

2/23/22

## **MEMORANDUM**

To: Albany City Council Members

From: Social and Economic Justice Commission

Re: Aging In Place Sub-committee recommendations

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council approve the following measures:

1 - That Albany join the Network of Age Friendly Communities.

2 – That Albany take account of the effect on seniors of changes in infrastructure related to access to outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, work and civic engagement, communication and information, community and health services.

3 – That Council establish a senior advisory committee to work with staff on a livability assessment and to advise staff and Council members on issues related to senior friendly infrastructure and services.

4 – That the City conduct a campaign during Older American’s Month to acquaint people with the Senior Center.

## **BACKGROUND**

The United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention defines aging in place as “the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently and comfortably regardless of age, income or ability level.” Both the American Association of Retired People (AARP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) agree on what they call the 8 domains of livability. Those include Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information and Community and Health Services.

In the next 20 years the number of adults age 65 and older will nearly double in the United States. Many of these people will continue to live in the community even if they have one or more disabilities. The degree to which they can participate in community life will be determined, in part, by how well their physical environment accommodates them and the quality of services provided. According to Alameda County the City of Albany’s senior population of citizens over 60 years of age is 2,918.

To compile this report, we looked at numerous websites including, AARP, WHO, Ashby Village, Alameda County, and various cities which have aging in place programs in place including Berkeley, Fremont and West Hollywood. We also met with Robin Mariona who is supervisor of the Albany Senior Center.

The Senior Center serves from 100 to 300 people per day. Senior Services run out of the Center include:

- Staff available to help connect seniors with social services, healthcare coverage, home health and meals and to help fill out forms.
- Meals on Wheels—The Albany Program delivers meals for seven days a week over a four-day period. This is funded by the city, county, state and done in collaboration with the City of Berkeley.
- A hot dinner is provided at low cost (\$4.00 maximum) or no cost five days a week. This is also done in collaboration with the City of Berkeley.
- Birthdays are celebrated once a month with a special dinner.
- Mercy Brown Bag Program—Program provides food distribution on the first and third Fridays of each month. Each participant pays a \$10.00 annual fee and Catholic Charities funds the remainder.
- Podiatry Services are provided once a month for no fee for Albany residents.
- Blood pressure tests are done free of charge once a week.
- Para Transit program—takes seniors shopping to Safeway, Target, Asian Mall and El Cerrito Plaza.
- Taxi Reimbursement Program
- Day trips which usually are fully booked with a waiting list. Includes transportation. Participants pay for the trips.
- A variety of classes that are provided for a nominal fee.
- Two computers are available for self-serve 30-minute sessions. Free tutoring appointments available on Mondays and Fridays.
- The Albany Community Foundation helps to support some programs at the Senior Center. Also, the Friends of Albany Seniors (FOAS) is a volunteer group that raises money for the Senior Center to help supplement and take care of special needs.

## **DISCUSSION**

Alameda County did an assessment of seniors in Alameda County in 2016. Unfortunately, only 39 seniors in Albany participated in the survey. On December 3, 2019, Senior Center Supervisor, Robin Mariona, attended a seminar put on by the Bay Area Senior Health Policy Coalition. They are part of the SCAN Community of Constituents Initiative of the SCAN Foundation, building a statewide movement to transform the system of care so that all Californians can age with dignity, choice and independence. Robin took away two recommendations from the conference. One, is that Albany should to join the Network of Age Friendly Communities.

To join the Network, an evaluation of the senior population of Albany must be done. We recommend using the AARP Questionnaire with some changes , as needed , for Albany. Another suggestion that

Robin took away was that the City should form a Senior Task Force/Leadership Team to take this task on. We are recommending that it be done by a Senior Advisory Group with staff leadership.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

An assessment is required to become a member of the Age-Friendly Network. AARP has developed a 16-page questionnaire. This is the assessment instrument that the City of Berkeley used, with a few minor changes. We would recommend the same for Albany. After an assessment is done the city can use the results along with input from stakeholders to prepare a multi-year plan for the city. The findings of the livability assessment should be the basis of a full review of needed changes to make Albany a more senior friendly community with special emphasis on making it possible for seniors to age in place in Albany. The creation of a Senior Advisory Group would provide a vehicle to sustain these efforts over time.

