



Membership Application

to join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities** and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email livable@aarpp.org.
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 2/22/2017

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: *City of Urbana*

STATE: *Illinois*

POPULATION SIZE: *42,311 (2015 estimate)*

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: *11.8%*

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: *Mayor Laurel Prussing*

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: *400 South Vine Street Urbana, IL 61801*

Section 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.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

Dr. Bartlo serves as the day-to-day point person for Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana. She is housed at the Center on Health, Aging, and Disability in the College of Applied Health Sciences, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the logistical organizer of Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana. Dr. Bartlo handles media, public outreach, and general inquiries about Age-Friendly CU. Additionally she manages data collection, coordination and analysis, and provides organizational support for the Steering Committee.

Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

1) Please 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.

Champaign and Urbana are twin cities with a combined population of about 127,000 located in east central Illinois. The area is home to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which has close to 45,000 students and is highly ranked in engineering, agriculture, computer science, and many other fields. The University of Illinois has among the highest number of international students for a public university which brings great diversity and cultural exchange to the community. Champaign-Urbana is well-known for its progressive, micro-urban feel and its excellent neighborhoods, schools, and parks. It features three vibrant downtown areas, with dozens of locally-owned restaurants, nightclubs, shops, and boutiques. Champaign-Urbana appears on many top-ten lists for its tech opportunities, local culture, and progressive smart city policies. It sits within the highly productive agricultural region of Champaign County, which has some of the best soils in world. Champaign-Urbana is well connected to other cities with daily flights to Chicago and Dallas, and frequent train and bus service to Chicago.

Both Champaign and Urbana strive to provide a range of services and resources for older residents through aspirational goals set forth in comprehensive plans, transportation plans, City Council goals, and other relevant studies.¹ Relevant policies include provision of affordable housing and community services, development of “complete neighborhoods” (i.e., providing daily needs within a mixed-use neighborhood area), and multi-modal transportation.

Specific programs promoting services and housing for older residents are detailed in a Consolidated Plan (2015-2019), which is prepared pursuant to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development requirements for a funding consortium composed of the two cities along with Champaign County.² The goals of this plan are to improve the quality of life in Champaign County, particularly for low-income, homeless, elderly, and/or special needs individuals and families. The inclusion of elderly individuals in this countywide plan dovetails nicely with our Age-Friendly effort. Programmatic county goals and funds are also set forth each year in Annual Action Plans. Programs of service to older adults in both communities, particularly those wishing to “age in place” in lower-income neighborhoods, include senior repair grants for emergency home repairs, access grants to promote accessibility at the home, and whole-house rehabilitation grants. Senior pick-ups for regular neighborhood clean-ups are also offered in targeted areas within the City of Urbana.

The City of Champaign Neighborhood Services Department provides information, administers funding, and monitors programs that directly contribute to the health of neighborhoods throughout the City of Champaign. The Department's Neighborhood Coordination division is charged with the organization and support of neighborhood groups, while the Neighborhood Programs division monitors and disseminates funding to rehabilitate housing and support local social services. The Department acts under the guidance of the Neighborhood Wellness Action Plan, which coordinates City services across department boundaries to address public safety, housing, infrastructure, and civic involvement issues at a neighborhood level. Programs such as the Full Home Improvement Program, the Minor Home Repair Program, and the Home Accessibility Retrofit Program offer special eligibility criteria for economically disadvantaged persons aged 62 years or older.

On the community side, extensive services for older adults are provided by Family Service of Champaign County³, which offers a senior resource center, homecare services, Meals on Wheels, protective services, senior counseling,

¹ [http://www.urbanaininois.us/businesses/urbana-comprehensive-plan and](http://www.urbanaininois.us/businesses/urbana-comprehensive-plan-and)

<http://ci.champaign.il.us/departments/planning/champaign-tomorrow-comprehensive-plan/>

² <http://www.urbanaininois.us/government/community-development/grants-management/consolidated-plan>

