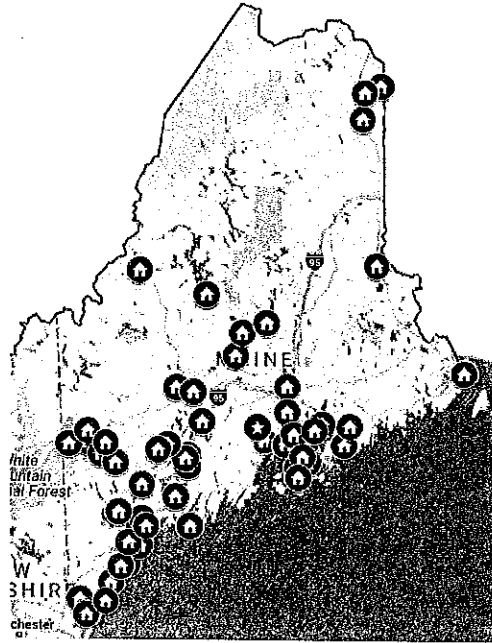


Age-Friendly Maine



58 Maine Communities enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

Auburn	Dexter	Ogunquit
Augusta	Dover-Foxcroft	Old Orchard Beach
Bangor	Eastport	Paris
Bar Harbor	Eliot	Penobscot
Bath	Ellsworth	Portland
Belfast/Waldo County	Fryeburg	Presque Isle
Berwick	Gardiner	Raymond
Bethel	Georgetown	Readfield
Biddeford	Gilead	Saco
Blue Hill	Greenville	Sedgewick
Bowdoinham	Greenwood	Skowhegan
Brooklin	Hallowell	Stonington
Brooksville	Jackman	Sullivan
Bucksport	Kennebunk	Surry
Caribou	Limestone	Waterville
Castine	Madison	Wayne
Cumberland	Milo	Westbrook
Danforth	Newry	Woodstock
Deer Isle	North Yarmouth	Yarmouth

In a Livable, Age-Friendly Community, people of all ages can go for a walk, get around without a car, enjoy public places, work or volunteer, find the services they need, shop, socialize, and be entertained, live safely and comfortably...and make their town, city, or neighborhood a lifelong home.



Maine Network of Age-Friendly Communities Member Benefits

AARP and AARP Maine offer ongoing support for the work you are doing.

Technical Assistance and Guidance

- ❖ **Livable Communities Newsletter:** (<https://aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-community-news-alerts/>)
- ❖ **Livable Communities Facebook Workgroup:** (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AARPLivableWorkGroup/>)
Closed Facebook group for AARP staff, volunteers, and communities that are working with AARP on livability issues and/or are part of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. It is a great place to get ideas!
- ❖ **Maine Guide to Building Age-Friendly Communities:** (<https://tinyurl.com/AARPMaineAge-FriendlyGuide>) and AARP **Roadmap to Livability** (<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/>) series.
- ❖ **Technical Assistance by AARP Maine staff** to move your work from Assessment to Planning and Implementation
- ❖ **Ask Age-Friendly Tech Talks.** Peer learning to help your initiative achieve specific goals – such as starting a home repair service, creating a property tax abatement program, or finding ways to help caregivers.
- ❖ **AARP Maine Age-Friendly Newsletter:** <https://tinyurl.com/MaineAge-FriendlyNews>. Learn what other communities are doing and get tips & ideas for your initiative.
- ❖ **Age-Friendly Maine Facebook Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/AgeFriendlyMaine/>.
 - Send us your age-friendly news and events to share and promote.
 - Stay up-to-date with age-friendly work in Maine communities and across the US.

Networking Opportunities

- ❖ **Annual Age-Friendly Communities Statewide Meeting**
- ❖ **Regional Meetings and Age-Friendly coffees** for nearby communities to get together and share ideas.
- ❖ **AARP Sponsored events** – All are welcome! To learn more: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPMaine/>

Funding the Age-Friendly Work

- ❖ **AARP Maine Panning Grants.** Mini grants to fund age-friendly assessment and planning.
- ❖ **AARP: Challenge grant** funds “quick actions” that will help you move the age-friendly work forward.
- ❖ **Assistance finding grants** for ideas that will increase the livability of your community.