### **SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Seniors are a group with special needs that are often overlooked, moreover within the senior population BIPOC members are often disadvantaged. In many cases this is a result of systematic racial and cultural inequities both historic and current. Among these inequities is a history of redlining that has deprived African Americans from access to intergenerational wealth. Special attention should be paid to the particular needs of minority populations in the livability assessment and in the development of strategic goals to increase age-friendliness and support aging in place in Albany.

### **CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES**

These recommendations are consistent with Council Strategic Plan Goals 1 – Foster a healthy and sustainable City and 2 – Engage our Diverse Community.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There is no cost involved in joining the Network of Age Friendly Communities. Staff support for the assessment could be provided by Senior Center staff who are familiar with the issues. A 16-page AARP questionnaire has been developed and was used by Berkeley to conduct an assessment. As proposals were developed by the Senior Advisory Committee there could be costs associated with implementation. However, such expenditures would be considered by Council in reviewing specific recommendations. This initial effort does involve a significant cost beyond the provision of staff time.

**February 4, 2020**

### **Advantages of joining the WHO/AARP Network of Age-Friendly Cities**

- **Automatic entry to the WHO global network**
- **A wide range of free resources on age-friendly and livable communities**
- **Opportunities for partnership with other cities**
- **The network provides cities with resources to become more age-friendly by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices**
- **Joining the network means that Albany's elected leadership has made a commitment to actively work with residents and local advocates to make our city an age-friendly place to live. This is public recognition for committing to becoming age-friendly.**
- **The network helps local leaders identify and understand community needs.**
- **The network fosters partnerships among community groups and local stakeholders.**
- **The network provides access to technical and expert-led webinars.**
- **AARP will work with local officials to facilitate Albany's enrollment and guides city representatives through the network's implementation and assessment process.**

### **After enrolling in the Network:**

**60% of member communities achieved a change in public policy most often by integrating an "age-friendly lens" in community planning**

**34% achieved a private sector investment or action such as local retailers and restaurants securing "age-friendly business" designations, commitments by builders to expand use of age friendly design standards**

**85% described other successes, such as raising awareness of livability issues**

## **Other Bay Area Cities in the Network and year they joined**

**Berkeley 2016 /Oakland 2018 /Alameda County 2019 /Emeryville 2018/  
Marin County 2018/ San Francisco 2014/ Santa Clara became the first  
county in the country to have all cities become part of network**

## **TASK FORCE/LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**The leader of the team could be a volunteer, community activist,  
agency staff member or someone employed by the City.**

- **Have a passion for livability project**
- **Have expert knowledge**
- **Willing to put in the time to see the project through**
- **Comprised of people who bring different perspectives to the work being done. This would mean people from government, volunteer sector, local businesses, academic, social service providers and residents.**
- **Ensure diversity on the team by including people who live in different neighborhoods or who represent different interests such as artists and business owners and those who have resided in Albany for longer and shorter periods of time**
- **The team should represent the ethnic, cultural and racial diversity of Albany as well as different income levels**



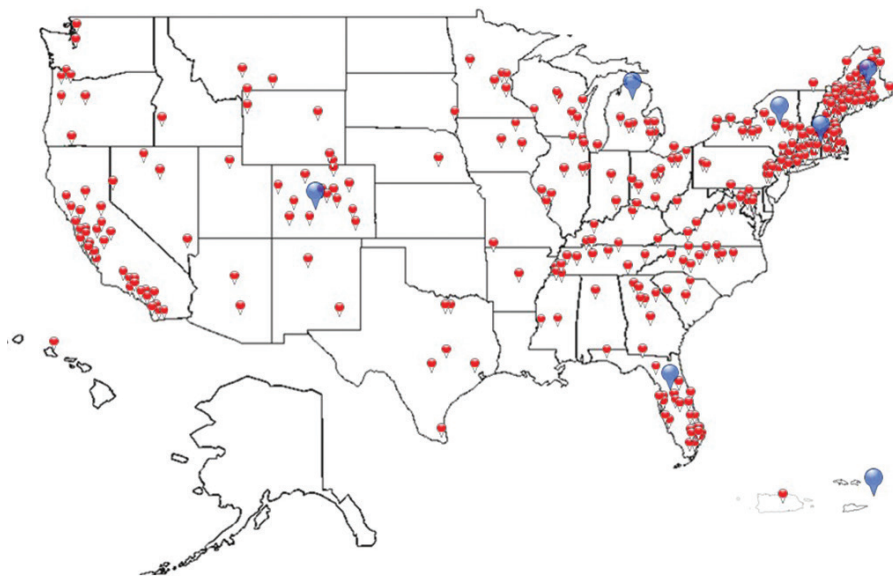
# AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

An age-friendly community is livable for people of *all* ages



[AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://AARP.org/AgeFriendly)

**AARP®**  
Real Possibilities



The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities reached the 400 member mark in September 2019. The red dots indicate town-, city- and county-level members. The blue pins identify state- and territory-level members. Check out the member list at [AARP.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List).



