State: Georgia

Community Name: City of Dublin

Population Size: 16000

Percentage of Residents Above Age 60: 16

Community Structure: City

Other: Rural

Elected Official Signing the Letter of Commitment

Name: Phil Best Sr.

Title: Mayor

Office Mailing Address: P.O. Box 690, Dublin, Georgia 31040

Community Contact Name: Katy Morton

Email: 

Position: Grants and Community Development Coordinator

Telephone: 

Role: Katy Morton currently serves as the Grants and Community Development Coordinator for the City and has been involved in many community initiatives and projects. Most recently she chaired the City’s involvement with the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing and the Plan First City designation through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Similar to these programs, Katy will be involved in the committee formation for this program, meeting scheduling and planning efforts. Throughout the process, she will keep AARP representatives up to date and progress and will seek assistance and guidance when needed. She will keep the Mayor and Council updated on goals and plans regarding this program.

Older Adult Involvement:

Older adults will be instrumental in the planning and goal setting for the age friendly community committee we establish. The majority of committee members will be those 60 and older. The committee will be made up of all socioeconomic levels, ages, and races to provide a thorough cross section of citizens. Through quarterly meetings, the committee can set goals and work on completing them throughout the year. The City and surrounding areas have a strong church presence and this will be an excellent resource for committee members. In addition, our community also has many civic organizations, sororities, clubs and social groups who will be a valued resource also. We could possibly schedule town hall type settings
throughout the community to get direct feedback from a larger number of citizens and use the committee to fine tune our goals and objectives. We currently have many ways for citizens to voice their concerns through social media, the My Dublin 311 app, in person and virtual council meetings, and periodically meetings are held at alternate locations across the community. Through or relationship with the VA, we hope to also have veteran representation on the committee. We have unique needs of veterans in our community that are not present in every city. The County in conjunction with the Heart of Georgia Regional Commission’s Area Agency on Aging (AAA) operate the local Senior Citizens Center. We hope those services can be reestablished after the COVID pandemic and vaccines progress. The AAA could be a valuable resource and staff could be involved in facilitating our committee.

Increasing Collaboration and Coordination: As stated before, the AAA will be a great partner to collaborate with on services and resources that are currently available to our older generation. The City of Dublin government is already very intertwined with agencies and programs on the state and local level. The City is home to the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center and the center has been a presence in our community since the 1940s. While we have a strong relationship with the VA, our relationship could always be stronger. There is an immeasurable number of partners we could work with including those who represent healthcare, education, private development, recreation, etc. We have very strong relationship with state/local/ federal agencies like the Department of Community Affairs, United States Department of Agriculture, the Dublin Housing Authority, and the Dublin Laurens County Recreation Authority. One of the most exciting aspects of the designation and building a committee will be the creation of new possible partnerships. The Heart of Georgia Regional Commission serves our area and provide planning guidance, aging services, and workforce development. They will be essential for understanding current aging services and potential programs we could address in the future. We plan to review the AARP 8 Domains of Livability and see where we may can enhance current programs. Georgia has a Placemaking Initiative that may be a great option for us to address the Outdoor Spaces and Buildings category. The Georgia Economic Placemaking Collaborative is three-year place-based economic development program that provides participating communities with education, facilitation, technical assistance, networking, peer learning, and incentives to help identify their community assets and develop a locally based placemaking strategy. It will be exciting to see what relationships grow from this AARP Age Friendly program.

AARP Team Member Contact Info: We had a great informational virtual meeting with Myrtle Habersham (Ambassador of the Age Friendly and Livable Communities, mh@mshconsultingservices.com) and Kay Sibetta (Associate State Director, Community Outreach, ksibetta@aarp.org) in early February 2021 regarding this program.

Most Instructive Area of Work: We think what makes this AARP program unique is it is a federal level program assisting communities all across the country. This a great
opportunity to share what Georgia is doing as a state to promote the lives of our elderly population. We were part of a program called GICH. The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Initiative (GICH) offers communities a three-year program of collaboration and technical assistance related to housing and community development. The objective of the Initiative is to help communities create and launch a locally based plan to meet their housing needs. We set multiple goals and were able to complete 100% of them by the end of the three-year period. Through our participation we started a blight tax, improved code enforcement efforts, secured federal grant funding, assisted beautification and clean up efforts and many more tasks. This program is a great one to showcase to other states. Partners in Georgia were the University of Georgia, the Department of Community Affairs, and Georgia Power. This program greatly benefited the elderly community.