State: Ohio
Community Name: Harrison Township
Population Size: 22322
Percentage of Residents Above Age 60: 23
Community Structure: Township
Other:
Community Type: Urban,Mixed
Elected Official Signing the Letter of Commitment
Name: Georgeann Godsey
Title: Trustee President
Office Mailing Address: 
Community Contact Name: Tyler Hauck
Email: 
Position: Township Planner
Telephone: 
Role: Our Township Planner oversees the review of development permits within the township and is the custodian for the Zoning Resolution and plans such as the Strategic Plan and, when it is developed, the Comprehensive Plan. The Township Planner also oversees long-range planning projects, such as the Age-Friendly Initiative. The Township Planner would act as the township's main point of contact between itself and both the AARP and the Miami Valley Age-Friendly Network. This would include attending meetings and any other related events. The Township Planner also would be leading the age-friendly assessment of the community. This would include creating a survey for residents, holding multiple community meetings, and working with stakeholders. The Township Planner would also take the completed surveys and form a needs assessment and from that recommendations and policies to increase the community's age-friendliness.

Older Adult Involvement: Older residents will play an absolutely essential role in the township's plan to become more age friendly. This community is an older urban township and many residents, even older residents, have lived here their entire lives. This gives these residents unique insight into the Township. What was the area like growing up? How has it changed? What things used to be here that are no longer and vice versa? These residents can offer so much in the way of
information when we conduct our studies and analysis. As staff we understand what principles and best practices are important but someone who has lived here 60-80 years will have insight into aspects others wont. These residents will be able to tell us what struggles they currently have as they are attempting to age in place? What strengths or benefits does the community have but maybe not realize or use to its full potential? Harrison Township will have many meetings over the course of our age-friendly study and analysis and each one of those will be highly publicized by way of our website, Facebook page, flyers in the Township office, notifying key stakeholders, and by putting an ad in the local paper. We would like to reach as many people as possible as we feel that will yield the best results. Anyone who comes to the meeting will also be asked to sign in by giving their name, address, and email address if possible so that we can contact them about any future meetings directly. We have also considered establishing a small committee of interested stakeholders that will help guide the decision making process for our age-friendly initiative. Undoubtedly some of these committee members would be older residents.

We believe that the drive to become more age-friendly will increase collaboration and cooperation between both our internal departments and potentially even nearby communities. Within the Township, we believe both the Development Department and the Services Department would play a key role in increasing the age-friendliness of the community as a whole. The Development Department is the main entity for enacting and overseeing policies such as the Zoning Resolution and the Strategic Plan. The regulations of the Zoning Resolution and objectives of the Strategic Plan guide development in the township; these documents are the framework which we use to move toward our goals of becoming age-friendly. The Services Department plays a critical role in maintaining the services and amenities of the township. This includes streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, parks, and more. It will take both departments working together to achieve our goals. For example, even if the Development Department is able to identify a weakness in our community more than likely Services would be needed to help strengthen that weakness. This could include upgrading and repairing sidewalks, increasing amenities at our local parks, and more. The Township also believes that becoming an age-friendly leader within the area could increase cooperation with nearby areas. We believe that while undertaking the study of our township much of this data could be useful to nearby communities in similar situations. We also believe that visible positive changes in the community could prompt other communities to think about how their community can be more age-friendly. Harrison Township is always happy to work with nearby communities and other agencies to better serve its residents and the Miami Valley area as a whole.

Increasing Collaboration and Coordination:

AARP Team Member Contact Info:
Most Instructive Area of Work: As a part of our intended age-friendly work the township intends to take multiple surveys, have several meetings, and get input from residents all over the township. We will take this information and compile it into data we can analyze to determine the needs of our community. We believe that this needs assessment could help adjacent communities as a starting point for improving their own jurisdiction. Ideally we would use our needs assessment to make changes to the area that would not only improve our residents quality of life but anyone from adjacent areas that visited as well. This could include changes or improvements to our park system or the overall connectivity of the township.

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