Membership Application

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

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

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: Click here to enter a date.
NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Columbia River Gorge Communities of Hood River, OR; Moiser, OR and White Salmon, WA
STATE: Oregon and Washington
POPULATION SIZE: 10,724 total (Hood River 7,715; Moiser 455; White Salmon 2,554;)
PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: Avg 23% (Hood River 13%; Mosier 23.5%; White Salmon 30%)
NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Kate McBride, Mayor City of Hood River; Arlene Burns, Mayor of Mosier; Marla Keethler, Mayor of White Salmon
OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 211 2nd Street, Hood River, OR 97031; PO Box 456, Mosier, OR 97040; 100 N Main Ave - PO Box 2139, White Salmon, WA 98672

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and 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: Britta Willson and Gracen Bookmyer
POSITION: Aging in The Gorge Alliance Steering Committee Members
EMAIL ADDRESS: Britta: , Gracen: 
TELEPHONE NUMBER: Britta: , Gracen: 

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

Britta Willson, MA is a gerontologist who has worked with older adults for nearly 20 years. She lives in The Dalles and works as the program coordinator for Providence Volunteers in Action, which provides social and practical support to older adults in Hood River and Klickitat Counties. She is on the Senior Advisory Council for Oregon’s Region 9 Area Agency on Aging, the Oregon Governor’s Commission on Senior Services, and the Aging in the Gorge Alliance. Through her work with the Aging in the Gorge Alliance, Britta helped the Gorge region become the first and only community in Oregon to join the Dementia Friendly America network.
Gracen Bookmyer is a member of the Aging in the Gorge Alliance, a member of the Klickitat county senior advisory board and the community liaison for Age+ Circles of Care.

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter, which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe.
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 Aging in The Gorge Alliance (AGA) spearheads several programs and initiatives for older adults and their care partners. Programs and services led by AGA members include: Powerful Tools for Caregivers, the Wellness Initiative for Senior Education, Positive Approaches to Care Dementia training for caregivers (paid and unpaid), service providers and first responders. The AGA took on a major project in 2018, working to make the Columbia Gorge region the first, and still only, officially recognized Dementia Friendly Community. The logic model for the Dementia Friendly Initiative is included as an attachment with this application. The Columbia Gorge Health Council in partnership with PacificSource Community Solutions Coordinated Care Organization (Medicaid Insurance Provider) completes a Regional Community Health Assessment every 3 years. We work with them on collecting data and identifying their priorities. The following priorities were identified in the latest 2019 Health Assessment:

- **PRIORITY Housing**: People can gain access and afford safe housing. People do not worry about losing their housing. People spend less than 30% of their income on housing.
- **PRIORITY Food**: All people can access and afford healthy food. People do not worry about running out of food for themselves or the people they live with.
- **PRIORITY Transportation and Mobility**: Public and private transportation is available and convenient for all activities that support and encourage health, daily living, physical activity and wellbeing. Public and private transportation is safe and meets the needs of each person. Communities have safe transportation and infrastructure that supports walking, biking and wheelchair or walker rolling.
- **PRIORITY Prevention and Promotion**: The information that people need to support healthy choices is available to all. Information and education on wellness, health promotion and disease prevention are available and offered in an equitable and trauma informed way. Prevention and control of current and emerging healthcare issues are addressed in the community. Prevention of interpersonal violence is addressed through the promoting health, safety, communication, equity, and respect.
- **PRIORITY Improved Access to Equitable Physical Activity and the Outdoors**: All people have opportunities for physical activity that supports their health and well-being. This is regardless of their race, ethnicity, physical limitation or where they live. It is easy for people to access parks, trails and natural areas for both exercise and social activities.
- **PRIORITY Improved Social Connection and Communication Sense of Community**: People feel a sense of connection, security, belonging, and trust in their community. People receive social support from family, friends, and other community members. People feel a sense of community through access to parks, nature and recreation. People and groups get support in growing as leaders. They feel they have a voice and can contribute to their community.

2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?
We will utilize AGA membership to ensure inclusion and involvement of older people. Currently the AGA has older people involved on the steering committee. In addition, two AGA members serve on the Senior Advisory Council for the Area Agency on Aging. The AGA has a successful track record of bringing community members and older people together for community book readings and other discussions. We will create focus groups and invite older people to serve on different committees.

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.

The Age Friendly Steering Committee will facilitate community input on older adult's issues. This Steering Committee will include older adults and community agency partners (those with a shared mission) who will coordinate and lead the discussion, in which partners from other entities will be invited to monthly meetings and participate in community-wide conversations through forums and outreach efforts. This team comprised of a diverse make-up will report findings back to City Council and other community partners. Current community partners include: Hood River County Library, The Dalles Library, White Salmon Library, Hood River History Museum, Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital, Skyline Hospital, The Hood River Valley Adult Center, Mid-Columbia Senior Center, Greater Oregon Behavioral Health Inc., The Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Mid-Columbia Community Action Council, Age Plus, SHIBA, Aging and People With Disabilities, Mid-Columbia Center for Living, Down Manor and the OSU Extension Office.
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 States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

We hope to contribute our successes (and lessons learned to the Network as we proceed through this process). We hope to be a model to other Oregon Cities and will be happy to share our experience and results with other communities considering becoming an Age Friendly Community. As the only model for both Dementia Friendly and Age Friendly in Oregon, we hope to share how these initiatives complement each other.

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

We feel that joining the Age-Friendly Network overlaps with the work we are already doing with our Dementia Friendly Initiative. We have positive forward movement due to our work with the Dementia Friendly Initiative and our other projects. We feel that this initiative may spark interest in other area communities to join the project. We want to keep the momentum going on intergenerational projects that began prior to COVID. High school students working with older adults was a starting point. We also want to capitalize on communities learning of issues related to older adults and wanting to help (letter writing etc.) reaching out to homebound people. We want to push that forward into a community norm. We also have an influx of older adults moving to the community to be closer to children/grandchildren. This is a great opportunity to involve them in working towards the goals of an Age-Friendly Community.

6) Provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights. The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here’s ours:

Click here to add a link to where we can find your logo. Or, send a JPEG, PDF or PNG of your logo by email attachment to livable@aarp.org.