advocate for services that will allow seniors to remain living in the community. The Planning and Funding Committee oversees the AAA funding allocation and reviews contractor performance. The AAA Legislative Committee meets regularly with elected officials to advocate for new legislation and reforms. The Transportation and Mobility Committee pursues transportation coordination and improvements for seniors. The Older Adult Collaborative, which provides case management and counseling services for seniors who are depressed or suicidal, has taken a leadership role in addressing mental health issues for seniors and will continue to expand those services. AAA participates in the California Department of Aging/Area Agencies on Aging data management system that has the potential of providing timely and accurate profiles of seniors receiving services.

Goal 4: Involve and engage seniors as a valuable resource in the community.

Sonoma County's Aging Together initiative is helping to connect generations for the well-being of the entire community. Through Aging Together, AAA and other county agencies will engage families, businesses, local government, and the broader community to identify ways for seniors to be physically, psychologically, and financially healthy and active, and connected to others throughout the county. Sonoma County's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), operated by the Sonoma County Volunteer Center, will continue to be an important connector between seniors and volunteer needs in all communities. AAA involvement with the Age-Friendly Cities/Livable Communities initiative will enable multi-generational participation to help many seniors age in place and remain a vital force in their communities.

Looking Toward the Future

Today's Sonoma County seniors are living longer, healthier, more independent, and more engaged with their communities than any previous generation. Tomorrow's seniors will continue to enrich Sonoma County with their creativity and energy and the myriad of skills and experience they bring to every facet of community life. As we look to the future and work toward creating a community that supports and nurtures all residents at every stage of life, seniors will remain one of our most valuable resources. For more information, visit www.socoaaa.org or call (707) 565-5950 or (800) 510-2020.





Key Findings

The following information presents key findings about the Sonoma County senior population.

Demographics

- Sonoma County's senior population comprises 118,951 individuals, representing 24% of the county's total population.¹²
- Women age 60 and older (55%) significantly outnumber men (45%).¹³
- The number of individuals in Sonoma County age 60-69 represents 56% of the senior population; people age 70-79 represent 25% of the senior population; people age 80-84 represent 8% of the senior population; and people age 85 and older represent 10% of the senior population.¹⁴
- The Sonoma County Latino life expectancy averages 85.3 years, while the life expectancy for Sonoma County whites is 80.5 years.¹⁵
- Sonoma County Latinos and all other non-white ethnicities/races age 60 and over comprise 14% of the population, an increase of 11.5% over 2012 and 24.2% over 2008. Specifically, this population includes 8% Latino and 6% other non-white ethnicities/races.¹⁶ By 2030, Latino and all other ethnic groups will represent 25% of the total senior population in Sonoma County and Latinos will continue to be the largest group at 16% of the senior population.¹⁷
- 29% of Sonoma County seniors report having a disability due to some type of physical, mental and/or emotional condition, compared to 12% of the total population.¹⁸
- 21% of Sonoma County seniors age 60 and older live in poverty. For seniors 75 and older, the figure is 26%.¹⁹ Compared to 11.3% of the total population.
- Sonoma County is currently home to 12,434 seniors age 85 and older.²⁰
- Of the total senior population, 49,651 (42%) live in unincorporated towns and rural areas, 17,953 of whom (15% of seniors) are considered geographically isolated based on the definition in the Older Americans Act.²¹
- Sonoma County seniors are more educated than seniors in California and the United States as a whole, with 38% of seniors age 60 and older having a bachelor's degree.²²
- 18% of the population of individuals age 60 and over (20,912 individuals) have served in the armed forces.²³
- In 2015, 6% of all county homeless residents were age 61 and older, compared to 3% in 2013.²⁴

