AARP Age Friendly Application for West St. Paul, MN, FINAL

Membership Application
Join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

AARP Livable Communities

When a town, city, county or state joins the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, it is joining a global effort to be a more livable and age-friendly community.

The AARP network is an organizational affiliate of the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. (Communities wishing to join the global network instead of or in addition to the AARP program can find application information on the WHO website.)

To enroll your community in the AARP network, please complete and submit the application below.

Note: Since content added to this form cannot be saved, we advise that you review and download a PDF of the questions in advance, gather the materials and information you'll need, and draft the narrative responses offline for later pasting into the applicable fields. If this form doesn't work for you, please email your materials to Livable@AARP.org.

Section 1: Community Details

Application Submission Date
State Select a State
MN
Community Name
City of West St. Paul
Total Population
20,615 (2020 estimate)
Percentage of Residents Age 60 or Older
Age 65+: 17.4% (2019 estimate)
Community Governance Structure (choose one)
Borough City County Town Township Village Other (explain below)
Explain here if you selected "Other"
Community Type (Check all that apply.)

- Urban Mixed
- Suburban (offices, apartments and shops)
- Suburban (mostly residential)
- Small Town Rural
- Remote/Frontier
- Other (explain below)
- Not sure

Explain here if you selected "Other"

Elected Official Signing the Community's Letter of Commitment

Name (elected official), Title, Office Mailing Address

Dave Napier, Mayor

1616 Humboldt Avenue

West St. Paul, MN 55118

Community Contact

The community contact is the community staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work. (It is not the AARP staff member the community might be working with.)

Name (community contact)

Email (valid email address required to submit this form)

Position

Telephone Number

Please describe the named person's role in the community's age-friendly initiative (100 words minimum)

Jess Luce

Dakota County, Program Manager, Communities for a Lifetime Initiative
Mr. Luce leads Dakota County’s aging initiative to help prepare the County and communities for an aging population. He is the facilitator (staff support) for the “Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul” coalition/nonprofit that is leading the city’s age-friendly designation process.

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 subscribe now, visit AARP.org/Livable Subscribe. You will not be disconnected from this page. After completing the newsletter form, AARP will send an email — with the subject line "Action Required" — containing a link for you to confirm the subscription.

Section 2: Community Activities, Engagements and Collaborations

Briefly describe your existing community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people. Please identify how your community plans to become more age-friendly. (250-300 words required) 299

The City of West St. Paul (WSP) has many advantages that make it a great place for older adults (and other age groups) to live. WSP offers a significant number of housing options for older adults, including affordable County owned buildings, affordable independent and assisted living options, along with cooperative housing and facilities offering dementia care, and a transitional health care center.

There is an extensive transportation network connecting WSP to other parts of the metro area, including paratransit services. DARTS, a local nonprofit, operates The LOOP circulator bus, connecting residents to groceries and shopping.

There are many resources available to older adults in the community. For over five years, an ACT on Alzheimer’s group has been active in WSP, educating residents and businesses about dementia. Thompson Park Activity Center is an active community center with great programming for older adults.

The library offers free and equitable access to physical resources (including large print, audiovisual materials, memory care visit kits, and technology—Chromebook/wi-fi hotspot kits); digital resources (e-books, e-audiobooks, subscription databases); services (including services for those physically unable to come to the library: books-by-mail, curated home library service boxes, deposit collections for older residences – and no late fines on any of these services); and lifelong learning opportunities (including book groups and author talks, arts and cultural programming, etc.).

Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul (LLS), a nonprofit coalition, has been working for over a decade to make the WSP community more aware of the resources available to older adults and advocating for the issues facing older adults and their families.

LLS plans to help WSP become more age-friendly by increasing efforts to communicate what is available to older adults and working to address existing the gabs by partnering with the City, County, and other nonprofits.
How will older adults be involved in the community's efforts to become more age-friendly? (250-300 words required) 262

Older adults have been engaged as participants in Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul’s coalition since its inception and will continue to be a part of the coalition’s age-friendly planning efforts.

Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul will reach out to older adults with the assessment survey by mailing a post card to all households with a family member who is age sixty or older with a link to the survey and highlighting locations where a hard copy of the survey can be picked up and dropped off. Additionally, Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul will be delivering paper-based surveys to where older adults are known to live (County CDA buildings, independent senior living and assisted living buildings). The survey data will be compiled and analyzed by the Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul coalition.

