



## 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](mailto:livable@aarp.org).
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 12/19/2017

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: City of Roanoke

STATE: Virginia

POPULATION SIZE: 99660

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 22.6% age 60+; 15.6% age 65+; 6.3% age 80+

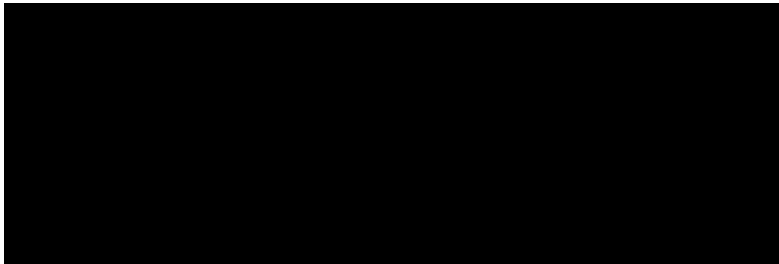
NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.



OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 215 Church Ave. SW Room 456 Roanoke, VA 24011-1594

### 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:

Ron Boyd is the Chief Executive Officer for the Local Office on Aging, Inc. (LOA) and LOA is the designated Area Agency on Aging for the Fifth Planning District. The Fifth Planning District (aka Greater Roanoke Valley Region) includes five counties (Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin & Roanoke) and three independent cities (Covington, Roanoke, & Salem), which are interconnected through state and local services. Director Boyd has been instrumental in helping to coordinate initiatives, programs, and services that support the quality of life for older residents in the Greater Roanoke Valley Region and across Virginia. His experience building community capacity to address local issues aligns with the expertise needed to lead the age-friendly initiative for the City of Roanoke.

### **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 Greater Roanoke Valley Region prides itself on being able to offer residents a healthy and meaningful quality of life; and The City of Roanoke is no exception. The City is home to 29.7% of the region's population, yet occupies less than 2% of the land in the region. It leads the region in economic development and serves as the gateway city into rural southwest Virginia. In 2017, the National Civic League designated the City (for the seventh time) as an All-America City, thanks in large part to the dedicated efforts of regional partnerships in supporting youth, education, and the arts. It is difficult to delineate the efforts of the City from the work of regional agencies because they are interconnected when providing programs and services. Due to the large rural area within the region, public and private agencies have historically entered into collaborations to meet the needs of residents. In the last decade as the number of older residents in the region has increased, agencies have started to think and talk about livable communities for all ages - not just for youth. Organizations and collaboratives currently taking a lifespan approach in their work include the United Way of the Roanoke Valley's Healthy Roanoke Valley Plan, the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) Livable Community Plan, the City of Roanoke Senior Quality of Life Initiative and the LOA Strategic Plan. With the exception of the Senior Quality of Life Initiative Plan which only addresses residents in the City of Roanoke, the plans address needs across the entire region. Healthy Roanoke Valley efforts have focused on addressing care coordination and care equity for residents of all ages.

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

The City of Roanoke AFC workgroup has held three public working sessions since June 2017 to discuss possible AFC certification. Efforts were facilitated by Just Partners, Inc. and attended by members of a local AARP chapter, the Virginia AARP regional representative, and key partner stakeholders representing the LOA (Designated Area Agency on Aging for the Fifth Planning District), Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, the RVARC (5th District Planning Commission), Virginia Tech Center for Gerontology, United Way of the Roanoke Valley, The City of Roanoke City Council and City Manager's office, and the Virginia Commission on Aging in Roanoke. All stakeholders are committed to engaging older residents in future AFC efforts, including workgroup membership.

**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.**

Despite a robust history of collaboration between public and private agencies, the City of Roanoke AFC workgroup is utilizing the services of Just Partners, Inc. to help identify unmet needs in the city through the use of SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis. Issues that percolate to the top and viewed as having the potential to change through community collaboration are being considered. Support from city and regional government comes from the RVARC, the City of Roanoke Economic Development Department, The Workforce Development Board, Greater Roanoke Transit Company, City Council members, and the City Manager. Additional support has been offered from local government representatives and we will seek support from agencies including Carilion Clinic Center for Healthy Aging, YMCA of Roanoke Valley, Leadership Roanoke Valley, Urban League, NAACP, Local Colors, TAP, and Commonwealth Catholic Charities. Healthy Roanoke Valley has focused on access to care, care coordination, and wellness for all ages through the lens of health equity. In addition, Carilion Clinic is conducting its triennial Community Needs Assessment in 2017-2018, which will draw upon primary and secondary data, community engagement, and cross-sector stakeholder involvement to address the health needs of the community. A community-wide implementation plan will be initiated based on findings that focus on collaborative solutions to improve health outcomes across the life span. Active participants in this process include the LOA and other key partners in this application.

**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?**

The City of Roanoke AFC team is uniquely positioned to work with communities of similar size (~100,000 residents) surrounded by rural areas and looks to share ideas and strategies with them. The City is also able to share experiences and perspectives with AFCs of any size that also support a growing immigrant population (55 unique languages are spoken in Roanoke) and industry including a major hospital system, a medical school and multiple colleges/universities that train healthcare professionals.

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

**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?**

Three separate but convergent factors have influenced the City of Roanoke to move forward with AFC certification. 1) Southwest Virginia includes several communities which have engaged in livable community evaluations. Information about their efforts has been disseminated and has caught the attention of Virginia AARP representatives and members. The AARP regional representative has been instrumental in generating interest and organizing the Roanoke workgroup spearheading this effort. 2) The City of Roanoke has prided itself in offering a quality of life for its residents. However, community leaders were disappointed in the City's livable community rankings by the Milken Institute and AARP. City Council members have encouraged agencies to identify ways to raise the City's score and address areas in which the city fell short. The City of Roanoke Senior Quality of Life Initiative was created in response to this request. Findings from a 2016 survey of 250 older residents has provided insight into some of their unmet needs and concerns about the quality of life in Roanoke. 3) Carilion Clinics (a healthcare leader in the region) has partnered with United Way of the Roanoke Valley to conduct local needs assessments every 3 years in the region. Results from the needs assessment continue to point to the need to address unmet health needs of older residents. The next assessment will be conducted in

2018 and is expected to help guide the work of the AFC workgroup.

**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 >



[http://www.roanokeva.gov/PhotoGallery/9/1898\\_Roa\\_City\\_Seal-Small\\_300dpi.jpg](http://www.roanokeva.gov/PhotoGallery/9/1898_Roa_City_Seal-Small_300dpi.jpg)