Pasadena Senior Center

Strategic Plan
2027 to 2031

Engage ● Enrich ● Empower

Adopted by the Board of Directors
September 22, 2026

OVERVIEW

The Pasadena Senior Center aims to ***engage*** seniors in life affirming activities for both the mind and body; ***empower*** them to make choices that keep them physically healthy, financially stable, and in safe surroundings; and ***enrich*** their lives.

Purpose of this Strategic Plan

The Pasadena Senior Center has served older adults for more than six decades by helping them remain connected, healthy, engaged and independent. As the number of adults over age 50 continues to grow, so too does the need for the services we provide.

This Strategic Plan establishes the priorities that will guide Pasadena Senior Center through 2031 by:

- Strengthening our ability to meet the evolving needs of older adults through innovative, relevant and compassionate programs and services.

- Ensuring PSC's long-term financial sustainability through responsible stewardship, diversified revenue sources, thoughtful investment, and strong philanthropic support, knowing that we must take some risks to prudently secure our future.

- Empowering our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and community partners to work together toward a common vision that allows Pasadena Senior Center to serve future generations.

This Plan recognizes that every strategic decision should support both our mission today and our ability to fulfill that mission tomorrow. Our commitment is to balance today's needs with tomorrow's opportunities by ensuring that financial resources are available to sustain the Center for generations to come. Every strategic priority contained in this Plan reflects that commitment.

Who does the Pasadena Senior Center serve?

The Pasadena Senior Center serves adults, ages 50 to 100+, regardless of their family resources, education, sexual orientation, gender identification, ethnicity, cultural affiliation and socioeconomic status.

Our programming continuously evolves to meet needs and interests presented by incoming generations and by external factors such as the catastrophic fires in 2025 and the pandemic of 2020-21. We serve people from disparate backgrounds and circumstances for recreation, intellectual stimulation, physical fitness, personal development, help with daily living and overcoming social isolation.

How does the Pasadena Senior Center serve?

Our independent, donor-supported, not-for-profit status meets seniors where they are, ensuring we can provide what they need, when they need it—regardless of age, health, or socioeconomic status. Seniors today are more diverse than ever and have evolving interests, backgrounds, and expectations compared to those when we first opened over 65 years ago. Our mission continues to evolve with them, always centered on connection, dignity, and helping people age well together.

Pasadena Senior Center offerings, whether in-person or online, are designed not only to meet a broad range of needs and interests, but also to bring people together, provide a sense of belonging, and support healthy, fulfilling aging.

- Social services:
  - Food programs for low-income seniors
  - Group support for anyone navigating aging-related concerns
  - Case management
  - Information resources and direct case-by-case referrals

- Educational programs:
  - Health and wellness events
  - A college-level lecture series covering current events, world culture, science and the performing arts
  - French and Spanish language instruction
  - Hands-on art and computer classes that help keep minds flexible and sharp
  - Technology instruction

- Fitness programs:
  - A staffed on-site gym with exercise machines and free weights
  - Physical therapy after doctor-prescribed PT expires
  - Aerobics, Pilates, Qigong, Zumba Gold and Yoga classes
  - Group strength training with qualified instructors
  - Ballroom and line dancing
  - Senior athletic competitions (“Pasadena Senior Games”)

- Recreational and social activities:
  - Free movie screenings
  - Musical performances
  - Holiday and group birthday celebrations
  - Socializing games like bridge, performance arts, book clubs
  - A low-cost lunch program and morning coffee bar

This is just a sample of more than 100 activities, events, classes, and support groups available, all aimed at fostering emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual well-being while creating connection, community, and a strong sense of purpose in seniors’ lives.

Case Statement

The Pasadena Senior Center exists because older adults deserve a place where they can remain active, connected, informed, and supported throughout every stage of aging. Demand for these services continues to grow. At the same time, the financial resources required to provide them grow as well.

This Strategic Plan recognizes that fulfilling our mission requires both compassion and stewardship.

