



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Launches “Blue Zones” Project to Increase Public Health and Longevity in Arlanza Neighborhood

Partnership with the Office of the Governor’s California Volunteers seeks to build education, community mobilization, and projects around increased public health and longevity.

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside in partnership with Governor’s Office/California Volunteers has been awarded a \$1 million “Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors” grant to develop a resident-led, two-year effort in the Arlanza neighborhood to address local health and sustainability concerns and potentially position the area for future competitive sustainability funding.

The goal is to empower residents in understanding and making lasting changes in their lives and their community. Resident education and community projects in areas of connectivity, nutrition, movement, and climate will help Arlanza residents learn how to achieve greater longevity and wellbeing.

The City worked with community partners Riverside Community Health Foundation and Healthy Leaders Thriving Cities/Love Riverside to secure the Statewide competitive funding. Five sub-neighborhoods in the greater Arlanza area will develop projects leading to a resident driven local “community action plan” with the goals of connecting neighbors, increasing volunteerism, and advocating for greater public health and sustainability within their neighborhood. The community planning associated with this project also will position the neighborhood for more grant funding.

“Living longer and happier lives should be a goal for all residents,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “This is an opportunity for a new generation of Arlanza residents to enjoy a healthier community”

Blue Zones are communities identified as having populations living measurably longer, happier lives with lower rates of chronic diseases and a higher-than-average quality of life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, life expectancy for Americans averaged 77.5 years in 2022. But this year, over 70,000 Americans have reached their 100th birthday. The Arlanza project will feature local programs and projects inspired by the examples set by residents with of high life longevity.

“This is a great win for the Arlanza neighborhood,” said Councilmember Jim Perry, who represents a portion of the area. “It’s community investment, but on a human scale, with a project that impacts issues critical to sustainability in Riverside.”

The City of Riverside has been a part of the greater Riverside County Blue Zones effort since the City Council voted on Dec. 12 to join. The potential value created for the City includes modified behaviors, decreased instances of disease, medical cost savings, productivity savings and increased regional economic performance. The City Council’s Strategic Plan priorities align well with the Blue Zones effort, most notably the priority on Community Well-Being for Riverside residents.

“We are excited for what this means for the greater Arlanza community,” said Councilmember Steve Hemenway, who also represents the area. “Not only will this build community, empower residents, and strengthen neighborhoods, it will also position the area to be more competitive for grants to complete even more projects in the future.”

More information can be found at: <https://www.californiavolunteers.ca.gov/>