HUMAN SERVICES GRANTS PROGRAM (HSGP)

FY 2023-24 PROGRAM STATUS REPORT

**Agency:** WISE & Healthy Aging

**Program:** Club WISE & WISE Diner (CWWD)

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###### FY 2023-24 SUBMISSION CALENDAR

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| **REPORTS** | **REPORT PERIOD** | **REPORT DEADLINE** |
| Mid-Year Program and  | 7/1/2023 - 12/31/2023 | Monday, February 5, 2024 |
| Fiscal Status Reports |
| Year-End Program and  | 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024 | Monday, August 5, 2024 |
| Fiscal Status Reports |

Instructions:

All reports submitted to the City are considered public record. Please note that staff will use the information provided in the mid-year and year-end reports to provide Council and the public with summary reports of agency performance highlighting key outcomes, successes, findings, and concerns.

Please be concise. For example, do NOT copy and paste repetitive content from your Mid-Year to your Year-End. In most cases, a complete program status report will be no more than 8-10 pages in length.

When preparing your report, please be sure to refer to your current Program Plan (Exhibit A), Program Budget (Exhibit B) and Special Funding Conditions (Exhibit C), of your executed Grant Agreement with the City.

To submit your completed report to the City, upload the file to your agency’s SharePoint folder as a Word document and notify your grant analyst once you have done so.

Please contact your grants analyst or humanservices@santamonica.gov for any issue with accessing your agency’s SharePoint folder.

**SECTION I: PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANGES**

Provide a brief summary of your program accomplishments, challenges, and changes that occurred during the reporting period. Please also provide information or observations related to population or service trends.

Following are Accomplishments, Challenges, and Changes for the reporting period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MEMBERSHIPS

During the reporting period, **1,031** unduplicated Santa Monica residents were members of the Club and Diner, and the Diner served **26,133** meals to older adults. We are proud to have provided this valuable service to our community and will continue to do so in the future. The Santa Monica Club and Diner are committed to improving the quality of life for older adults in our community by providing nutritious meals and a welcoming social environment.

PUBLIC INQUIRIES

During the reporting period, WISE & Healthy Aging's commitment to provide resources for older adults was evidenced by the high volume of calls received. With **2,340** calls from members, clients, and the public, WISE & Healthy Aging is a go-to source for those seeking assistance. The top three reasons for calls were: Housing Assistance, Care Management Services, and Caregiver Resources.

PROGRAMMING

Demand for the Club’s virtual and in-person programming increased during the reporting period with over **25,139** registrations received for the **1,384** classes, events, trips, and workshops. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of WISE to provide quality programming that meets the needs and interests of members.

WISE & Healthy Aging has taken initiative to address the issue of social isolation among older adults by increasing in-person programming during the reporting period. During the reporting period, **fifty-eight percent (58%)** of programs - classes and day trips - were held in-person. While virtual programming has become more prevalent since the COVID-19 pandemic, WISE & Healthy Aging recognizes the importance of in-person interaction for older adults. By creating opportunities for older adults to engage in activities and connect with others, WISE & Healthy Aging is helping to improve their overall well-being and quality of life. This effort underscores the organization's commitment to serving the needs of the aging population and promoting healthy aging practices. The shift to support and promote in-person classes and trips continues post-pandemic.

Here are some notable programming highlights that happened during the reporting period:

In July,the Active Aging Listening Session hosted the Active Aging team. The final wrap up event was held in August to provide feedback to the program team and city staff.

In September, Santa Monica’s Chief Resiliency Officer presented “Are You Ready – Emergency Preparedness” with tips for members, Santa Monica residents, and WISE staff on how to prepare for and stay safe in a disaster.

In October, WISE hosted a free preview for a multi-week *A Matter of Balance: Fall Prevention Workshop*, hosted by the organization’s in-house educational gerontologist. Staff from the DMV presented “Understand Real ID with the DMV.” The virtual presentation informed members about the new REAL ID identification required effective May 2025 including effective dates, why one needs it, and how to get one.

