

2001-2002 GRAND JURY REPORT

The Riverside County Office On Aging

Background

The Riverside County Office On Aging (RCOOA) was established in 1975, by the Board of Supervisors, to coordinate the many county-wide activities supporting the county's aging population (Fig. 1). The Board of Supervisors along with a 17 member Citizens Advisory Committee On Aging determines policy and develops program recommendations. The RCOOA is managed by a 12 member leadership team, which shares in the responsibility for providing customer service. The RCOOA has a staff of 120 full time employees, which includes seven caseworkers, and uses the services of more than 1,800 volunteers.

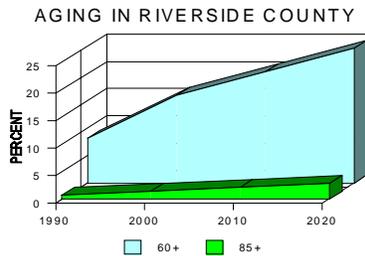


Fig. 1—Riverside County's aging population.
(Source California Department On Aging,
U.S. Bureau of Census Year 2000 report)

The RCOOA administers a ten million dollar annual budget comprised of funds from the federal, state, and county governments (Fig. 2). Additional funding may be obtained by grants and donations from persons who receive these services.

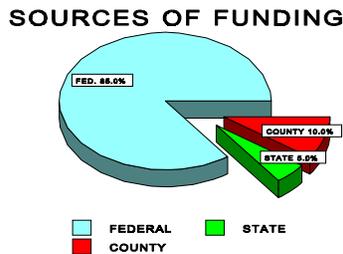


Fig. 2—Principal sources of funding for the
Riverside County Office On Aging.
(Source RCOOA)

The RCOOA policy is cost effective, allowing clients to remain in their homes. Riverside County's population is rapidly growing and shifting demographically. It is projected that by the year 2020, the county's total population will be more than 2,500,000. Many of retirement age are remaining active and productive due to the increasing availability of health services. These people will continue contributing to society through employment and volunteerism. This will result in a greater need for expanded public transportation, education, recreation, and the honing of job skills.

Findings

1. There are more than 50 agencies in the county that offer services for seniors. RCOOA is developing a computer data system to list the services that are provided by each agency.
2. RCOOA funds are used to provide a variety of services including case management for:
 - assisted home living, adult day care, preventive health care
 - home delivery of meals, nutritional advice, and transportation
3. Riverside County lacks transportation for seniors living in remote locations. Those seniors, who use available public transportation, find many bus stops do not provide benches, route maps, and schedules.
4. Due to the current senior population, as well as projected growth, additional case managers are needed to meet workloads.

Recommendations

Riverside County Board of Supervisors Riverside County Office On Aging Riverside County Transit Authority

1. RCOOA expedite the development and implementation of the computer data system.
2. RCOOA develop and implement a plan to provide both private and public transportation for seniors residing in isolated areas of the county.
3. Riverside County Transit Authority provide benches, route maps, and bus schedules at all public bus stops.
4. RCOOA immediately hire a minimum of three additional case managers to meet current and expected workloads.