

Model Local Executive Order
World Health Organization
Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

WHEREAS, the global population of people aged 60 and over is expected to grow from 600 million in 2000 to almost 2 billion by 2050; and

WHEREAS, in the United States, the population of people aged 65 and over is expected to grow from 35 million in 2000 to 88.5 million by 2050, taking the total share of the 65+ population from 12 percent to 20 percent of the total population; and

WHEREAS, research shows that older Americans overwhelmingly want to remain in their homes and communities as they age; and

WHEREAS, access to quality health care and long-term services and supports is essential for individuals to live in their homes and communities; and

WHEREAS, of the 80 percent of adults 65 and older living in metropolitan areas, 64 percent live outside the principal cities of these areas in suburban locations that tend to be auto-dependent, creating challenges for residents who do not drive; and

WHEREAS, 21 percent of adults age 65 and older do not drive, and more than half of these non-drivers do not leave home on a given day, in part because they lack transportation options; and

WHEREAS, reduced mobility for older non-drivers leads to 15 percent fewer trips to the doctor, 59 percent fewer shopping trips and visits to restaurants, and 65 percent fewer trips for social, family and religious activities; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities to encourage and promote public policies to increase the number of cities and communities that support healthy ageing and thereby improve the health, well-being, satisfaction, and quality of life for older Americans; and

WHEREAS, active ageing is a life-long process, whereby an age-friendly community is not just “elder-friendly” but also intended to be friendly for all ages; and

WHEREAS, the WHO has noted that “[m]aking cities and communities age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic ageing,” and

WHEREAS, the WHO has developed eight domains of community life that influence the health and quality of life of older people:

- 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings** – accessibility to and availability of clean, safe community centers, parks, and other recreational facilities;
- 2. Transportation** – safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation, “Complete Streets” types of initiatives, hospitable built environments;

3. Housing – wide range of housing options for older residents, ageing in place and other home modification programs, housing that is accessible to transportation and community and health services;

4. Social participation – access to leisure and cultural activities; opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people;

5. Respect and social inclusion – programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, programs to encourage multigenerational interaction and dialogue, programs to combat loneliness and isolation among older residents;

6. Civic participation and employment – promotion of paid work and volunteer opportunities for older residents; opportunities for older residents to engage in formulation of policies relevant to their lives;

7. Communication and information – promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family, both near and far; and

8. Community support and health services – access to homecare services, clinics, programs to promote active ageing (physical exercise and healthy habits); and

WHEREAS, the WHO recognizes that cities and communities have different needs, resources, and varying capacities to engage their resources to take action to facilitate active ageing;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, _____, Mayor (or County Commissioner) of the Town/City of _____ by virtue of the authority invested in me by the Town (or City) of _____ do hereby support initiatives and opportunities to engage in the WHO Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Network.

Further, in recognition of existing efforts to promote and expand age friendly communities in the Town (or City) of _____, I do hereby support the (insert names of existing age friendly community efforts and passage of legislation or resolution).

Further, I order and direct (insert name of local agency) to convene a Blue Ribbon Commission to evaluate opportunities to engage in the WHO Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. The Blue Ribbon Commission shall actively seek input from diverse stakeholders. At least twenty five percent of the Blue Ribbon Commission members shall be residents of the community and shall include older residents.

THIS ORDER supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations, or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as the Mayor (or County Executive) rescinds it.