**Websites:** [AARP.org](https://www.aarp.org) and [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)

**Email:** [Livable@AARP.org](mailto:Livable@AARP.org)

**Facebook:** [/AARPLivableCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/AARPLivableCommunities)

**Twitter:** [@AARPLivable](https://twitter.com/AARPLivable)

**Free Newsletter:** [AARP.org/LivableSubscribe](https://www.aarp.org/LivableSubscribe)

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 or older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. The AARP Livable Communities initiative works nationwide to support the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities, counties, rural regions and entire states to be livable for people of all ages.

Cover photographs (clockwise from top): Washington, D.C., block party, provided by Van Ness Main Street; bike-sharing in Honolulu, by Colby Takeda, Blue Zones Project Hawaii; Age-Friendly Festival, provided by Age-Friendly Sarasota, Florida.

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- The population of the United States is rapidly aging.
  - By 2030, one of every five people in the U.S. will be 65 or older.
  - By 2035, the number of adults older than 65 will be greater than the number of children under 18.
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**T**hat's why AARP staff and volunteers are working throughout the nation to engage and mobilize communities, share expertise, and deliver technical assistance to the towns, cities, counties and states in the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities**.

The work that happens within the network — which is a program within the larger **AARP Livable Communities** initiative — is hands-on and locally determined and directed. The common thread among the enrolled communities and states is the belief that the places where we live are more livable, and better able to support people of *all* ages, when local leaders commit to improving the quality of life for the very young, the very old, and everyone in between.

AARP engages with elected officials, partner organizations and local leaders to guide communities through the age-friendly network's assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation processes.

People of all ages benefit from the adoption of policies and programs that make neighborhoods walkable, feature transportation options, enable access to key services, provide opportunities to participate in community activities, and support housing that's affordable and adaptable. Well-designed, age-friendly communities foster economic growth and make for happier, healthier residents of all ages.

Communities and nations around the world are increasingly seeking to grow in a more age-friendly manner. Launched in 2012, the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities is an organizational affiliate of the World Health Organization Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, which was established in 2006 to help prepare for the world's growing population of older adults. (Communities wishing to join that network can do so at [AgeFriendlyWorld.org](http://AgeFriendlyWorld.org).)

This booklet provides an overview of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, the enrollment process and the obligations of member communities. Turn the page to learn more. ►



# FIRST IN THE NETWORK!

► In April 2012, Macon-Bibb, Georgia, became the first community to join the brand-new **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities**, thanks to the age-friendly efforts of AARP volunteer Myrtle Habersham, Bibb County Commission Chairman Samuel F. Hart (seated, left) and Macon Mayor Robert A.B. Reichert.



◀ In 2017, grant funds from the **AARP Community Challenge** (see below) helped a Macon neighborhood turn a vacant lot into a community park with outdoor games, seating and tables so people of all ages can visit and play together. “Chess allows people to open their minds,” said Antonio Lewis-Ross, president of South Macon Arts Revitalization Technology (SMART). Outdoor game tables “bring people together and gives them something to do other than just hanging around.”

Learn about the AARP Community Challenge at [AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](https://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge).

Photographs by Matt Odum (top) and Julio S. Gonzalez

# Introducing the Age-Friendly Network

The **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** serves as a catalyst to educate local leaders (both elected officials and engaged residents) and encourage them to implement the types of changes that make communities more livable for people of all ages, especially older adults.

The network provides cities, towns, counties and states with the resources to become more age-friendly by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices.

Membership in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities means that a community's elected leadership has made a commitment to actively work with residents and local advocates to make their town, city, county or state an age-friendly place to live.