Our commitment is to balance today's needs with tomorrow's opportunities by investing wisely, expanding philanthropic support, strengthening earned revenue, and ensuring that financial resources are available to sustain the Center for generations to come.

This Strategic Plan is directed toward inspiring our leadership to steward financial resources with integrity, discipline and vision so the Pasadena Senior Center can address the broad and changing range of needs in the growing age 50+ population, and so the organization can be financially sustained for generations to come.

Since PSC is committed to serving all older adults in our community, grant makers and potential individual donors sometimes fail to understand the needs our organization faces. Because of our identification with Pasadena, and because many municipalities and counties operate senior centers using public funds, potential benefactors frequently believe that we receive public funding. This could not be further from the truth.

In fact, the Pasadena Senior Center operates without local, state or federal government support.

We are not officially affiliated with the City of Pasadena, except that the City provides our facility rent-free. The not-for-profit Pasadena Senior Center covers all operating funds and executes the social services role typically assumed by other municipalities.

PSC provides the most programs and services dedicated to older adults in the San Gabriel Valley. In Pasadena, 27% of the residents are older adults. While Pasadena is aging faster than most communities its size, the population of older adults overall is rapidly increasing in the United States at a rate of 10,000 new 65-year-olds a day. *(SOURCE: Pasadena Public Health-Community Health Assessment)*

It is vital that we plan for continuous service expansion from 2027 through 2031 while increasing our fundraising capacity. We must face the reality that even with exploding demands from older community members, we can grow programs and services only in proportion to the funds we can raise.

History

In 1957, a local committee outlined a plan resulting in the City of Pasadena approving a bond issue for construction of a small building in Memorial Park. The Pasadena Senior Center opened in 1960 as a volunteer-run organization, managed and staffed by the Pasadena Junior League. In 1972 an official Board of Directors was created, and a staff was hired to deliver programs.

Thanks to the City of Pasadena and Proposition A funds, in 1997 our physical space tripled within a new building. Now there was room to increase the number and variety of programs offered to the extent PSC's Board and staff could raise operational funds.

In 1999 PSC was accredited by the National Institute of Senior Centers of the National Council on Aging, making it California's first nationally accredited senior center. With our Board and staff slowly building fundraising capability, PSC expanded its focus from primarily fee-based recreational programs to delivering more services to low-income and frail seniors supported by soliciting individual charitable contributions, grantsmanship, membership income, class fees, and event space rentals.

Our role in the community has grown significantly.

Since 2020 participation has doubled, reflecting both increased need and a strong sense of belonging that draws people to Pasadena Senior Center. Older adults depend on us not only for support during difficult times, but also for opportunities to stay engaged, connected and healthy. More individuals are enrolling in classes, attending events, and relying on essential services such as our food program.

During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020–21, we pivoted quickly to fulfill the City of Pasadena's request that we serve as an essential resource for older adults.

After the Eaton fire in 2025, we immediately assisted by delivering services to the survivors at the Pasadena Convention Center. Displaced people from Pasadena, Altadena and the destroyed Altadena Senior Center benefit from services customized for them at PSC. We continue to serve this population as their needs continue.

These experiences reinforce what has become increasingly clear: in times of both crisis and stability, Pasadena Senior Center is a trusted hub of support. When challenges arise in our community, we are looked to as a central resource because of the large and growing population of older adults we serve.

As we try to accommodate the rising number of older adults who rely on us, we are experiencing significant space constraints. Our programs continue to expand in response, even as we explore methods to increase capacity and ensure that no one is turned away when seeking connections and the opportunity to age well.

VISION ● MISSION ● VALUES

OUR VISION **Helping seniors engage, enrich and empower their lives.**

OUR MISSION Improving the lives of seniors through caring service with opportunities for social interaction, recreation, basic support and needs services, education, volunteerism and community activism.