From October to June, lecturers from UCLA hosted virtual information sessions for seniors on vaccines, colonoscopies, dermatological issues, sleep, falls, diabetes, vitamins, back pain, and osteoporosis.

From February to June, WISE & Healthy Aging’s team presented on medication management, emergency preparedness, fall prevention, Online Dating - How to Connect Safely, and Scam & Fraud Self-Defense. Additionally, informational sessions were delivered by partners including the SCAN Foundation and the Pacific Neuroscience Institute.

The following new in-person classes were added during the reporting period: Kripalu Chair Yoga, and Life Tap. The following one-off workshops were also introduced: The Art of Self-Regulation – tactics taught by a Cognitive Behavioral Specialist to attain sustainable self-management skills; and Online Dating: How to Stay Safe Online. During the second half of the fiscal year, the following classes were added to The Club - Strength Training, and Taiji to include Intermediate and Advanced competencies.

WISE & Healthy Aging continued to offer a wide range of engaging activities, including gaming with Bingo and Bridge, language lessons in Spanish, creative pursuits like poetry, painting, and jewelry-making, and even holistic practices like acupuncture. We also provide opportunities for socialization and connection over coffee, tea, and bagels. Our programs are designed to promote mental stimulation, physical activity, and social engagement, all of which contribute to a better quality of life for older adults.

EVENTS

**August 2023: T-Mobile Free Phone**

T-Mobile partnered with WISE to bring free phones and service to qualifying older adults. This initiative aimed to connect underserved communities to the wireless network, providing access to essential services such as applying for benefits and staying in touch with family. The offer for a free phone and service was available at the event. This partnership is made possible through Assurance Wireless, a T-Mobile subsidiary that provides talk, text, and data services at no cost to low-income households in over 40 states nationwide. Eligibility was based on income requirements or participation in programs such as SNAP, SSI, Medicaid, etc.

**November 2023: Thanksgiving at Back on the Beach Café**

WISE joined with local business owner, Fred Deni, to host the annual Thanksgiving at Back on the Beach Café. Guests enjoyed a full Thanksgiving meal on the beach, complete with the traditional dishes and breathtaking views of the ocean.

**December 2023: Holiday Soul / Restaurant Day**

WISE’s congregate meal program was transformed during the holiday season with a mouth-watering meal from the renowned Chef Marilyn, a Los Angeles-based woman and minority owned business. The event featured holiday music, decorated gingerbread houses, and raffles.

**March 2024: Spring Luncheon**

WISE Diner hosted a spring luncheon catered by Rutt’s - a tropically inspired Culver City café.

**April 2024: Go Grey on Denim Day**

On April 24th, WISE & Healthy Aging observed “Go Gray on Denim Day” campaign to raise awareness about older survivors of sexual assault. Diners were offered free T-shirts in support of the cause.

**June 2024: Summer Luncheon**

WISE Diner hosted a summer luncheon catered by Fritto Misto – the family-owned Santa Monica Italian eatery.

**June 2024: Musical Performance**

The Club hosted a special guitar performance by Latin Flamenco Brazilian Classical Guitarist, Nocy, where Club and Diner members danced and sang to cherished hit tunes.

**Day Trips**

The popularity of day trips offered was evident with the well-attended trips this year. August 2023: Huntington botanical gardens trip. September 2023: Hollyhock House tour & The Deck atHollywood & Highland.October 2023: Aquarium of the Pacific Senior Day WISE was able to offer free tickets.December 2023: Newport Beach Balboa & Fashion Island. January 2024: Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture & visit to the Riverside Food Lab, and the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir – a Hindu temple in Chino Hills. February 2024: Joshua Tree National Park guided by a geographer. February 2024: LA Opera Double Feature ‘The Dwarf’ & ‘Highway One.’ March 2024: Santa Barbara Orchid Show**.** April 2024: A scenic drive to San Diego’s North Park neighborhood for lunch and an afternoon ride on the Pacific Southwest Railway through the rugged backcountry of east San Diego County. May 2024: El Pueblo de los Angeles (Olvera Street).As a low-cost option, WISE staff joined Club members and guests on a day trip to Olvera Street - the birthplace of Los Angeles.May 2024: Descanso Gardens and the Norton Simon Museum.June 2024: Big Bear Lake Escape

on a narrated cruise to learn the valley’s history and folklore.