## **A community's age-friendly leaders and champions will likely include:**

- Elected officials
- Government agencies
- Nonprofit organizations and foundations
- Academic institutions
- Local businesses and Chambers of Commerce
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Community coalitions
- Residents and lots of volunteers

## **A few important points:**

- Communities in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities are not retirement villages, nursing homes or assisted-living facilities. Nor are they planned communities or age-restricted housing developments.
- Membership in the network does not mean AARP endorses the towns, cities, counties or states as places to live. Nor does it mean the member communities and states are currently age-friendly and great places to retire.

# The Benefits of Membership

Members of the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** become part of a network of towns, cities, counties and states that are committed to enhancing the lives of people of all ages and enabling older residents to have rewarding, productive and safe lives.

## Membership in the network:

- Helps local leaders identify and understand community needs
- Serves as an organizing structure for making community improvements
- Fosters partnerships among community groups and local stakeholders
- Provides leadership opportunities for volunteers
- Enables changes that benefit people of all ages

## In addition, membership provides a community with:

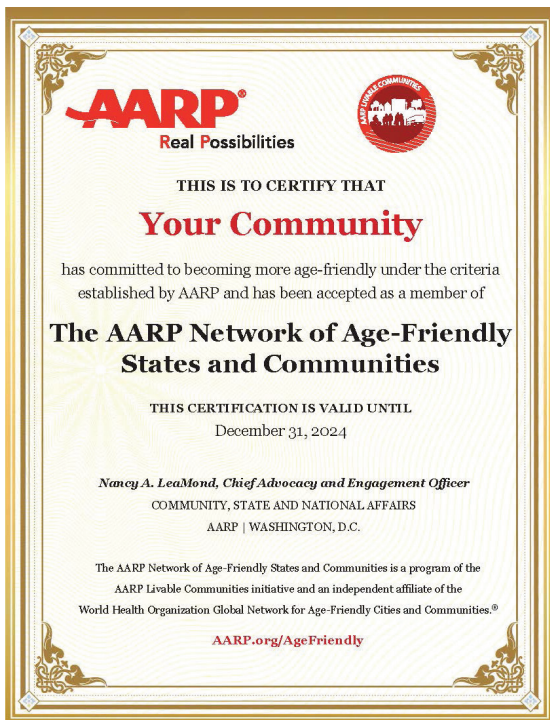
- Public recognition for committing to becoming age-friendly
- Resources for identifying and assessing community needs
- Access to technical assistance and expert-led webinars
- Support and best practice materials from AARP

### **According to a membership survey, after enrolling in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities:**

- 60% of member communities achieved a change in public policy, most often by integrating an “age-friendly lens” into community planning
- 34% achieved a private-sector investment or action — such as by local retailers and restaurants securing “age-friendly business” designations, commitments by builders to expand their use of age-friendly design standards, and partnerships with taxi services to provide discounted rides to older adults
- 85% described other successes, such as raising awareness about livability issues, increasing collaborations within the community, and implementing educational and engagement programs

\* Survey distributed to members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities (February 2019)

# Joining the Network



## There is no fee to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

- Find membership details and an application: [AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly)
- Watch informative videos about the program: [AARP.org/AgeFriendlyTraining](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendlyTraining)
- Interested communities can contact their AARP state office: [AARP.org/States](https://www.aarp.org/States)
- See the list of enrolled communities: [AARP.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List)

Communities enroll individually, as part of a region or as a state.\*

All towns, villages, townships, boroughs, cities, counties and states seeking to enroll in the AARP age-friendly network are required to submit a membership application.

In addition, the community must provide a letter of commitment signed by the jurisdiction's highest elected official (e.g. a governor, mayor, county executive).

Communities with council or commission forms of government typically pass a resolution in support of membership in the network.

An enrollment certificate (pictured) is issued once a community's application has been reviewed and accepted by AARP.

\* State enrollment in the network does not confer automatic membership on that state's local communities.



# What Makes a Community “Age-Friendly”?

The most livable communities are those that enable residents to thrive at every age and every life stage — in other words, they are age-friendly.

However, the availability and quality of certain community features — commonly referred to as the **“8 Domains of Livability”** — do have a particular impact on the well-being of older adults. The domains framework can be used to organize and prioritize a community’s work to become more livable for older residents as well as people of all ages.

While many members of the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** tackle all eight domains at once, others choose to focus on fewer or combined domains.

## 1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

People need public places to gather — indoors and out. Green spaces, seating and accessible buildings (elevators, zero-step entrances, staircases with railings) can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.