Creating a Resource Guide

- ❖ **Professionally-designed template** that lists state-wide resources and includes plenty of space for your committee to add local and regional programs and services. FMI: Contact Andrea Cooper
- ❖ AARP provides an electronic version and 100 printed copies.

Engaging Your Community

- ❖ **Annual book donation to your local library** on an aging topic, i.e. Caregiving and Financial Security
- ❖ **AARP-Sponsored local events:** Community Shred Day, Coffees, and On-Taps
- ❖ **Free Promotional items featuring your Age-Friendly Team:**
 - Stickers with your age-friendly logo.
 - Tablecloth with the AARP Maine logo and your city or town initiative name for events.
- ❖ **Emails and postcards to AARP Members** in your community.
- ❖ **Find volunteers** and explore ideas for community projects at **Create the Good** (<http://www.createthegood.org/>)

Contact AARP Maine: 1-207-776-6312 or

Lori Parham: lparham@aarp.org

Patricia Oh: paoh@aarp.org | Andrea Cooper: acooper@aarp.org | Sara Grant: sgrant@aarp.org

AARP Livable Communities and the Network of Age-Friendly Communities

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities supports municipal efforts to become great places for people of all ages to live, work, play, and do business. We believe that communities should provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to lead active, healthy and engaged lives.

Livable communities are inclusive and respectful of every generation. Counties, cities, towns, and villages are stronger when community planning and economic development includes the needs of the very young, the very old, and everyone in-between.

Traditionally, municipal planning has focused on creating policies and infrastructure so that children and young families can thrive. AARP wants to broaden the conversation to include people 50-plus.

Older people have life experience, skills, and interests that can make the community stronger. Communities lose when older folk are not encouraged to be fully engaged in the civic, social, cultural, spiritual, and economic aspects of community life.

Livable Communities

AARP research consistently shows that people 50-plus want to age in their community. However, many places do not have the policies, infrastructure, or services we need to age in our communities safely and comfortably.

Age-friendly, livable communities build on community strengths to provide what residents need and want to thrive in the community.

Cities and towns use different tactics to meet community needs. Low-cost changes—such starting an age-friendly business program, sponsoring a monthly dinner dance, or adding benches in a downtown park—encourage older people to get out of their houses and spend time in the community. Zoning and building code changes that allow families to add an “in-law” apartment make it easier for people to age in the community where they want to live.

Communities have increased access to services by partnering with regional service providers to increase local awareness or by engaging volunteers to provide services to meet a gap identified in the age-friendly assessment.

Although each community develops tactics that best fit the community, all age-friendly communities are encouraged to look at community and economic development through the lens of the eight domains of livability.

Eight Domains of Livability

Research conducted by the World Health Organization with people 50-plus in 22 countries concluded that eight aspects of community life are essential for the health and well-being of older residents.

When residents can meet their needs in the first five areas—*Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Housing, Transportation, Community Support and Health Services, and Communication and Information*—people of all ages and abilities can maximize their health and well-being, do the things they want and need to do, and walk, bike, or roll from one place to another safely.



The next three domains—*Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, and Civic Participation and Employment*—encourage people to connect with others in their community. The woman in the cartoon is shown sitting on the porch, watching life go by. None of us were “born to rock;” we are social beings and even the introverts among us need social connections.

Consider your own life in the community where you live. Are the eight domains of livability important to you? Do you prefer to live in a place where civic engagement is encouraged? Where public spaces are safe and attractive? Where recreational opportunities abound?

The Economy and Community Development

The eight domains of livability are key for people to remain active, healthy, and engaged in the community as they age. Cities and towns that address the eight domains in community planning are better places for people to live. But

what about economies and community development? Is age-friendly development good for local economies? Does it create stronger communities? The answer is "yes."

In a livable community, policies, services, settings, and structures encourage people to remain as active as they want to be at any age and to live life to their own satisfaction regardless of individual challenges. This is achieved by:

- Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among residents.
- Anticipating and responding flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.
- Respecting the decisions and lifestyle choices of people of all ages.
- Protecting and supporting the most vulnerable residents.
- Promoting the inclusion and contributions of older adults in all aspects of community life.