³ <http://www.famservcc.org>

caregiver support, transportation services, and a hotline. Family Service also runs a very popular Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which promotes community engagement through volunteering for older adults. Additional services are provided by the Eastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging⁴, including service referrals and an on-line resource guide. ECIAAAA also supports the Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation which provides some free legal (civil) services for seniors. Champaign County Regional Planning Commission⁵ also provides senior services through their Senior Services Program. Local providers coordinate their efforts through self-organized groups, the Senior Task Force and Champaign County Committee on Aging, both which meet monthly. Faith in Action, an outreach program of Presence Covenant Medical Center provides assistance to seniors with long-term health needs and their caregivers in a variety of forms. All services are provided by volunteers and include transportation to medical appointments, friendly home and telephone visits, minor home repairs, assistance with shopping and errands, "Chore Days" (yard clean up and household chores), special projects throughout the year, Senior Health Insurance (SHIP) counseling, health education and screenings, and exercise classes.

There are a number of housing and health care options for older adults in Urbana-Champaign, including independent living, affordable housing, public housing, supportive housing, assisted living, skilled nursing, memory care, and adult day care. Clark-Lindsey Village is a full-spectrum continuing care retirement community which offers a number of community outreach programs and will soon be opening a wellness center and therapy pool, which will be available to its residents with options for community dwelling older adults to purchase memberships. The community is served by three major health care centers, including regional hospitals at Carle Foundation Hospital and Presence Covenant Medical Center in Urbana. A clinic for low-income patients is operated by Promise Health Care at the Frances Nelson Health Center in Champaign. Older veterans have the opportunity to seek care at a VA hospital in neighboring Danville, IL.

Transportation services are provided free for individuals with disabilities and those over age 65, and at reduced costs for other older adults by the award-winning Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (C-U MTD). CU-MTD has an extensive bus system throughout the two cities.⁵ CU--MTD also offers curb-to-curb pick-up and drop-off for mobility impaired users. Champaign County Area Rural Transit System (C-CARTS) is available for locations outside of the two cities.⁶

Both the Champaign and Urbana Park Districts offer classes and programs geared towards older adults. The Urbana Park District offers fitness classes, a Senior Citizens Club, drop-in senior programs, bus tours, and technology help. The Champaign Park District offers regular "50 Plus!" programs at two local senior centers (the Hays Recreation Center and the Douglass Annex) with open game days, chair exercises, computer classes, potlucks, and a monthly "50 Plus!" community meeting. Both Park Districts offer paved and unpaved trails for recreation with over 16 miles of trails in Urbana and 18 miles in Champaign. Recreation and swimming programs are also offered by the Stephens Family YMCA in Champaign. Additionally, residents of all ages can enjoy entertainment in venues like the Virginia Theater, a historic performing arts center and movie palace owned and operated by the Champaign Park District.⁷

Enrichment education for those aged 50 or older is offered by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which includes 1300 older adults as members.⁸ Parkland Community College offers continuing education classes for both personal and professional development in the areas of; art, technology, fitness, music, health and wellness, foreign languages, money management, and opportunities for day trips and overnight educational excursions. The University of Illinois Extension provides community-based training and education on complex issues facing aging families and professionals working with aging families that can benefit from evidence-based and research-informed Extension programming. They have a variety of program

⁴ <http://eciaaaa.org/>

⁴ <http://www.ccrpc.org/community-services/programs-services/senior-services/>

⁵ <https://www.cumtd.com/about-us/>

⁶ <http://c-carts.com/>

⁷ <http://thevirginia.org/>

⁸ <http://olli.illinois.edu/>

focused on; aging issues, brain health, Alzheimer's/dementia, caregiving, retirement transitions, managing stress, maintaining balance in life, life story writing, grandparents raising grandchildren, and grief/loss.

As the host for the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana has many more cultural and entertainment activities than would be expected for a city of its size. Big Ten sports are a huge draw and there are world-class musical, dance, and drama performances at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, as well as a number of other performance venues on and near the campus. The campus itself has two major museums, the Krannert Art Museum and the Spurlock Museum of world history and culture, as well as several special collections. Other amenities include an Arboretum, golf course, formal gardens, and Japan House Cultural Center, among many others. The attractions provided by the University of Illinois combined with the relative safety and affordability of the community make it a very compelling place in which to grow older and/or to retire.