## 2. Transportation

Driving shouldn’t be the only way to get around. Pedestrians need sidewalks and safe, crossable streets. Dedicated bicycle lanes benefit nondrivers and drivers alike. Public transit options can range from the large-scale (trains, buses, light rail) to the small (taxis, shuttles or ride share services).



## 3. Housing

AARP surveys consistently find that the vast majority of older adults want to reside in their current home or community for as long as possible. Doing so *is* possible if a home is designed or modified for aging in place, or if a community has housing options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages and life stages.



## 4. Social Participation

Regardless of a person's age, loneliness is often as debilitating a health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities.



## 5. Respect and Social Inclusion

Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.



## 6. Work and Civic Engagement

Why does work need to be an all or nothing experience? An age-friendly community encourages older people to be actively engaged in community life and has opportunities for residents to work for pay or volunteer their skills.



## 7. Communication and Information

We now communicate in ways few could have imagined a decade ago. Age-friendly communities recognize that information needs to be shared through a variety of methods since not everyone is tech-savvy — and not everyone has a smartphone or home-based access to the internet.



## 8. Community and Health Services

At some point, every person of every age gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs some help. While it's important that assistance and care be available nearby, it's essential that residents are able to access and afford the services required.



Photo credits: (1) Jacques Warré for AARP; (2) Yawpal Regional Transit; (3) Getty Images; (4) Getty Images; (5) Melissa Stanton, AARP; (6) AARP Arizona; (7, 8) Getty Images

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# The Age-Friendly Process and Program Cycle

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Members of the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities** commit to an assessment process and cycle of continuous improvement, the steps of which typically require the member community to:

1. Establish a way — such as through a commission, advisory panel or focus groups — to include older residents in all stages of the age-friendly planning and implementation process
2. Conduct a community needs assessment (AARP can provide survey examples, templates and an online tool in English and Spanish)
3. Develop an action and evaluation plan based on the assessment results
4. Submit the plan for review by AARP
5. Implement and work toward the goals of the plan
6. Share solutions, successes and best practices with AARP
7. Assess the plan's impact and submit progress reports
8. *Repeat!*

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## AARP Livable Communities Resources

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- Learn about AARP's livability and age-friendly work: [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)
- Find network-related information and materials: [AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly)
- Download or order free publications: [AARP.org/LivableLibrary](https://www.aarp.org/LivableLibrary)
- Read about our "quick-action" grant program: [AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](https://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)
- Follow us on Twitter: [@AARPLivable](https://twitter.com/AARPLivable)
- Like us on Facebook: [@AARPLivableCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/AARPLivableCommunities)
- Calculate your community's livability score: [AARP.org/LivabilityIndex](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityIndex)

Stay informed! Subscribe to the free, weekly, award-winning  
**AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter:** [AARP.org/LivableSubscribe](https://www.aarp.org/LivableSubscribe)

## In a livable community, people of all ages can ...



Go for a walk



Cross the streets



Ride a bike



Get around without a car



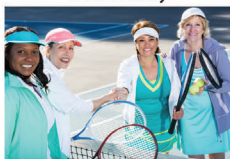
Live safely and comfortably



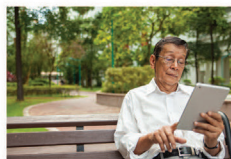
Work or volunteer



Enjoy public places



Socialize



Spend time outdoors



Be entertained



Go shopping



Buy healthy food



Find the services they need



... and make their city, town or neighborhood a lifelong home.



[AARP.org/livable](https://www.aarp.org/livable)

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Real Possibilities

▲ The handout pictured here is available in five languages — English, Chinese, French, Korean and Spanish — as a free, printable download. Visit [AARP.org/Livable-Poster](https://www.aarp.org/Livable-Poster).



Learn how your town, village, township, borough,  
city, county or state can join the  
**AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.**  
**[AARP.org/AgeFriendly](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly)**



State of Maine



San Rafael, California



Vicksburg, Mississippi



State of Florida



U.S. Virgin Islands



Ithaca and Tompkins County, New York



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

See the complete list of enrolled communities: **[AARP.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List](https://www.aarp.org/AgeFriendly-Member-List)**

To locate and connect with your **AARP State Office**,  
visit **[AARP.org/States](https://www.aarp.org/States)** or call 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277)

Email **AARP Livable Communities**: **[Livable@AARP.org](mailto:Livable@AARP.org)**



AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that  
empowers people to choose how they live as they age.

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