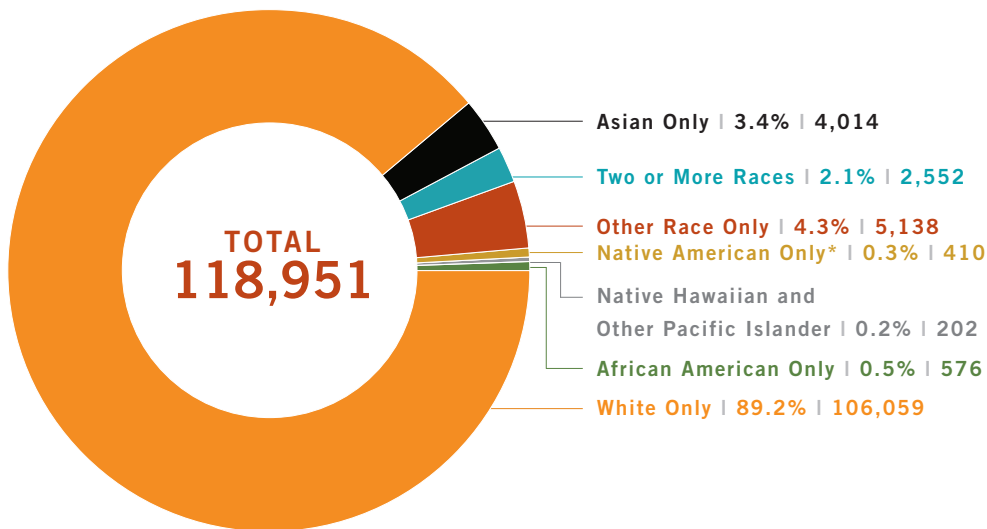
Needs (as identified in the 2015 AAA Senior Needs Assessment Survey, Appendix 3)

- **Independence:** 74% of respondents were concerned about staying independent at home.
- **Services:** 73% of respondents were concerned about learning about services available to them.
- **Services:** 72% of respondents were concerned about receiving senior services.
- **Healthcare:** 69% of respondents reported that they were concerned about healthcare.
- **Living at home:** 66% of respondents would prefer to remain living in their home during retirement.

Key Facts

CURRENT DATA

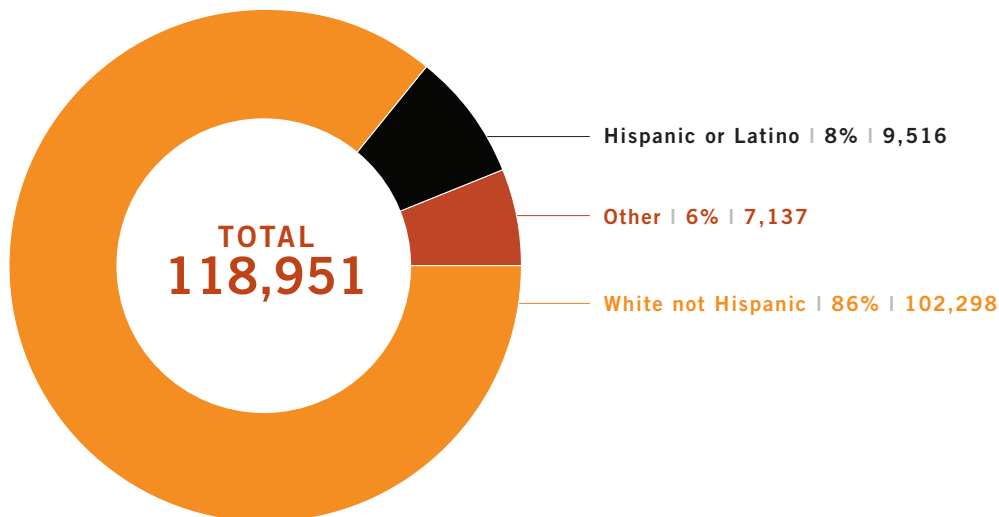
RACE OF SONOMA COUNTY SENIORS AGE 60 AND OLDER



*Native American only combined with American Indian and Alaskan Native tribes specified; or American Indian or Alaskan Native, not specified and no other race

Percentages retrieved from census 2014 estimate % of 119,416 and applied to 2014 ACS PUMS 1-year estimates for consistency

