



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: 4/18/2018

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Guilford County

STATE: North Carolina

POPULATION SIZE: 520,230 (2016)

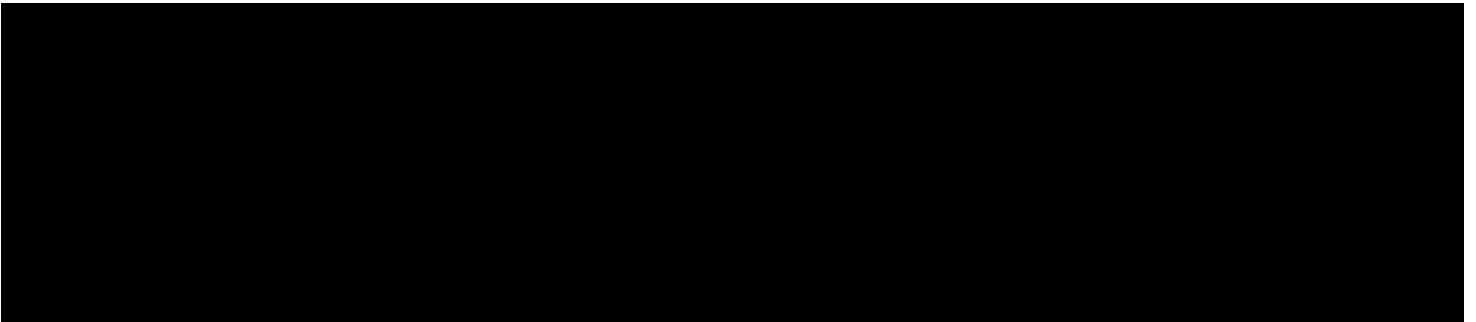
PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 20%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Alan Branson,
Chairman, Guilford County Commissioners

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: Guilford County Manager's Office, 301 West Market Street Greensboro NC 27402

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:

Ellen Whitlock has been director of Senior Resources of Guilford since 1995. Under her leadership the Guilford County Senior Services Roundtable was implemented a group consisting of service providers in the area of aging as well as interested citizens. Senior Resources has recently purchased and renovated a building that provides more space in a friendlier environment from which to serve older adults and families who call Guilford County home. One of the outcomes of the Roundtable has been to sponsor three aging summits in the last five years with funding from the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro. The most recent one focused on the topic of livable communities and featured Michael Watson of AARP as a keynote speaker. Ellen has also attended as a guest of AARP the annual Livable Communities Conference in Dallas in November of 2017. Ellen was the primary contact with the Guilford County Manager in making arrangements to request the Commissioners to participate in this project. In addition to her local work Ellen is the immediate past chair of the North Carolina Commission on Volunteer and Community Service and serves on the board of directors of the National Association of Nutrition Programs.

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.

Senior Resources of Guilford is the largest non-profit provider of community-based services in Guilford County. The agency is funded by the two United Ways in the County, the Area Agency on Aging as well as a number of local foundations, faith communities and individual donors. Additionally, the agency has a contract for services through the Local Mental Health Entity, the Office of Refugee Resettlement and the Corporation of National Service which funds the Foster Grandparent Program. Fifteen (15) years ago the agency started the Guilford County Senior Services Roundtable which is a group of non-profit organizations, for-profit entities and interested citizens whose mission is to develop increased communication among agencies in regard to senior services, develop systems which makes referring clients easier, and to advocate among elected officials to increase and improve services to older adults in Guilford County. The Roundtable has developed the 'Protocols and Pathways' project which can be found on multiple agency websites, has hosted numerous legislative educational events, and has planned and implemented 'Annual Aging Summits' with funding from the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro. The most recent Aging Summit keynote speaker was Michael Watson who educated the community on AARP's Liveable and Age-Friendly Communities Project. Throughout the history of the Roundtable, focus has been on developing an Age-Friendly Community and the group has looked at projects in other communities such as Portland, Oregon and Orange County, North Carolina. Members of the Roundtable include representatives of county funded agencies, agencies providing adult day care and Hospice. The group recognizes the need to focus on livability for all our citizens and has a desire to participate in the AARP Aging-Friendly Network. A full range of services exist in Guilford County that allow individuals and their caregivers to receive services as needed and as they move along a continuum of care. Senior Resources of Guilford's mission is to provide services that promote and support independent living as long as safely possible. Guilford County is unique in the state with two of the seven largest cities in the state contained in the County as well as a number of small townships. Senior Resources of Guilford has a presence in both cities with offices established in Greensboro and High Point. Monthly activities at eight rural outreach sites throughout the county provides services to the residents who frequently face barriers in reaching services in the main cities. Over the last two years, each of the major cities have made significant strides in specific areas that coincide in matching one of the eight domains which have created our desire to partner with them to move their work forward in a

