



## 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](mailto:livable@aarpp.org) or call 202-434-2430
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE:** [Click here to enter a date.](#)

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY:** City of Hernando

**STATE:** Mississippi

**POPULATION SIZE:** 15,000

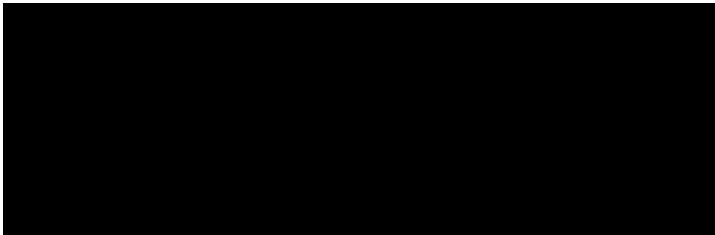
**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60:** 1,392

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:** Chip Johnson, Mayor

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER:** 475 West Commerce Street

### 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:**

Gia Matheny manages various projects for the city many of which focus on the health, the environment, citizenship, social capital, and economic development for the residents of Hernando. Her role is to strengthen the community and improve the quality of life of its citizens of ALL ages through city programs, events and public relations, and increase public engagement and awareness of the community through social media and the local press. Gia will be the main point of contact for the Senior Committee Task Force and will work together with other members on the city's age friendly initiative. Some of the programs Gia manages are the annual children's health fair, employee health fair, Hernando Farmers Market, Hernando Excel By 5, the city's Kindergarten readiness program and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, EPA Brownfields assessment grant, Mayor's Youth Council, Water Tower 10K Race and 1-Mile Fun Run, as well as the city's social media and public relations with the local press.

### 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.**

Meeting very similar goals of WHO's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Hernando is progressive about improving the quality of life for all its citizens. By helping the community get and stay healthy it was the first city in the state to be named the Healthiest Hometown (in 2010) by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. The award is given to the city in the state that is doing the most to promote a culture of health, especially via sustainable policy changes. Land developers are required to install sidewalks in all new development, including residential, commercial and industrial areas which will make the city more pedestrian friendly. The city has striped bike lanes and has installed signage promoting safe cycling. Other development policies, like a requirement for connected streets, makes the city more walkable and bikable. The city's design standards make the community safer and more attractive, further increasing the possibility that citizens will walk and bike. The city has a Senior Program called "Young at Heart" that focuses on seniors and provides activities including, arthritis classes, senior fitness and dance classes, walking group, Senior trip to Europe, a pot-luck luncheon once a month and monthly guest speakers who focus on the senior age community. The Hernando Farmers Market (HFM) is one block from the most disadvantaged neighborhood and in walking distance from the historic downtown neighborhoods as well as more modern subdivisions. The HFM drives the local economy by encouraging backyard farming and selling their produce at the market. HFM has many retired citizens who sell as vendors each Saturday. HFM also accepts SNAP and Senior Vouchers and doubles SNAP transactions up to \$10 to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables. The Hernando Public Library offers senior programs including Working with a local Senior Community Task Force will allow for more conversation about senior initiatives and how the city can become more age friendly.

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

The city has a strong social media presence and information is reached via Facebook and Twitter. Seniors who do not have access to the Internet will be given flyers through the Hernando Public Library, Young at Heart Group, Hernando Farmers Market, and the Shephards Center, a local Christian senior group that is comprised of over 15 churches. Mayor Johnson, the Community Development Director, and other members of the Task Force can speak to local senior groups about senior opportunities in the city. Information about current happenings will also be shared with the local press.

**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.**

The city of Hernando will provide office space and personelle to start the Task Force. The city will invite agencies and advocates with a focus on seniors and will work with the AARP State Director of Community Outreach to grow the local organization. Members will collaborate and find ways to work together to improve and implement opportunities in the city. Monthly AARP meetings are currently being held at city hall.

**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 goals of WHO are synonymous with the vision of Mayor Johnson and the administration of the City of Hernando, to improve equity in health, reduce health risks, promote healthy lifestyles and settings, and respond to the underlying determinants of health. Mayor Johnson is a champion of health and because of his efforts Hernando is recognized in the state of Mississippi as the “Healthy City.” Mayor Johnson has put forth many initiatives and policies that focus on the health of the community since elected to office, including a no smoking ordinance, Smart Growth design standards including additional sidewalks, bike lanes and connected streets. Hernando has adopted a philosophy of protecting its valuable natural resources and ensuring that the built environment is dignified, durable, well-landscaped, and attractive. Mayor Johnson and his staff are always looking for progressive approaches to improve the health of its citizens.

**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?**

**As the third fastest growing city in Mississippi we strive to be a city where people of all ages feel safe, happy, healthy and know their community is well designed for sustainable growth.**



Click here to paste the JPEG image or the link to one.

**6) Please provide a digital file or link of a logo or**

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