ETHNICITY OF SONOMA COUNTY SENIORS AGE 60 AND OLDER

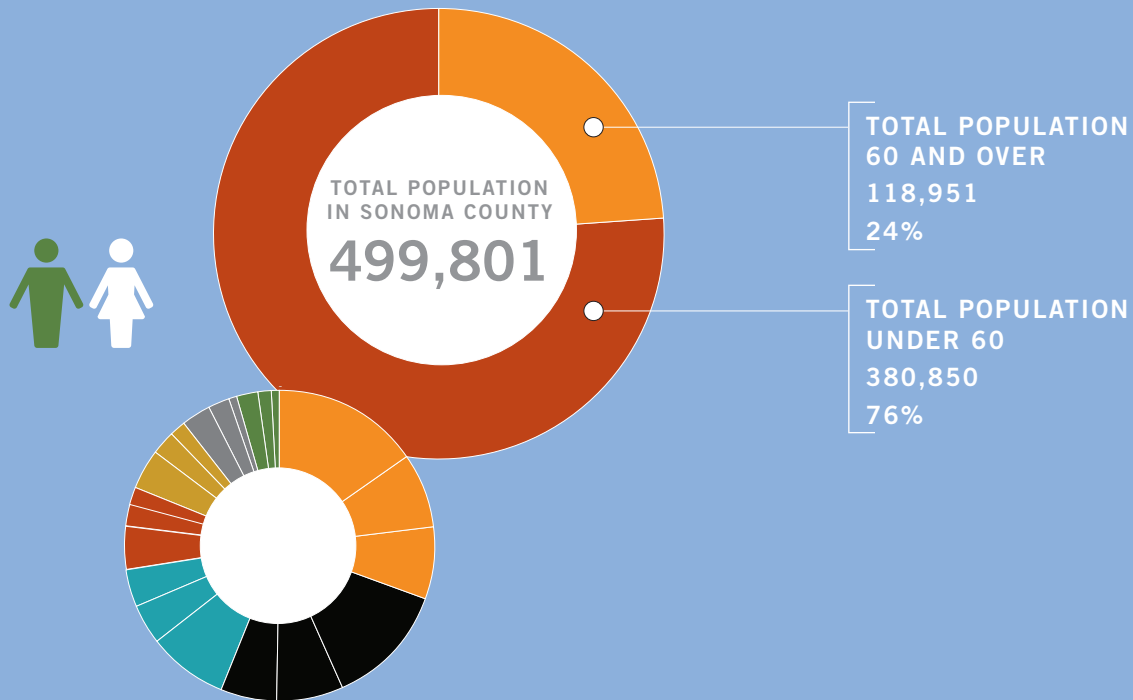


FINANCIAL STATUS OF 65 AND OLDER COMPARED TO THE GENERAL SONOMA COUNTY



Key Facts CURRENT DATA

SENIOR AGE GROUPS IN SONOMA COUNTY



60-64	36,260	7.3%
60-64 Females	18,457	3.7%
60-64 Males	17,803	3.6%
65-69	30,648	6.1%
65-69 Females	16,616	3.3%
65-69 Males	14,032	2.8%
70-74	19,491	3.9%
70-74 Females	9,911	2.0%
70-74 Males	9,580	1.9%
75-79	10,265	2.1%
75-79 Females	5,727	1.1%
75-79 Males	4,538	0.9%
80-84	9,853	2.0%
80-84 Females	6,155	1.2%
80-84 Males	3,698	0.7%
85-89	7,445	1.5%
85-89 Females	4,775	1.0%
85-89 Males	2,670	0.5%
90 and Older	4,989	1.0%
90 and Older Females	3,267	0.7%
90 and Older Males	1,722	0.3%

2014 ACS PUMS 1-year Estimates

TOP CONCERNS FACING SONOMA COUNTY SENIORS

- 1**
STAYING INDEPENDENT AT HOME:
74% ARE CONCERNED
- 2**
**LEARNING ABOUT/RECEIVING
SERVICES AND BENEFITS:**
72.5% ARE CONCERNED
- 3**
HEALTH CARE:
69% ARE CONCERNED
- 4**
ACCIDENTS AT HOME:
68% ARE CONCERNED
- 5**
HAVING ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ON:
63% ARE CONCERNED
- 6**
TRANSPORTATION:
57% ARE CONCERNED






