



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@aarp.org.
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 7/12/2017

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: City of Columbia

STATE: SC

POPULATION SIZE: 129,272 (2010 Census)

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 10.3% (65 and over)

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mayor Stephen Benjamin

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: City of Columbia, P. O. Box 147, Columbia, SC 29217

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:

Lisa Marie Field is an urban dweller on Main Street and is passionate about creating an age-friendly and pedestrian friendly urban core to attract like minded residents to the City of Columbia. Recently turning 59, Ms. Field worked in the senior living industry where she engaged with executive directors of LeadingAge in SC, NC, VA and GA. Through this work, she became active in securing her future to maintain an urban lifestyle into her retirement years in downtown Columbia. In January 2016, Ms. Field engaged city and community leaders at an Age-Friendly breakfast to open dialogue for measuring interest in obtaining an Age-Friendly City designation from AARP/ World Health Organization (WHO). She continues her passion for achieving this designation for her city as a key volunteer in making this voice of concern heard throughout city government. She has enlisted the support of others through city government, housing executives, neighborhood associations and the downtown community. Her goal is to recognize the City of Columbia as a destination location for citizens of all ages to enjoy the livability of the city through affordable housing, pedestrian friendly complete streets and a city center where you can live, work and play within a multi-generational community. Ms. Field is a board Member of the Sales & Marketing Council of the Building Industry Association, on the Membership Committee of Central South Carolina Alliance's Committee of 100, Main Street District Merchant Committee and past member of

LeadingAge SC, GA, NC and VA.

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.

Parks and Recreation Department hosts several annual events to engage the senior community including Senior Expo Day in May, SCRPA Beach Retreat in Sept/Oct and the Holiday Ball each December. Senior Clubs in the neighborhood recreation centers host exercise and art classes, trips and events, and activities to create a sense of community for retired residents. The Main Street District hosts monthly First Thursday events on Main Street, a multi-generational pedestrian friendly night out to enjoy the entertainment and dining venues. Community Gardens are located throughout the city for residents to tend to healthy environmental outdoor activities. James E. Clyburn Golf Center offers senior discounts and a multi-generational golfing experience at this public course. Love Riverfront Park Strolls encourage healthy walking activity along a picturesque waterfront venue. Public pools provide aquatic exercise for swimmers of all ages. The city maintains 62 tennis courts with programs designed for all ages and all levels of play. The City of Columbia's cultural arts program offers education, instruction and festivals to support those in the community interested in exploring their creativity. The Creative Journey program is specifically designed for the military and veterans. Downtown shopping and entertainment districts including Devine Street, Five Points and The Vista host pedestrian friendly events throughout the year for the engagement of residents of all ages.

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

Life long learning programs are available at local colleges and universities for those residents 60 and older. SC law provides tuition exemption for these students; however, credits are not earned. Social Security income that is taxed on the federal income tax return is not taxed on the South Carolina income tax return. Once taxpayers reach 65, they may exclude \$15,000 of income from any source on their South Carolina tax return.

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.

Columbia Museum of Art has engaged a senior study to gear programs to the 65+ audience to attract visitors and future members with programming with like minded interests. A 2014 study conducted by the Midlands Urban Land Institute resulted in findings that support a vertical urban core for the City of Columbia. As a result, the city has entertained vertical development plans above the city garages to introduce more urban core housing options creating a more friendly live, work, play environment. The Walk/Bike master plan addresses the next steps for developing transportation methods to enrich the city's health and economic vitality while connecting residents to local colleges and universities, parks, work and entertainment districts.

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?

As we craft workable and successful programs for creating a multi-generational future for Columbia, we hope to retain our graduates and retiring military and attract future retirees to our urban core. Through our best practices, we hope to share our programs that were instrumental in meeting the goals for enriching our city and surrounding communities through measurable results from improved lifestyle.

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 results of a 2014 Urban Land Institute Reality Check study opened our eyes to planning for the next 30 years. The changing needs of our current and future residents requires us to engage and learn from other markets, adapt new infrastructures to the changing needs of the aging of America and to continue to connect with innovative solutions for keeping a multi-generational experience for the citizens of Columbia, SC. It was the passion of a few who created the spark, and the vision of the community who continued to fan the flames. Through AARP and the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities, we can learn from each other the best practices to adopt in our cities to make certain that we continue to keep our eye on the future and maintain a relevant city and a vital economic future.

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.