manor that promotes livable communities. The Greensboro Housing Coalition Task Force, who encourages safer affordable housing, recently developed a housing plan that is being presented to the Greensboro City Council. Senior Resources of Guilford's Executive Director has served on this task force. In High Point, the focus has been on increasing food security since this community was ranked 9th in the area of food insecurity with the development of the High Point Food Alliance. Working with the Executive Team, Senior Resources of Guilford's agency director has chaired the Senior Task Force and is working on the implementation of a grant from the Community Foundation of High Point to create best practices for food pantries while increasing seniors access to these pantries as well as increasing awareness of SNAP benefits. Therefore, we desire to initially focus on these two domains through groups that are all ready making progress in the community in an effort to insure that in their planning process that the lessons learned through the World Health Organization's research will be included in their implementation. Over the last two years the Roundtable has educated our elected officials and community at large on the importance of Age-Friendly efforts and promoted that what is good for an older adult on an assistive walking device is also good for the parent who is jogging with a stroller. We believe participation in the AARP Age-Friendly Network will provide us valuable information to move our local efforts forward.

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

The senior population in Guilford County is anticipated to increase by 44% in the next twenty years. During this same period it is anticipated that the 85 plus population will increase by an incredible 90%. North Carolina is the 9th fastest growing state of individuals 60 and older. This increase in population provides our County with a large number of individuals from whom to seek input on needs and desires on what would make living in our community easier as well as provides us with a core of individuals from which to recruit volunteers. Currently Senior Resources of Guilford utilizes a cadre of over 1,100 volunteers the vast majority of which are seniors themselves. Additionally, other Roundtable members are dependent on volunteers to increase their ability to expand and enhance their services to those in need. For example, Community Housing Solutions utilizes volunteers to provide minor home repair to low-income older home owners in need of assistance. The existing volunteers will be encouraged to participate in this planning process as will other groups and individuals. The United Ways have groups of volunteers that focus on this senior service and their input and participation will be sought as well. AARP has a strong local presence with numerous volunteers who will be asked to participate. We are fortunate to have the presence of an AARP Associate State Director in our community, Mark Hensley, who formally worked at the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services and has a passion and strong understanding of the needs of an older community. In addition, AARP-NC State President, Dr. Catherine Sevier who also calls Guilford County home, is a strong collaborator, advocate and champion for the Age-Friendly initiative. The Guilford County Commission on Aging, which is a part of the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments Area Agency of Aging, will also be invited to participate in the planning process. Their members are primarily individuals over the age of 50. We will promote the opportunity among existing volunteers in our formal networks and recruit interested individuals in many ways to reach out to all segments of the community. Senior Resources of Guilford has just signed a contract with the O'Henry magazine to advertise in their monthly editions and this project will be among the items promoted. Press releases will go to the main stream press that we currently promote activities with as well as our social media outreach activities. Throughout the formal planning process, it is the intention of the planning group to develop task forces comprised of local individuals with expertise in the areas of each domain, and to garner their suggestions for others who share a passion for each segment of our focus. Meetings will be

scheduled throughout the day at times that are most convenient for our volunteers and in locations which are accessible. Diverse representation will be sought on each of the task forces throughout the process. Focus groups will also be held at Senior Resources of Guilford's eight rural outreach sites to insure that we receive input from all areas of our county since we have a strong mix of urban and rural communities. It is critical that individuals embrace this concept as one that is being done with them and not to them or for them. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council Area Agency on Aging is currently gather data on service gaps and information on unmet needs of the older adult population through a county-wide electronic survey. The initial findings of this survey will be a valuable first step toward evaluating the community-based needs of the community.