OUR VALUES

DIGNITY	Respecting all who interact with the Center.
DIVERSITY	Embracing differences in skills, knowledge, cultural heritage, ethnicity, gender orientation and religion of mature people and their families.
LEADERSHIP	Guiding our clients, members and the larger community toward life-long well-being.
WISDOM	Drawing from the accumulated wisdom of our clients and members to benefit the larger community.
INNOVATION	Reaching beyond the commonplace to address diverse interests and needs.
SERVICE	Assisting mature individuals in need of information, housing, caregivers, transportation and various other support.
REMEMBRANCE	Honoring the presence and accomplishments of our clients and other older persons in our community.
JOY	Bringing pleasure through education, social events and fitness.
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	Ensuring the long-term strength and resilience of our organization so we can continue to serve, support and bring people together for generations to come.

COMMITMENTS FOR RESULTS

Financial Sustainability, Income & Fund Development

The financial strength of Pasadena Senior Center enables every aspect of our mission. Our commitment is to:

- Protect and prudently manage the Center's financial resources.
- Maintain disciplined spending consistent with Board-approved financial policies.
- Expand philanthropic support through major gifts, planned giving, grants, annual giving, sponsorships and fundraising events.
- Prioritize the cultivation of donor prospects for major gifts and planned giving; increase numbers of individual donors and size of individual gifts; continue grants from foundations, fundraising events, annual appeals, special appeals, and more.
- Increase earned revenue through memberships, rentals, fee-based programs, strategic partnerships, business sponsors and new enterprises.
- Evaluate all new initiatives to ensure they strengthen both mission impact and long-term financial sustainability.
- Preserve investment assets by limiting annual withdrawals consistent with Board-approved spending policies, highlighting the goal to annually withdraw no more than 5% of the three-year average of our investment account.

Social Services

Our mission insists that Pasadena Senior Center serves the needs of our population for social services. Our commitment is to:

- Position PSC as a resource by continuously prioritizing needs of our population for social services, with sensitivity to diverse communities.
- Lead establishment of tracking processes for social service programs, including tracking participant attendance and volunteer count and hours.
- Continuing effective relationships with City of Pasadena officials as an essential service, adjusting programs and services in response to emerging needs, annually securing City support for Pasadena Senior Center facilities into perpetuity.

Programs and Operations

Our mission includes enriching the lives of the older adults we serve through offering engaging programs, events and classes in facilities designed to meet their needs. Our commitment is to:

- Maintain our present facility, property and parking in an up-to-date and attractive manner ensuring the safety and security of our members, staff and volunteers, under our license agreement with the City of Pasadena.

- Explore opportunities to increase PSC's available space for programming, expanding the existing facility, property and parking when funding is available without compromising existing activities determined appropriate to continue.

- Procure adequate information systems to support PSC and its delivery of programs, classes, events and activities including technology to grow our online and internet capabilities.

- Increase paid PSC memberships and the number of individuals who pay fees for programs, classes, events and activities.

- Prioritize the needs of our population for educational opportunities, programs, classes, events and activities. Strengthen and prioritize PSC's most relevant existing offerings while adding programs, classes, events and activities that attract new participants, with sensitivity to diverse communities.

Evaluation

Achievement of our mission depends upon accountability. Our commitment is to:

- Assess PSC social services, programs, classes, events and activities continuously to make sure they are consistent with PSC's mission, relevant to the needs in the community, and responsive to emerging needs.

- Establish formal evaluation processes for all social services, in-person and online programs, classes, events and activities. Applying simple methods and tools, measure Center performance annually for relevance, including case management, offerings in classrooms, the library, computer lab, gym, sports leagues, social clubs and more. Include demographic data where feasible.

- Establish assessment processes that include satisfaction evaluations and quality evaluations that consider benefits and outcomes.

- Establish tracking processes for all offerings, tracking attendance, volunteer count and hours.

Marketing and Communications

Communities we can serve, and those who can support us must be aware of the Pasadena Senior Center and programs and services we provide. Our commitment is to:

- Articulate our niche in the Pasadena region through consistent messaging and visibility of selected leaders, developing a robust breadth of spokespersons on behalf of PSC.