In addition to surveying older adults, we will share the survey results with the community and encourage participation in the next steps. We will use the survey results to help determine the focus of our efforts to become more age-friendly and we may seek out focus groups of older adults to evaluate potential strategies. Older adults’ perspective and participation is critical to understanding the gaps in the community and identifying approaches that will create a more age-friendly environment.

Throughout the entire process, older adults will be an important and valued voice in creating an age-friendly community; their experiences in the community and understanding of the needs of their peers will help us to create a better community for all.

How will the efforts to become more age-friendly increase collaboration and coordination among relevant community agencies and departments? (250-300 words required) 256

LLS already has participation from older adult residents/volunteers, Dakota County staff, nonprofits serving older adults, the Wentworth library, and private businesses—housing providers, healthcare organizations, and city staff and council members have participated over the years.

West St. Paul is home to both a large population of older adults and a variety of businesses and other providers. Through educating providers about the value of becoming an age-friendly community, we will increase the interest in collaborating to create better solutions. Recruitment of new coalition members and participants representing more minority voices in the age-friendly designation process will be a priority for LLS. CLUES, Minnesota’s largest Latino-led nonprofit, has been a member of LLS in the past when one of their offices was located in West St. Paul. We will continue to encourage their participation and seek out other organizations that specialize in serving underrepresented populations.

Initially, collaboration will increase through reaching out to groups for their input on how to make West St. Paul a more age-friendly place. In the longer term, minority groups and individuals need to feel more comfortable being a part of LLS and in city endeavors by seeing themselves represented and support for their issues and needs.

Coordination among various groups with different goals and procedures is always the difficult part, but the hope is that the age-friendly designation process, led by LLS, can bring these groups together. With
diverse voices represented, we will be able to create an age-friendly community that meets a variety of needs and recognizes that diversity strengthens our community.

Section 3: Network Membership

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

1-a. What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities (100 words minimum) 106

West St. Paul has a large aging population and key assets that already make it an age-friendly city.

LLS has watched other Minnesota cities become AARP Age-Friendly Communities and thought: “We deserve the same recognition for our hard work to make West St. Paul an Age-Friendly place.” Our ACT on Alzheimer’s work aligns closely with the priorities of an age-friendly community, and we plan to continue to build on the framework to enhance our community.

LLS looks forward to conducting another community assessment, building upon the one we did in 2017, developing an action plan and implementing that plan, sharing our progress, best practices, and updates.

1-b. If you have consulted with an AARP State office or the national AARP Livable Communities team to discuss enrollment, please provide that person’s name, title and e-mail address or phone number.

Elyse Ruiz
Associate State Director – Community Engagement
AARP Minnesota

2. What aspect of your community’s current or intended age-friendly work could be useful to other communities in the network? (100 words minimum) 98

The WSP ACT on Alzheimer’s group conducted “Dementia Friends” presentations in the community and reached out to businesses with a “We Are Dementia Aware” campaign, to educate employees about dementia. Participating businesses receive a “We Are Dementia Aware” window cling and website logo.

A partnership between the County and South Metro Fire educates older residents about fire safety and fall prevention, and contacts frequent fallers to connect them with resources.
Additionally, with several newer housing options for older adults, the group is planning to rotate a kiosk of relevant information and resources from partnering organizations in those buildings.

Section 4: Required Materials

1-a. Letter of Commitment

Provide a digital file (PDF preferred) of the signed document.

Attached to email.

1-b. Resolution or Proclamation (optional)

If your community issued either document in addition to the commitment letter, provide a digital file (PDF preferred) here.

Attached to email.

2. Logo or Image

Provide a digital file (JPG preferred) and/or a link to a downloadable logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights and permission to provide for use by AARP and the World Health Organization.

Attached to email.

Please email attachments of items 1-a, 1-b and your community’s logo or image to Livable@AARP.org

Website URL

Section 5: Social Media

Provide the most applicable Twitter handle(s) and Facebook account(s) for your community (i.e. an age-friendly coalition, the local government, key elected officials and/or local partners).

Twitter 1: https://twitter.com/WestStPaul

Facebook 1: https://www.facebook.com/cityofwsp

Twitter 2:
Section 6: Agreement

I have read and understand the requirements for my community to become a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, including the need to conduct a community assessment; develop and acquire approval of an action plan; implement the plan; submit an annual best practice and provide periodic updates, including a five-year progress report.

Yes, I understand the requirements.

Jess Luce

Check out resources, videos, and links: Communities for a Lifetime homepage.

Jess Luce

Communities for a Lifetime Initiative, Program Manager
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