While Champaign-Urbana offers a rich array of services for older persons, through the Age-Friendly process, we propose to dramatically improve the extent, awareness and access to these services to better benefit older residents throughout the community. This can be done through transformation of our neighborhoods, commercial areas and community focal points, making them more senior-friendly and easier to navigate for older persons. Implementation steps might include adoption and implementation of a pedestrian access and safety plan, and/or incorporation of measures suggested by the Vision Zero and 80 Cities movements⁹. We can seek to expand the availability of services to older persons, at all income ranges and in all neighborhoods, perhaps through implementation of a community volunteer bank (as in the Villages concept¹⁰) or through other networks. We can seek to further improve the compilation and distribution of resource information for seniors through increased collaboration among agencies and organizations offering services. Additionally, we see potential for the development of inter-generational programs for University of Illinois undergraduate students and older adults in the community. We can also promote improved engagement by older adults from throughout the community on issues of interest and relevance to their lives, including advocacy against ageism and discrimination. Further, Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana is proactive about supporting the needs of a diverse population of older adults, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, education, and gender and sexual identities

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

The Champaign-Urbana area is fortunate to have a variety of interested organizations and stakeholder groups from which to launch an Age-Friendly movement. The Center on Health, Aging, and Disability (CHAD), within the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign^{11 12} serves as the logistical home and coordinator for Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana. The mission of CHAD is to provide “leadership in interdisciplinary research, educational, and outreach efforts that promote health and wellness; healthy aging across the lifespan; healthy communities; and optimal participation of individuals with disabilities.” The CHAD mission is well-aligned with the goals and interests of Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana, and they are available to provide the structural support the effort needs for sustainability, including convening regular meetings of the Age-Friendly Steering Committee.

The Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana Steering Committee includes representatives from each city and park district, local health providers, local senior service providers, members of a local Senior Task Force organization, and other interested members of the community, specifically older adults who reside in the community. These organizations and individuals provide a natural launching pad for engagement and outreach to the larger community through a variety of means, such as special events, symposia, resource fairs, public and social media. Further, they are

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/visionzeronetwork>; <http://www.880cities.org/>

¹⁰ <http://vtvnetwork.org/>

¹¹ <http://www.chad.illinois.edu/age-friendly>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/agefriendlycu/?fref=ts>

committed to ensuring the inclusion of the diverse concerns of older community members with regard to the Action Plan.

Our Age-Friendly campaign was officially launched in April 2016 with the Chittenden Symposium¹³ hosted on campus by CHAD and the College of Applied Health Sciences. Mayors Deb Frank Feinen and Laurel Prussing, of Champaign and Urbana respectively, opened the afternoon with remarks expressing their excitement about Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana. Community members participated in discussion groups and learned about becoming an Age-Friendly community from Ryan Gruenenfelder, Manager of Advocacy & Outreach at AARP Illinois, and Margaret Neal, the Director of the Institute of Aging at Portland State University, the organization which hosted Portland's successful Age-Friendly effort. To further publicize our initiative, in September we took advantage Active Aging Week, a joint effort with local retirement community Clark-Lindsey Village, the park districts, local community college Parkland, insurer Health Alliance, the AAA, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Illinois. Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana has continued to partner with Clark-Lindsey Village, Family Service of Champaign County, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Synergy Home Care to develop a new outreach program called Connections Café. Connections Café is a "pop-up" senior center without walls and a fun way for seniors to connect, make new friends, receive technology support on their devices, and have the opportunity for free blood pressure and vital checks. In 2017 Connections Café will be "popping-up" at park district senior centers, libraries, churches, and senior apartment complexes.

As a precursor to developing an Age-Friendly Action Plan, the Steering Committee is currently undertaking a community survey of older adults with extensive outreach through news releases, radio interviews, social media, advertisements, and community presentations. The survey is available to adults over age 50 in both electronic and paper format. To date, almost 400 older adults have completed our survey. We plan to take advantage of survey specialists in the College of Applied Health Sciences for assistance with data analysis.

