



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: 7/31/2017

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Buncombe County

STATE: North Carolina

POPULATION SIZE: 258,000

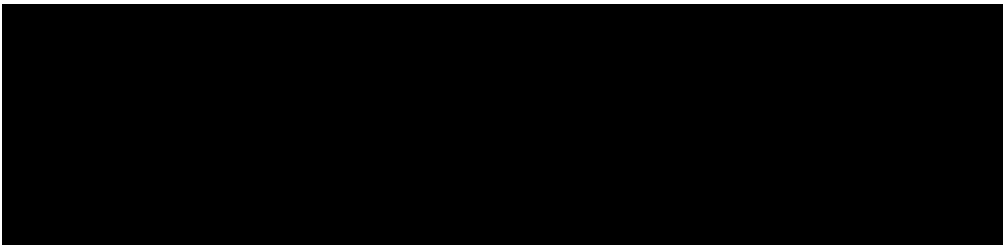
PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 18.6 % of people over 65 (2015 U.S. Census update)

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Chairman Brownie Newman, Buncombe County Commission Chair

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: brownie.newman@buncombecounty.org; Commissioners' Offices: 200 College Street, Suite 326, Asheville, NC, 28801

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.



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

Ms. Johnson-Sawyer serves as Executive Director of the area's most significant, multi-location adult day care program. She has represented that organization for several years on the Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC). At present she serves as Chair of the ACC, which provides the primary local focal point for public and private agencies, organizations, as well as individuals collaborating to improve and support services for older adults. As Chair of the ACC she provides leadership of its efforts to advise the County Commissioners through: the creation of a five year aging plan, monitoring that plan's implementation, providing annual financial award recommendations for public funds sourced from Community Block Grants and local County tax revenues, advocacy on behalf of the interests of local older adult needs, and promotion of their participation in the advancement of the local community. The ACC operates as a sub-committee of Buncombe County Health and Human Services and will serve as the main conduit to Buncombe County leadership.

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.

The Buncombe County Aging Plan guides the direction for aging and adult services. This plan is unique in that it is county-funded, staffed and responsible for directing HCCBG funds. The County intends to become more comprehensive in its planning for older adults. Specifically, this County seeks to broaden both the number and type of its leaders and institutions owning responsibility for: advancing the well being of older adults, improving their role in the community, and facilitating their capacity to more fully engage in the community. This County will continue to include a diverse representation of older adults in its comprehensive planning processes. Buncombe County is rich in resources and community programs and services. On becoming aware of the “Network of Age Friendly Communities” movement and it’s potential to contribute to the overall livability of this community, this County’s elected officials on May 2, 2017 adopted a resolution directing the Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC) to apply for membership in the Network of Age Friendly Communities. The 2018-2022 Aging Plan will have at it’s core the implementation of the 5 year planning structure (e.g. it’s first two years will be engaged in a formal assessment of existing services and identification of accountability benchmarks of future progress).

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

The County Commission adopted resolution authorizing participation in the Network of Age Friendly Communities includes this directive, “Convene a steering team to lead the Age-Friendly Community Initiative. The steering team should actively seek input from diverse stakeholders, with significant participation from older Buncombe County residents.” The initial assessment of current services and infrastructure will include direct responses from this County’s older adults. The intention is to use the survey process as an opportunity for community education about the diversity and interdependence of the 8 domains in order to provide a truly age-friendly community. The steering committee will include representatives of leadership from multiple sectors of institutions, service providers, and members of the older adult community. The implementation of the action plan will be guided by the steering committee, AARP volunteers and older adults residing in Buncombe County. An ongoing program to periodically assess progress of these measures is planned; its results will provide a feedback loop of older adults’ experience to guide future efforts.

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.

Buncombe County’s Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC) serves as the advisory body to the County Commission regarding aging services planning, including both the awarding of HCCBG and County sourced funds. In addition, the ACC currently provides public relations and provider information sharing functions. The ACC will be enriched in the future to add units specific to the implementation of the NAFC planning and assessment process. The ACC presently includes representatives from County Health and Human Services, transportation, affordable housing, financial security, health care and HCCBG services. The intention is to leverage this “core” with its strong history of inter-agency collaboration and cooperation and build out organization units that fully articulate the challenges and opportunities inherent in the eight domains of the NAFC model.

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?

Our intention is to have representatives from Buncombe County participate in the periodic assemblies of the NAFC as sponsored by WHO and AARP. Intermittently, Buncombe County plans to draw upon the community of peer experts for assistance in building its capacity to become an age-friendly community; in turn, Buncombe County plans to offer its assistance to other NAFC members as may be helpful. Moreover, this County expects to benefit from NAFC peer-based benchmarking data that will be made available to participants in the network; Buncombe County is willing to share its data with the Network's member communities. As this State and region become more populated with NAFC member communities, Buncombe County looks forward to joining in local exchanges among these members.

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?

Buncombe County has had success developing and implementing two 5-year aging plans; this County's work has been widely recognized in North Carolina as being among the stronger aging plans and processes. However, in comparison to other published data about communities across the United States, it is apparent Buncombe County could greatly profit from learning lessons from those who have advanced aspects of their 8 domains in ways that better meet the needs of their community residents. Buncombe County looks forward to enhancing its understand of these "portable lessons" from other members of the NAFC. For example, we believe there is significant opportunity for this County to improve its approach to be more "preventative" in development of services leading to well being.

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 >



<https://www.buncombecounty.org/img/logobrand.png>