**Digital Literacy**

As a 2022 recipient of funds from the California Utilities Commission’s CA Advanced Services Fund (CASF), the “WISE Connections” project added to the Club’s programming to help older adults bridge the digital divide through training and receipt of free laptops. Participants received up to eight hours of instruction and those completing a series of six (6) training courses were eligible, based on income status, to receive a new HP Chromebook for free. The grant concluded in April 2024 with **83** Santa Monica residents participated in digital literacy training.

**CHALLENGES**

**Increase in Demand for Food**

During the reporting period, Diner attendance frequently exceeded the number of daily meal orders that were possible with the current level of grant funding. This occurred more often during the latter half of the reporting period, with up to a dozen diners appearing several times per week and food inventory exhausted. To ensure equitable distribution of food, WISE introduced a waitlist numbering system for diners, typically those arriving after meal service begins. When possible, if meals can be stretched (e.g., pasta, rice, etc.), waitlisted diners are accommodated.

In May 2024, the catering vendor increased per-meal costs by 5%. As a result, WISE has faced challenges in meeting the demand due to rising costs.

WISE recognizes that this issue is an indication that meal demand is exceeding grant funding. By the end of April, WISE had expended all of the funds available to administer The Club and Diner and had to use agency reserves to fund this program for the months of May and June. WISE will not be able to do this in fiscal year 2024-2025 and reductions in the budget will have to be made.

**Facility Safety**

Members have expressed safety concerns while visiting Ken Edwards Center. In 2022, WISE & Healthy Aging took a proactive step towards enhancing the safety of its premises by hiring a full-time security guard. The guard is responsible for maintaining interior building security and providing exterior visibility, ensuring that staff, members, and visitors feel secure and protected. WISE also actively works with the Police Department on matters of public safety. WISE is committed to prioritizing the safety of its staff, volunteers, and clients, and will continue to explore new ways to enhance security measures.

**CHANGES**

The new electronic parking ticket validation machine at the 4th Street building has been a welcome addition for visitors during business hours. However, weekend day trippers who park in the structure when WISE & Healthy Aging is closed have been unable to secure validation. To address this issue, the City has collaborated with WISE to create a process whereby members can still receive parking validations for their weekend excursions.

###### SECTION II: COLLABORATION EFFORTS

Please highlight any new efforts to collaborate with other service providers and/or leverage services, if applicable. Please include the agency name(s) and service(s) provided.

In 2023, the WISE & Healthy Aging was invited to join an innovation hub with BetterAge for the development of a wellbeing assessment targeted for older adults (one of only four Southern California-based centers invited to participate). Participants received an invitation from MySeniorCenter with a link to complete the assessment. Once finished, they receive a personalized health and well-being summary. Early data confirmed that survey takers engaged in senior center participation report a greater level of “thriving” vs. living in “crisis”.  The top priorities for health improvement, based on responses, are physical activity, nutrition, and sleep. Assessment takers were offered a chance to get a personalized assessment of their Wellbeing Summaryby WISE staff. BetterAge presented results from the beta test in June 2024 to the California Commission on Aging, highlighting data from early adopters, including WISE & Healthy Aging, which compared and contrasted wellbeing data from homebound clients and senior center participants.

WISE participated in Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce events to connect WISE with new partners in the city of Santa Monica and secured a new Club instructor from Chamber networking.

WISE collaborated with UCLA to offer free lectures and workshops on issues affecting older adults. WISE collaborates with Food Cycle LA to receive food donations from Noah’s Bagels (Pacific Palisades). This fiscal year, WISE received 130 donations at 2582.1 pounds.

