July 21, 2016

Mr. Doug Shadel  
AARP Washington State Director  
9750 3rd Ave. NE, Suite 450  
Seattle, WA 98115  

Dear Mr. Shadel,

I am pleased to offer this letter in support of the City of Seattle’s commitment to pursue admission into the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities. As Seattle and other cities experience a demographic shift, the need for age-friendly design is becoming ever more critical. From urban planning, growth and development to housing, transportation and services, these aspects of our community may be shaped for and by the elderly.

Seattle is continuing to experience significant growth, and it is important for the city to do so equitably. At the start of my administration, I outlined a core vision for a safe, affordable, vibrant, interconnected and innovative Seattle that provides equitable access for people of all backgrounds, including a vision for:

1. Economic mobility and opportunity
2. Prevention of displacement
3. Local cultural assets
4. Transportation mobility and connectivity
5. Healthy and safe neighborhoods

The City of Seattle has demonstrated a commitment to work in partnership with other cities and communities across the country to address some of our nation’s most challenging issues, including homelessness, affordable housing, transportation, education, environmental sustainability, and race and social justice. We are eager to bring an age-friendly perspective to these ongoing efforts, and look forward to developing new partnerships to help create a community that supports people of all ages in achieving their potential. The Seattle Human Services Department manages the City’s investments in our local aging network and is also the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Seattle and King County; this department will be the lead for our age-friendly efforts.
Thank you for your consideration of our application for membership to join the Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Our city has a long history of supporting older adults by investing in services and supporting policies that enable people to age in their communities. We look forward to working together with AARP and other community partners to elevate this work and ensure that Seattle is a great place for everyone to grow up and grow old.

Should you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Steve Lee, a Senior Policy Advisor in my office, with any questions or feedback. Mr. Lee can be reached at (206) 684.7904 or steve.lee@seattle.gov.

Sincerely,

Edward B. Murray
Mayor, City of Seattle

Cc: Catherine Lester, Director, Seattle Human Services Department