Key Facts

PROJECTION DATA








2030 PROJECTIONS BY ETHNICITY AND RACE






TOTAL POPULATION OF THOSE 60+ {161,001}

WHITE 120,404		LATINO 25,562		OTHER RACES COMBINED 15,035	
	54,125 MALE		66,279 FEMALE		6,283 MALE
			12,925 FEMALE		8,752 FEMALE

TOTAL POPULATION OF THOSE 75+ {63,647}

WHITE 52,071		LATINO 6,496		OTHER RACES COMBINED 5,080	
	22,264 MALE		29,807 FEMALE		2,080 MALE
			3,567 FEMALE		3,000 FEMALE

TOTAL POPULATION OF THOSE 85+ {15,320}

WHITE 12,530		LATINO 1,515		OTHER RACES COMBINED 1,275	
	4,927 MALE		7,603 FEMALE		503 MALE
			602 MALE		913 FEMALE

Key Facts

PROJECTION DATA

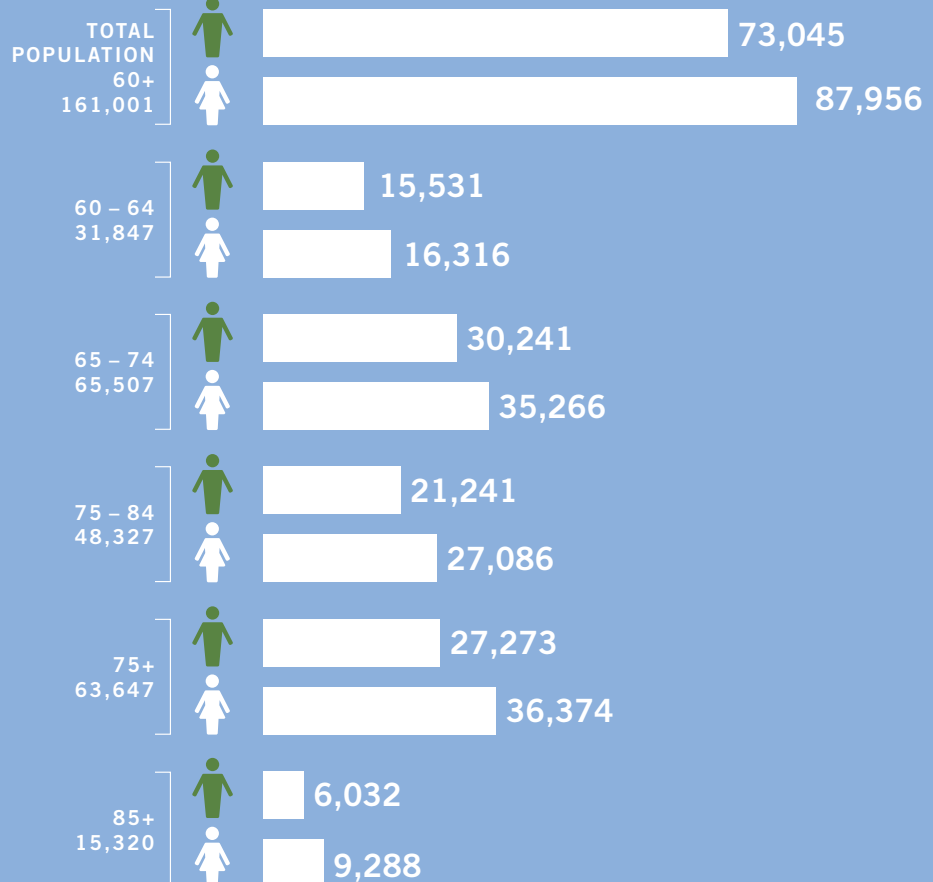
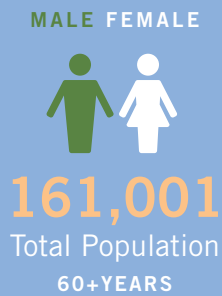
SENIOR AGE GROUPS IN SONOMA COUNTY

2030 PROJECTIONS BY AGE



AGE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
60 – 64	31,847
65 – 74	65,507
75 – 84	48,327
85+	15,320

2030 PROJECTIONS BY GENDER





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"Empower, Support, Protect"

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