



Application Form to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities

1) *Community details*

Name of community: City of Ellsworth

State: Maine

Population size: 7741 (2010 Census)

Percentage of residents above the age of 60: 22.9% (2010 Census)

Name and title of the Elected Official signing the official commitment:

Robert Crosthwaite, Council Chairman

Office Address of the signer:

1 City Hall Plaza
Ellsworth, ME 04605

2) *Designation of community contact* for the AARP Network*

**The community contact is the staff or volunteer mainly responsible for carrying out the work at the community level, not the responsible AARP staff member*

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Please describe the above person's role in the city or community's age friendly initiative:

As Economic Development Director, Ms. Sumpter is Ellsworth's liaison between civic organizations, community leaders and business professionals. She facilitates the City's initiatives and provides project guidance from initial concept to completed project. In order to move the AARP's Network of Age Friendly Communities Program forward for the City of Ellsworth, Micki will use her community contacts in order to engage our senior population, and involve several local senior advocacy groups with whom the City has exceptionally close ties.

3) Description of your age-friendly activities to date

Please provide a brief summary, of your community's policies, programs and services targeted at older people; and how you plan to make your community more age-friendly.

The City's Economic Development Plan and Comprehensive Plan address the issues of providing for the health and wellbeing of Ellsworth's aging population through initiatives that target housing, safe neighborhoods, available healthcare, senior support services, goods, services and amenities (with a focus on pedestrian friendly areas), social integration and transportation. The City of Ellsworth has focused on being progressive, rather than reactive, and reached out early to encourage investment from developers to provide senior housing as evidenced by two recent projects; the Leonard Lake Senior Housing complex and the Seaport Village Assisted Living facility. Additionally, ground breaking activities are underway to turn a 5 acre former school property (within walking distance of the aforementioned properties) into a park with senior and child friendly attributes including walking paths, covered seating areas, an outdoor amphitheater, children's play area and 'splash pad'. Yet again the renovation of another old former school building into a new Community/Senior Center is nearing completion forming a "senior friendly" campus of sorts, all within walking distance from senior friendly housing to: Downtown Ellsworth, the Ellsworth Public Library, all necessary services and amenities, restaurants, goods and services, social and cultural events and much more.

4) Engagement of older people

How will you engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly community?

The City will once again partner with several of our local organizations to involve our community and our seniors in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Program. For example; the City, the local YMCA and a senior services organization called "Friends in Action" recently enjoyed and mutually benefited from the strong level of cooperation that exists between the three entities. The YMCA and FIA organizations were both occupying space in the newer section of a City owned former school building. The City witnessed first-hand the progressive, out-of-the box concepts developed by the YMCA to encourage interaction between the children in their Child Care Program and the seniors in the Friends in Action senior group, with exceptionally positive results. When space and accessibility became an issue the three groups formulated a plan which was presented to Ellsworth's City Council. The plan was heartily embraced and the City invested in the significant reconstruction and renovation of the occupied and unoccupied portions of the former school to turn it into a Community/Senior Center. Completion of the B.E. Moore Community Center is scheduled for January of 2015 and both of these organizations are in the process of moving back into the completely renovated building. The Center will provide for expanded space and services for both occupying organizations and allow for expanded use of the facility by more community groups and individuals. The redesign incorporated specific senior friendly design aspects and special spaces for senior friendly activities such as arts and crafts, low impact exercise, and a "senior café" to name a few.

5) Cross-sector collaboration

Briefly describe what mechanisms you have or are planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments across sectors?

One example of the City's serious intent to stay ahead of the curve in meeting the needs of our existing and ever increasing senior population is a Planning Department initiative to hire a qualified firm to develop a Senior Housing Study focused on the need of active and independent seniors. City officials believe that many of the senior housing needs (low income, assisted living, nursing, and continuing care facilities) are adequately addressed with the completion of several recent projects. The focus now is on housing for the Baby Boomers who are active, independent homeowners who are "aging in place". City officials want to know if "aging in place" is the result of a lack of other housing options, and what their future housing preferences are. A Request for Proposal has already been drafted and mailed to several consultant companies. The ultimate focus of the study will be to understand the existing housing inventory and to identify any unmet needs and opportunity areas.

The City will also once again rely heavily on the Friends in Action senior advocacy group for assistance in the planning and implementation of the Age-Friendly Communities Program. Additionally the City will actively reach out to engage the vast array of other organizations we are fortunate to have in our area and have enjoyed many past collaborations with.