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 Community will build on the existing infrastructure of existing efforts. The Roundtable has created existing relationships between governmental entities and private non profits as well as other identified groups. These individuals will be given the opportunity to choose the area which they desire to be involved in researching, assessing and developing plans which will improve the livability of our community. AARP volunteers and members of the Guilford County Commission will also be given the opportunity to participate. All of these groups are existing ones which have had a focus on determining the gaps in services that exist as well as recognizing where the communities strengths lie. Guilford County is unique in that two large cities as well as a number of townships are located here with each area having a local governmental presence in addition to the County structure. Efforts are currently underway to reach out to seek the involvement of the High Point and Greensboro City Councils followed by outreach to the eight rural communities where Senior Resources has a presence and contracts to provide services. Individuals with expertise in each of the eight domains from across the County will be brought together with task force leadership being identified from each group. It is the intention to originally focus on housing and food security in the larger areas where significant efforts have begun and the groups have indicated a willingness to collaborate. Additionally, each of the Aging Summits have been attended by over 125 people each year committing a day to learning about senior issues and we have a record of these individuals who have indicted an interest in helping to develop an Age-Friendly Community.

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?

Dr. Catherine Sevier the President of the AARP of North Carolina and her husband David reside in Guilford County. They have all ready begun a planning process in their own neighborhood College Hill located in Greensboro. Last year during their Neighbors Night Out Event they coordinated a variety of events and hosted a film crew to highlight the differences that had been made in their neighborhood as they seek for it to be a more livable area. Lessons have been learned from their activities that are available to be shared. A community conversation has begun and made significant strides in the area of improving affordable, safe housing in a variety of forms in Greensboro. The Housing Coalition has sponsored several Housing Forums which have been well attended and Ellen Whitlock has participated on one of the planning committees to assess the services available and where the gaps exist. Lessons learned will be shared as requested. In the High Point area the Greater High Point Food Alliance has created awareness of neighbors needs in the area of food security with the creation of expanded food pantries, community gardens and education as well as increased awareness and utilization of SNAP benefits. Communities across North Carolina are reaching out to the Food Alliance requesting information which would also be available for sharing with the network. We hope to bring the experience of two geographically contiguous communities to the network with approaches to diversity and development of cohesion. Guilford County is a unique county; the third largest populated in NC, with two strong, populous cities – High Point and Greensboro. Both cities are rich with culture, academia, industry and natural beauty. Each city has a city government with sizeable budgets and responsibilities, yet as a county they “share” resources, a tax base, and programs and services that impact both communities. Historically each has developed a unique economic base with its own unique strengths and priorities. Both have targeted priorities and capabilities as well as areas for improvement toward livability. The strengths of one can benefit the other and minimize the need to start from scratch.

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?

Guilford County, NC, as part of the Triad Region Community Presence, is a unique community with two strong cities – High Point and Greensboro. Our community at large has seen an ever growing number of senior citizens with a wide range of needs as well as a number who want to continue to remain engaged and involved in the life of the community. The community is also home to many institute of higher education including University of North Carolina – Greensboro, Guilford College, High Point University, Greensboro College, A&T University (the largest African American University in the US), Bennett College - just to name a few. In addition, Guilford County hosts one of the country’s largest Furniture Markets in High Point and is a hub for interior design, home furnishings and related industries. Centrally located between the mountains and the coast, Guilford County has many unrecognized existing age-friendly and livable assets within the community including walkable and bike-able streets; beautiful open green space, multi-cultural strengths including the state’s International Civil Rights Center, a strong and robust African American faith-based community, and a community rich with arts, culture, and growing diversity. College Hill in Greensboro was highlighted by AARP partner Better Block in the 2017 ‘complete streets project’ and was publicized at the national Livable Communities conference in Dallas. However, there are still a number of opportunities to continue creating a stronger, more livable and age-friendly community. In planning for this Silver Tsunami, we recognize the need to plan for the influx by providing services which meet their desires and needs. Additionally, we know that an environment that is better for older adults is also better for families. As we learned more about the AARP and World Health Organization's Network, it was clear that we want to benefit from the Network's research, program planning and resources. We believe that working within the Network's structure will be an asset to us and bring credibility to our efforts. We were impressed with the research Michael Watson presented and the printed materials which have been developed that we can utilize as well as the efforts that have been accomplished by our neighboring aging provider in Orange County, NC. Our previous efforts as well as our vision for the future encouraged our participants to reach-out for membership. Joining AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities will allow stakeholders and partners to continue to access and align efforts in concern with the 8 domains of livability and utilize the tools, best practices and support provided through AARP.

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://seniorfriendlyguilford.wordpress.com/about/>