###### SECTION III: STAFFING PATTERN

If applicable, please describe how staffing changes during the report period have impacted service delivery, caseload, and redistribution of work among other staff to ensure service levels are maintained. please also describe recruitment efforts and an anticipated hire date.

During this reporting period we had on employee on leave and two employees resign. These positions were filled promptly. As of June 30, 2024, there were no vacancies in Member Services.

Please indicate how volunteers or paid or unpaid interns were used during the reporting period. Provide the total number of volunteers or interns and hours provided. If interns were used, please indicate their program level (e.g., undergraduate, masters).

During the reporting period, forty-eight (48) dedicated volunteers generously contributed their time and expertise to support Club programming and diner operations. These volunteers provided invaluable instruction and discussion group facilitation, along with food service, helping the Club to continue providing high-quality services and programming to the community. Of these volunteers, nineteen (19) were Santa Monica residents who contributed a total of 1,399.75 hours of service. We are immensely grateful for their contributions.

**SECTION IV: GRIEVANCES & GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENT (GNA)**

*Please provide the total number of grievances recorded by your program during the reporting period. Discuss trends in the number and types of grievances and any action taken to address common or recurring issues.*

There were three grievances during this reporting period that have been successfully resolved. There are no trends.

*Please detail any additional changes or issues regarding your agency’s GNA (if applicable).*

N/A, there were no issues or changes regarding our GNA during the fiscal year.

**SECTION V: SPECIAL FUNDING CONDITIONS**

*Provide a status report on how the agency is meeting its funding conditions listed in Exhibit C of your Grant Agreement for the current fiscal year, clearly addressing each individual funding condition in bullet point format.*

Individuals who are in need of housing assistance are referred to the care management program. The WISE case managers in our care management program assist clients will the completion of housing applications, vouchers, and all the noted programs in Exhibit C.

###### SECTION VI: BOARD INVOLVEMENT (COMPLETE AT YEAR-END ONLY)

Please indicate:

* Number of Board meetings conducted during the reporting period:

There were four board meetings during this reporting period.

* Board vacancies and plans to fill those vacancies, if applicable:

There are no board vacancies. Recruitment for Board Directors is ongoing to ensure the Board composition is meeting the needs of the agency at any given time.

* Significant policy actions or development activities taken by the Board during the program year:

At the end of January 2024, the board, President and CEO, and leadership team began working on a nine-month strategic planning process that will conclude in fall/winter 2024.

**SECTION VII: PROGRAM PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT (COMPLETE AT YEAR-END ONLY)**

Share examples of how feedback from program participants was incorporated into program design during the program year.

CWWD conducts a mid-year and year-end survey to collect participant feedback and recommendations on program design.

Additionally, this fiscal year, WISE hosted an in-person Dessert & Feedback Forum in March 2024 as an opportunity for Club and Diner members to grab a treat and meet the CEO and staff to share feedback on the 4th Street Santa Monica facilities, classes, and trips.

**SECTION VIII: SUCCESS STORIES (COMPLETE AT YEAR-END ONLY)**

*Please include no more than three success stories that illustrate the impact of your program on individual participants or households. When doing so, please take care to avoid any personally identifiable information that could compromise the privacy of any program participants. Please also note that staff will use the information provided to update Council and the public on agency performance.*

In March, WISE & Healthy Aging proudly nominated an exceptional older adult volunteer for the Los Angeles County 2024 Older Americans Recognition Day Award. This dedicated individual devoted over 360 hours to delivering meals and serving seniors. The volunteer was honored alongside other senior awardees at the city-hosted event in May 2024.

In the spring, WISE & Healthy Aging engaged a Santa Monica resident older adult artist and Club member to facilitate free painting sessions in the 4th Street Arts & Crafts studio. This informal instruction was designed as a welcoming environment for members to come and paint, with guidance from the artist, who is knowledgeable in color theory. Members were encouraged to bring their own projects or use the provided tools and materials.

**By submitting this report to the Human Services Division, I certify that this report is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that all disbursements have been made in compliance with the conditions of the Grantee Agreement and for the purposes indicated**