Aging is a lifelong process, a livable community is not just a great place to grow older. It is a great place to live, work, and play at any age. Livable communities improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for Mainers of all ages.

Municipal commitment to age-friendly planning prevents older residents from leaving the community when they need services and supports for aging-in-place and attracts people 50-plus looking for a great place to live, which is a boon for the local economy. In a study of the annual economic impact of people 50-plus moving into Georgia, one new job was created for each 1.8 retirees that re-located to the state and each new resident spent an average of \$59,000 during their first year in the area¹.

Older people have purchasing power, give their time, talents, and experience for volunteer activities, continue to work and mentor younger employees, start new businesses, and are active in the community.

People 55-plus are responsible for 41% of consumer spending², launch 25% of all new business start-ups³, and often choose to work part- or full-time after traditional retirement⁴. Almost half (47%) of people 65-plus who volunteer give more than 100 hours of service each year and contribute an average of \$1697 to charitable causes⁵.

Far from a drain on local economies, people 50-plus can represent a wellspring of economic activity for municipalities. Age-friendly communities are attractive to people of all ages: research by AARP shows places that provide what older adults need to age happily in their communities are places that provide what people of all ages look for in a community.

AARP support for Livable, Age-Friendly Communities

AARP recognizes municipalities that use the framework of the eight domains to plan the changing age-structure in their towns through membership in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities provide residents of all ages and abilities the opportunity to live rewarding, productive, and safe lives by using the eight domains of livability as a tool for community planning and economic development. They recognize the experience and skills of older residents and include them in all phases of age-friendly community and economic development.

¹ Humphreys, J.M. & Kochut, B. *Golden rules: A study commissioned by the One Georgia Rural Policy Center*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia, Terry College of Business, Selig Center for Economic Growth. Retrieved from: <https://www.terry.uga.edu/media/documents/selig/golden-rules-2013.pdf>

² United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016a, January 04). Annual expenditures by age group, 2013. In *TED: The Economics Daily*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/annual-expenditures-by-age-group-2013.htm>

³ U.S. Census Bureau (2017). *Statistics for Owners of Respondent Employer Firms by Owner's Age by Sector, Gender, Ethnicity, Race, Veteran Status, and Years in Business for the U.S., States, and Top 50 MSAs: 2015 Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs*, Retrieved from: <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

⁴ AARP & Oxford Economics. (2016). *The Longevity Economy: How People over 50 are Driving Economic and Social Value in the US*. Washington, DC: AARP. Retrieved from: <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/home-and-family/personal-technology/2016/09/2016-Longevity-Economy-AARP.pdf>

⁵ United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016b, February 25). *Volunteering in the United States, 2015*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm>

The Age-Friendly Process

Preparing Membership Materials

Does your town, city, or county want to join the Network of Age-Friendly Communities? Congratulations on starting the process to make your municipality a better place for people of all ages to live, work, play, and do business!

Joining the NAFC is a simple process. It only requires two documents – an application from the community and a letter of commitment signed by the highest elected official(s) in your jurisdiction.

The application is short and easy to complete:

- **Your municipality.** The application asks for some basic demographic information about your municipality and about the individual who will be the primary contact person for the age-friendly work.
- **The age-friendly planning process in your jurisdiction.**
 - What are some of the programs, policies, and services that already make your village, town, city, or county a great place to grow old?
 - How does the jurisdiction plan to become more age-friendly?
 - How will older adults be included in all aspects of the age-friendly planning process?
 - How is the age-friendly initiative going to collaborate with agencies and municipal departments?
- **Participation in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.**
 - How will the age-friendly initiative in your jurisdiction contribute to the peer learning community that is the core of membership in the NAFC?
 - What motivated your village, town, city, or county to join the NAFC?

Download the Membership Application: Application to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (<https://tinyurl.com/AARP-NAFC-App>)

The Letter of Commitment shows that the elected officials in your community are committed to including an aging lens in municipal planning. The Network of Age-Friendly Communities recognizes that elected officials are change leaders. It is key for them to make a commitment to changes in the physical and social environment of the community that will make it a better place to live for people of all ages.

