February 3, 2022

Dear Review Panel of AARP Age Friendly Applications,

On behalf of the City of Watsonville, I, Ari Parker, as Mayor, am committing the City to become an age friendly community. Like many surrounding cities, our aging population is steadily increasing. In 2019, the City of Watsonville took a bold step in drastically increasing its investment in older adult services by assuming management of the Watsonville Senior Center. This positioned the City as a leader in the development and coordination of services for older adult services throughout Watsonville. In February 2020, the Watsonville City Council adopted a resolution approving the City's enrollment into AARP’s Age Friendly Communities, further solidifying the City's commitment to improving livability standards for older adults.

The COVID-19 pandemic shed light on the unique needs of our aging population, with the Watsonville Senior Center serving as a vital resource for many essential services, from assisting with food deliveries, to providing technology devices and training to bridge the digital divide, to serving as a COVID-19 vaccine call center and assisting 1000s of seniors with appointments.

We feel that being part of the AARP Age Friendly Community Network will allow us to understand areas within our community that need improvement and empower the City and its partners to improve the ability for our seniors to age in place. We are committed to providing opportunities for all ages and abilities to thrive and to creating and implementing an action plan to support these efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of our application.

Ari Parker
Mayor, City of Watsonville