- Effectively manage PSC's brand for any activity that we plan, sponsor or lead.

- Market and communicate to all seniors through relationship management, personal contact, and a variety of media, including email, video, digital and print communications.

- Enlist experts to assist in creating and maintaining a user-friendly website and to implement increasingly effective online strategies.

- Continue as a "thought leader" on significant topics of interest to age 50+ target populations, including working seniors, caregivers of parents who may also be raising children, active seniors, fragile seniors.

- Provide advocacy and education for issues affecting older adults.

Collaboration and Outreach

Pasadena Senior Center must enlist help to achieve our mission. Our commitment is to:

- Enhance relationships with City of Pasadena leadership and City Departments, including but not limited to, the Department of Health and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services.

- Continue to access no-cost assistance from other organizations to add expertise for a variety of needs.

- Intensify relationships to meet existing and emerging needs, including but not limited to relationships with the Pasadena Senior Commission, the County of Los Angeles, and other related community focused organizations.

- Identify and establish potential new partnerships that include opportunities for increased revenue in support of PSC's mission.

Staff and Volunteers

Effective human resources practices are critical to our mission. Our commitment is to:

- Be a good employer by providing pensions and other incentives to attract and retain high-quality staff.
- Annually review the PSC succession plan for future transition of PSC staff leadership, updating as needed.
- Continue to recruit volunteers of all ages. Define a wider spectrum of tasks for volunteers to perform, leveraging volunteer services to offset administrative and service costs for programs and services we deliver.
- Honor volunteers who assist Pasadena Senior Center activities at our main site and at satellite locations.

Board Development, Engagement and Responsibilities

Every Board member serves as a steward of Pasadena Senior Center's mission, reputation and long-term financial health. Accordingly, Board members are expected to:

- Support the Center through personal financial commitment.
- Participate in cultivating relationships with donors, community leaders, foundations and strategic partners.
- Advocate for Pasadena Senior Center throughout the community.
- Promote a culture of philanthropy in which financial sustainability is viewed as a shared responsibility of the entire Board.
- Understand the Center's financial position and exercise sound governance over its resources, by prioritizing and interweaving financial sustainability of the Center into all aspects of Board activity.

To these ends, staff interface with the Board will emphasize:

— Enhancing Board understanding of PSC's financial statements.

— Implementing a Board agreement each year that outlines both Board member responsibilities and responsibilities of the organization to each Board member. The agreement:

  Outlines the Board's responsibility to hold the organization accountable for adhering to the Pasadena Senior Center mission.

  Communicates core values about debate and disagreement, accountability and Board—Staff relationships.

  Fosters shared responsibility for fundraising to support long-term financial sustainability.

  Assures that funds are available to sustain selected existing programs and support any new programs or services proposed.

- Cultivate Board interactions and experiences that reflect the Center's mission and represents its values. Nurture Board members' interests and individual fulfillment from their overall Board service and their annual individual financial gift commitment.

- Define opportunities for Board members to serve as ambassadors and spokespersons for Pasadena Senior Center.

- Improve effectiveness of each Board Committee that aligns with the charter for each Committee, evaluating and reporting on each Committee's results annually.

- Improve education value in Board meetings and provide Board training where needed, including Board and staff team building, to enhance Board members' ability to assist Pasadena Senior Center in achieving results this Strategic Plan will pursue.

CONCLUSION

The Pasadena Senior Center has earned the trust of our community through decades of service, compassion, innovation and responsible leadership. The years ahead will bring tremendous opportunity as the population of older adults continues to grow and their needs evolve. Meeting their needs will require thoughtful leadership, sound financial stewardship, community partnership and an unwavering commitment to our mission.

This Strategic Plan provides the framework for that work. Together, the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, donors, members and community partners will ensure that Pasadena Senior Center remains a welcoming place where older adults can engage, enrich and empower their lives, not only today, but for generations to come.