The highest elected official must sign any application made to the Network of Age-Friendly Communities. In some municipalities, a group of elected officials want to sign the application. Additional signatures are welcome because it indicates the extent of support for the age-friendly planning process.

Each letter of commitment should be worded in a way that rings true for the municipality. AARP doesn't want you to use boiler-plate language but to write a letter that reflects the jurisdiction that is applying. However, as with the application, there are a few things that should be included in the letter.

1. Establishing mechanisms to involve older people
2. A baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the community
3. The development of a community-wide action plan based on the findings of the assessment
4. Identification of indicators so progress can be monitored against the action plan

Submitting the Application and Letter of Commitment

The application and the letter of commitment are submitted to AARP Maine. The application packet is then sent to the National Livability and to the World Health Organization for review. Applications can be mailed or submitted electronically to paoh@aarp.org.

The following letter can be used as an example. Communities should feel free to add other pertinent information while retaining the commitments in the second paragraph.

(Date)

Lori Parham, AARP Maine State Director

Dear Ms. Parham,

On behalf of the (town/city of ---), I am pleased to submit this letter of interest and commitment in the AARP/World Health Organization Network of Age-Friendly Communities. (Town or city name) recognizes the importance of encouraging and promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address changing demographics and to enhance independent living and is committed to a process of continual improvement to support active and healthy aging.

As part of our involvement and commitment we will conduct a base assessment of the community's age-friendliness and develop a community action plan based on the findings of the assessment. We will involve older residents deeply in the planning process and we commit to monitoring progress toward implementing the action plan.

Sincerely,

(Signature by highest elected official or town manager)

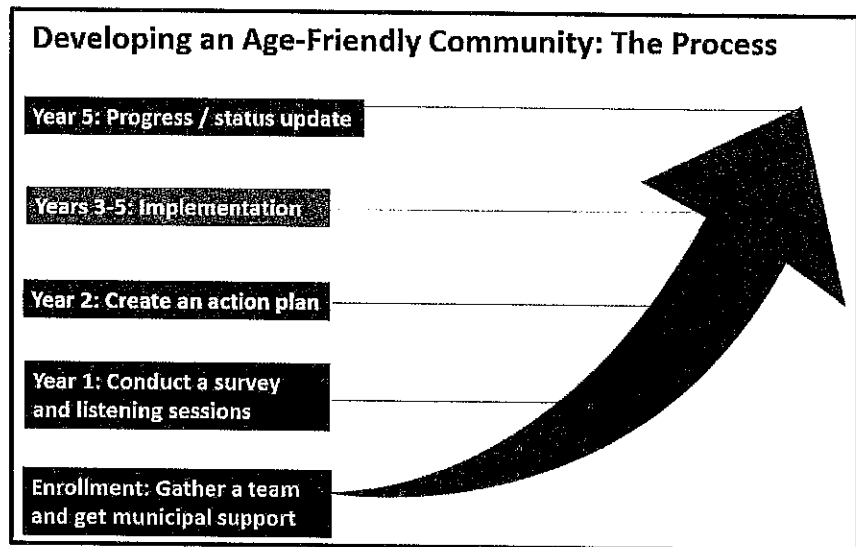
You have Joined the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, Now What?

Age-friendly planning is a five-year cycle of continuous improvement. The first two years are spent engaging the community, establishing a core team to guide the work in your community, and completing your assessment.

The assessment is structured by the eight domains of livability that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. It includes:

- An asset inventory that lists resources that the age-friendly team can build on to address needs.
- A demographic profile of the community
- Information about what older people need and want to thrive in the community and how residents prefer changes to be made.

The work done to engage the community and the data gathered during the assessment contributes to the development of the action plan at the end of year two.



After the action plan is adopted and approved, the core team continues the work in years three to five with implementation and evaluation. By the conclusion of the initial five-year period, the community should have made tangible and meaningful progress toward the goals laid out in the action plan and be able to revise the plan and the next five-year cycle begins.

To guide your work, AARP has developed the *Roadmap to Livability Series* and the *Maine Guide to Building Livable, Age-Friendly Communities*.