Moving forward in our Age-Friendly efforts, we will continue to utilize the many resources available to us on campus and in the community, through continued engagement, events, and formation of focus groups and stakeholder interviews to promote participation by all sectors of the community and to make sure our efforts are headed in the right direction. We will also undertake focused efforts to engage older adults who may not be participating in our events, through direct visits to churches throughout the community, including African-American churches, assisted living locations, nursing homes, health providers, and special classes.

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

As noted above, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, through the Center on Health, Aging, and Disability, has stepped forward to partner with the cities of Champaign and Urbana in a cooperative long-term venture. The Age-Friendly effort is spearheaded by a diverse Steering Committee composed of representatives from the University, the two cities, the two park districts, local social service providers, local health providers, local retirement communities, educators, media, and interested older individuals. The purpose of the Steering Committee, as set forth in its Charter, is to draw upon the diverse experiences, expertise, and insights of key individuals and organizations from the community to acquire and maintain the Age-Friendly City designation, as awarded by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Steering Committee members provide essential connections to other organizations and key individuals in the community through affiliations such as the Senior Task Force, the Council of Service Providers, Family Service of Champaign County, and the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging. The Steering Committee members are inclusive of older adults, and provide enthusiastic advocacy for the initiative, identify strengths and weaknesses of Champaign-Urbana related to the Age-Friendly designation features, and developing an Action Plan with goals, priorities, and implementation steps to follow.

¹³ <http://ahs.illinois.edu/chittenden-2016>

Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

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

4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Through our unique collaboration with a world-class research university, we expect that our Age-Friendly effort will contribute significantly to research in the area of aging and will in turn benefit from it. We believe that we will also form a model for communities to collaborate with universities and other educational institutions to advance the cause of creating Age-Friendly communities. Through conversations with Bill Armbruster from the AARP, we have learned that Age-Friendly/University partnerships are becoming an increasingly common collaboration model for these initiatives. Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana anticipates that we would have the future ability to mentor other communities interested in this type of collaboration effort. Finally, through our collaboration, we hope to provide a model for other locations that have twin cities or multiple jurisdictions with unique characteristics, but common goals to create Age-Friendly environments. A potential example of a research thrust that could benefit Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana and all cities in the network revolves around the use of technologies to promote independent and healthy living among elders. Our University and the Center on Health, Aging and Disability has made a commitment to health, technology and aging by fostering interactions between our world-class College of Engineering and the College of Applied Health Science. A new engineering-inspired College of Medicine set to open in fall of 2018 will only accelerate momentum for technologies related to health and chronic conditions, including those afflicting older adults. Furthermore, in October 2016 AARP opened their first office on a university campus in our University Research Park. The Tech Nest at AARP in Research Park is part of AARP's Innovation Portfolio and provides a technology lab for the AARP, students, and faculty to collaborate on research that addresses the needs of older adults.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The concept of pursuing Age-Friendly designation was sparked by an inspirational presentation on the topic held at the 2014 Leading Age Conference in Nashville. This presentation was attended by Clark-Lindsey Village Board member Kathleen Holden. Ms. Holden is a retired University Administrator who had previously successfully launched the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is deeply connected to the community and a motivated Age-Friendly advocate. Ms. Holden, with the assistance of Clark-Lindsey Village President, Deb Reardanz, was able to draw upon her expertise and enthusiasm to attract the attention of the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois in considering the opportunity to have the Center on Health, Aging and Disability (CHAD) host the effort under the leadership of Director Dr. Jeff Woods and the day-to-day attention of staff researcher Dr. Wendy Bartlo. Together, these individuals were able to earn the commitment and enthusiasm of other key stakeholders, including the Mayors of the Cities of the Urbana and Champaign. The two communities are particularly excited by this opportunity to engage with the University of Illinois on a topic of critical importance and impact to the host communities. Our effort presents a terrific opportunity to meld cutting-edge academic research with current day community applications in our progressive twin city environment.

6) Please provide a digital (JPG, PNG or PDF) file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.

The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours >



Click here to add a link to where we can find your logo. Or, send us your logo by email attachment to livable@aarp.org.