State: Massachusetts
Community Name: Town of Palmer
Population Size: 10795
Percentage of Residents Above Age 60: 30
Community Structure: Town

Other:
Community Type: Suburban (mostly residential), Small Town

Elected Official Signing the Letter of Commitment
Name: Ryan McNutt
Title: Town Manager
Office Mailing Address: 4417 Main Street Palmer, MA 01069
Community Contact Name: Marlene Johnson
Email: [redacted]
Position: COA Executive Director
Telephone: [redacted]

Role: I have been at this position as the Executive Director for 4 years, I am responsible for administrative, fiscal management, managerial, supervisory, and social service work in connection with the need’s determination, development, implementation of support programs, services, events, activities, and facilities of a multi-purpose Council on Aging and Senior Center. I also recruit, supervise, train (as necessary), and schedule staff, volunteers, and facilities.

Older Adult Involvement: Older adults participated in providing input for the Master Plan through two survey (the Master Plan survey and Healthy Palmer Survey) and through participation in a series of online public forums hosted by the consulting firm that developed the Master Plan. These forums drew viewers on Zoom and Facebook Live, and broadcasted on MPACT-TV, the local cable access station. In addition to including older adults in a Working Group for the Age and Dementia Friendly Community planning process, we plan to work with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to hold one or two public forums (we hope in person, depending on public health guidance around our ability to meet in person), presentations and opportunities for interactive dialogue in conjunction with congregate meals, and a short survey to prioritize actions identified in the Master Plan and other assessment activities. Throughout the planning process, we will provide updates in our
monthly newsletter, press releases and social media posts to announce meetings and public forums, and in person contact with people who receive home-delivered meals or pick up food through the brown bag program at the Senior Center.

**Increasing Collaboration and Coordination:**

The development of the Palmer Master Plan and Health Addendum started the process of raising awareness of the needs of older adults in the community by incorporating the needs of older adults in public forums on transportation, housing, recreation and outdoor spaces, and access to healthy food. We will continue this work by including representatives from municipal departments (Planning, Department of Public Works, Police and Fire, Health and Community Development), the public library, transportation (PVTA and the Quaboag Connector) and social service providers in the Working Group and as guests for forums with older adults on the domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Community. This collaboration will continue to build awareness among municipal and state agencies of the needs of older adults in the community.

**AARP Team Member Contact Info:**

Becky Basch, Senior Planner Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Land Use & Environment Department home office: [Redacted]

**Most Instructive Area of Work:**

Our plan will offer other aspects of being an Age and Dementia Friendly Community that apply to a smaller community and one with several village centers. In Palmer, each village (Thorndike, Three Rivers, Depot Village and Bondsville) each have specific needs related to healthy aging, including the ability to get to the Senior Center, shopping, and services that are located in some villages and not others.

**Optional Resolution:**

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**Logo or Image:**

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**Website:**

Town of Palmer

**Twitter 2:**

[Palmer Senior Center](https://www.townofpalmer.org)

**Facebook 1:**

Palmer Senior Center

**Additional Social Media:**