Membership Application
To join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email me@aarp.org or call 866-554-5380
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 9/16/2016

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS
NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: CITY OF BELFAST
STATE: MAINE
POPULATION SIZE: 6,682 (2015 Census Estimate) 6,668 (2010 Census)
PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 2002 (About 30%)
NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: JOSEPH J. SLOCUM, CITY MANAGER
OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: CITY OF BELFAST, 131 CHURCH ST. BELFAST, ME 04915

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

NAME: Wayne Marshall
POSITION: City Planner
EMAIL ADDRESS: [redacted]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [redacted]

Please describe the named person’s role in the city or community’s age-friendly initiative:

The City of Belfast is active member of Aging Well in Waldo County, the grass roots organization that has recently been established to identify and advocate for the interests of elder residents in Waldo County. The City Council identified Wayne Marshall, City Planner, as the City government’s main representative to the organization. Mr. Marshall has served as the City Planner for nearly 17 years, and has been involved in many of the issues of importance to the community, including but not limited to: pursuing affordable housing options for elder residents and persons with special needs; obtaining grant funds for projects that promote healthy lifestyles and managing construction of the project after funds were received, such as the Belfast Harbor Walk and Downtown Revitalization projects; and working on transportation options for seniors. Mr. Marshall will be the main liaison between Aging Well in Waldo County and the Belfast City Council. He also recognizes that a number of Belfast residents stepped forward to participate in the establishment and ongoing activities of Aging Well in Waldo County and he will work with these individuals to ensure that Belfast’s needs are considered.
Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.

The City of Belfast and advocacy and service organizations that serve elder residents that live in the City and County currently offer many services that benefit area residents. A few examples of current programs that help to make a difference include: Senior College at the University of Maine Hutchinson Center which now has over 500 members and which offers classes of interest to seniors, many of which are taught by area seniors; Waldo County Transportation which offers door-to-door transporation to eligible seniors, a service which is particularly critical because Belfast does not have public bus service; and the Waldo County Senior Call Service, which offers a daily call-in service through its dispatchers to ensure that home-alone seniors are not experiencing a problem that would prevent them from calling in. Aging Well in Waldo County will soon undertake a community wide assessment to better identify the needs of elder residents, and our future policies will consider these results. One issue we are now trying to address is more housing options for elder residents, both market rate and subsidized. State statistics identify the critical need for better housing. We are striving to encourage the construction of more housing, particularly smaller scale houses, and the conversion of single family housing to multi-family housing.

2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

Belfast's citizens actively participate in and help guide public policy decisions associated with the myriad of services and projects in which the community is involved. For example, when Samantha Paradis, RN, the Public Health Nurse for the greater Belfast area reached out to area residents to broach the question of establishing an organization such as Aging Well in Waldo County, 9 Belfast residents stepped forward to participate in the initial meeting. Those who met recognized that the community now offers many programs and services that well serve our elder residents, however, all spoke of the need to build on our successes and to do more. Several common themes were: how to generate more understanding of what is needed to enable elder residents to age in place, creating greater awareness of how our elder residents are assets to the community, and the need for housing options that would serve senior needs. The Steering Committee for Aging Well in Waldo County is preparing to launch its next steps, including performing a community assessment, and the group intends to use the results of this survey to better identify area needs. The group is also reaching out to other communities in Waldo County to ensure that they are active parts of our efforts.

3) Briefly describe the mechanisms the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments.

A group of committed community members have regularly been meeting to assess available resources and resource gaps to support Waldo County's elder residents in being able to live safely and thrive in their own homes in their own communities as they age. This group first met with the Belfast Public Health Nurse in March 2016, and decided to convene a larger group of community members and stakeholders to discuss the topic. The community interest in creating a plan to make the City of Belfast and Waldo County a great place for elders has been overwhelming. The group has established a working committee of representatives from the following organizations: City of Belfast, Belfast Senior College, Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County, Belfast Public Health Nurse, Waldo County Commissioners, Waldo County Community Action Agency, TRIAD, Broadreach, Healthy Waldo County, Waterfall Arts, Waldo County Sheriff (senior call program), local business owners and local citizens. The group has established initial standing committees who are preparing for the initial needs assessment. Our goal is to assure representation from all organizations serving elders and all communities in Waldo County. The City of Belfast and its Council are proud to be the first community in the County to seek AARP Designation.
Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Samantha Paradis, RN, in her role as Belfast Public Health Nurse, is helping to facilitate the work of the volunteer group. The Committee is documenting its progress in convening stakeholders and creating a process to assess community needs and to secure initial resources to conduct project planning. Ms. Paradis and the community volunteers will be available to share lessons learned and challenges with networks and community groups seeking to create age-friendly communities by being willing to make presentations, participate in site visits and similar communications. We note that representatives from the AARP and other network communities have assisted our initial organizational efforts and that we recognize the importance of similarly sharing what we have learned.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Belfast, like many Maine communities, has a significant and growing elder population. In fact, while the community’s overall population has experienced minimal growth, our elder population has grown while nearly all other age groups below 55 years of age have declined. Many other Waldo County communities are experiencing similar trends. In short, our communities need to ensure that elders enjoy a high quality of life and to encourage them and enable them to continue to live in their homes and communities. When the question of becoming an Age-Friendly Community was introduced at the August 17 Council meeting, one Councillor asked --- why hadn’t we done so sooner. We are excited to join the AARP and WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities so we can access available resources, assist us in conducting a meaningful assessment community needs, and then taking productive steps to address identified needs. We are eager to reach out to other communities in the Network, particularly rural communities in Maine and New England, so that we can benefit from their experiences.
6) Please provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.

The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours >

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