1) COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Allegheny County

STATE: Pennsylvania

POPULATION SIZE: 1,223,348 (2010 Census)

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 22.72% (2010 Census)

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Executive and William Peduto, City of Pittsburgh Mayor

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Courthouse, 436 Grant Street, Room 101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; City of Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, 512 City-County Building, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

2) COMMUNITY CONTACT* FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

* The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

Please describe the named person’s role in the city or community’s age-friendly initiative:
AARP Age Friendly Communities Network Membership Application

Community Contact

Please describe the named person’s role in the city community’s age friendly initiative:

Jen Martchek, MSW-LCSW is the primary contact for the Age Friendly Communities effort in Allegheny County. Jen serves on the Board of Directors and as a consultant for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging, the organization introducing the initiative in the region. With support from her team, Jen will coordinate the efforts to complete and submit the WHO application. This will include the research and gathering of data required for the application, participate in the coordination of the assessments, the development of the Age Friendly Community Collaborative as well as the Action Plan to meet our identified goals. Jen brings extensive background in the field of aging to this work. She previously served as the Executive Director of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging, and is the current Secretary of the Pennsylvania Council on Aging. She also serves on the Board of Directors for CCAL, a non-profit national organization that raises awareness and advocates for the widespread implementation of person-centered living principles, policies and practices. During her time at SWPPA, Jen designed and implemented a program entitled Adult Community Engagement (ACE), a leadership training program for older adults to convene and participate in public meetings on social issues they identify.

The Communities Age Friendly Activities to Date

Provide a brief summary of the Community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age friendly.

Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and City of Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto (County Seat) are highly committed to making our region more age-friendly. Live Well Allegheny was launched by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald in January 2014 as a comprehensive, innovative strategy on wellness that embraces a broad concept of living well for people of all ages. The City of Pittsburgh signed on as an inaugural Live Well community within this county-wide initiative. Mayor William Peduto has taken the Milken Institute Pledge on behalf of the City of Pittsburgh to be a “Best City for Successful Aging.” Earlier this year, he also issued an Executive Order requiring the city to develop a complete streets policy that will affect the design, construction and maintenance of city streets, sidewalks and other public infrastructure. Recently, there have been a number of projects coming forward such as Pathfinder an accessible street finder application and others, compliment the concepts we want to encourage. By highlighting and sharing these projects we hope they will be integrated into the local communities we will build on these successful community policies, programs and services in the planning phase of our Age Friendly Community effort.

Community Engagement

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

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging will engage and involve older people in the process of becoming age-friendly in a number of key ways. With a generous grant from the Hillman
Family Foundation, we will initiate a series of six “gatherings” which will engage community members, and specifically older adults to create a community vision for their community that will support them as they age. These “gatherings” are modeled on Seattle’s highly successful Age Your Way model for asset based community engagement, are expected to engage a minimum of 150-175 older adults in targeted communities throughout the County. We will also be working with older adults in select communities that identify pedestrian safety-related challenges on a series of Crossings street performances in partnership with Sojourn Theater in Milwaukee. Finally, in 2016 we intend to request AARP resources to conduct an Age Friendly Community survey to reach out to older adults who may otherwise unable to participate in these person centered opportunities. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging brings a 25 year history of engaging older adults to this work. Most notable, it developed a model for active community engagement entitled “Adult Community Engagement” as an outcome of a grant funded by the Benedum Foundation and Jewish Healthcare Foundation. With this model, older adults were brought together in their local communities to identify a need and then create a plan to meet that need. The Age Your Way “Gatherings” in Allegheny County are built on the success of this effort. Aproximately 140 members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging including providers and older adults, have also been engaged in a SWOT analysis of our region as it related to Age-Friendly Communities Concepts.

**Cross Sector Collaborative**

Briefly describe the mechanism the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging is an independent, non-partisan, nonprofit organization has been a leader in the region building collaborative to improve the quality of life for older adults and people with disabilities. Our 350+ members in 10 Southwestern Pennsylvania counties represent a diverse cross section of individuals and organizations that believe in a future where older adults thrive, engage and contribute to the success of the region. SWPPA with AARP and community partners will build an Age Friendly Community Collaborative. This collaborative will be the mechanism for Government, organizations businesses and older adults to come together to discuss and analyze data gathered from the community assessments, craft the development of a 3 year countywide plan of action and monitor the progress on that plan. Additionally, the AFC Collaborative will identify new priorities and engage with other AFC to exchange best practices and knowledge. Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging members are also active in another of related regional collaborative such as the Pennsylvania Culture Change Coalition, the Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition and the Quality at End of Life Collaborative which may be tapped as forums for best practices, formulation of policy recommendations and discussion. SWPPA is recognized across Pennsylvania as an exceptional example of collaboration across different stakeholders on healthy aging.
September 23, 2015

Mr. Bill Johnston-Walsh, Director
AARP Pennsylvania
30 North 3rd Street, Suite 750
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Mr. Johnston-Walsh:

We write today to convey our support for the efforts of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging and commitment to the pursuit of policies to make our region friendlier to aging populations. By pursuing admission into the World Health Organization and AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities initiative, we can ensure that our residents age safely and with purpose and dignity.

Allegheny County has one of the highest proportions of residents aged 60-plus with 22.72% of the population falling into that category. This is an opportunity for our governments to address those changing demographics and environments so that older residents can live their best lives. To that end, Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh will be supporting this enrollment in the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities by:

- Designating staff to represent both governments on the local Age-Friendly Community collaborative, and throughout the stakeholder process;
- Engaging relevant departments, agencies and offices within our governments as appropriate to inform the action plan being developed for our region; and
- Leveraging our voices to raise the visibility and awareness of Age-Friendly Community issues and efforts when the opportunity presents itself.

We look forward to working collaboratively with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging, AARP Pennsylvania, as well as other stakeholders to make Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh most livable communities for people of all ages.

Sincerely,

Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Executive

William Peduto, Mayor
City of Pittsburgh