



## 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).
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 11/19/2018

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

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

**STATE:** New York

**POPULATION SIZE:** 258,612

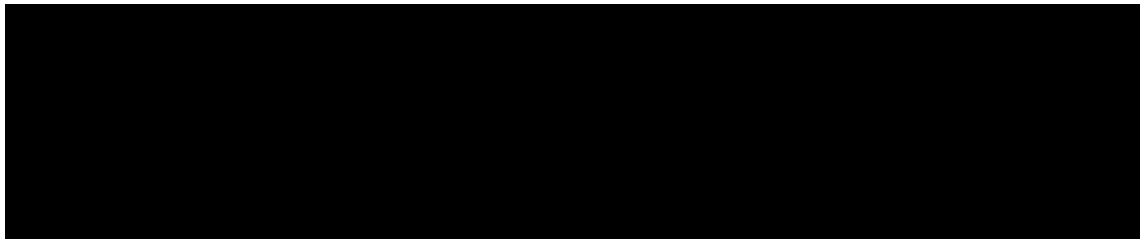
**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60:** 27%

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:** Byron W. Brown - Mayor

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER:** 201 City Hall, 65 Niagara Square, Buffalo, NY 14202

### 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:**

The Director of Senior Services' mission is to provide a diverse and highly responsive battery of recreational and leisure based services which include: referrals, medical transportation, coordination of services for the elderly, and organizing various educational and health seminars. In addition to sponsoring those activities across the City, the office works with the Department of Community Services in the management of three community centers that provide a broad spectrum of programming for residents of all ages. As the population of disabled residents grows, this department is also responsible for meeting an increased demand for temporary and permanent disabled and handicapped parking permits.

### **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.**

A)-Mayor Byron W. Brown has ensured that Buffalo's Older Adults are well represented in City government through employees, meetings with clergy and block club members, and community organization leadership. The Mayor also recognizes the elderly are a strong foundation for a stable community. Current services provided by Senior Services and community centers include: health and wellness programs, arts and music programs, intergenerational programming, employment referral assistance, social networking opportunities, volunteer opportunities, transportation services, senior rights counseling and legal referrals, nutritional programs and meals, dinner and dining groups, and leisure travel programs. Additionally the office helps facilitate single topic seminars and classes. The topics of these classes include: foot care, daily exercise tips, technology confidence and cell phone use workshops, the importance of telephone trees, and low vision and diabetes seminars. The Office also sponsors several special events throughout the year. These include: the senior picnic, annual health fair, senior ball and the senior masquerade. Buffalo's older population is actively involved in the planning and development of many of the City's quality of life activities. B.) Although Buffalo is already age friendly, the Administration continues to make efforts to improve the safety, affordability and comfort of older adults. Additionally, the Division of Senior Services provides more access to courses promoting health and wellness, employment support, entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

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

A). Engaging older Americans is a priority for every City Department. The City's Senior programs and services are a collaborative effort, coordinated through the Division of Senior Services and a network of community centers. Each community center has a Senior Advisory Planning Board. There is also a Senior Advisory Board that works directly with the Division of Senior Services and assists in the coordination of Citywide efforts. The Senior Services Advisory Board has assisted with planning the City's first Older Americans Health Fair in 2017. The Fair drew approximately 900 participants. As a follow-up to the Fair, the Mayor's Age Friendly City of Buffalo Symposium was held and took place earlier this year. The advisory board chose break out topics, which included: transportation needs, technology training, first responder training to address senior specific needs, and anti-stigma for aging. Over 1,500 individuals of every age participated in the symposium. In addition to these engagement activities the City will establish a blue-ribbon commission to further examine other steps this Administration can take to further meet the needs of our evolving older resident population. B). Older adults within the city of Buffalo are also provided a monthly newsletter that contains information on upcoming events, resources, health clinics, free flu shots, and informational and educational seminars. Additionally, the Mayor and his department heads regularly visit senior gatherings, churches, and community centers in order to provide updates on City initiatives and receive input directly from residents. The 311 Call and Resolution Center is another tool that the City employs to address complaints and record suggestions from residents. The Call Center generates regular reports that are reviewed by the Mayor and relevant department heads. Residents are also invited to call in after the monthly airing of the Senior Services Monthly Interview on the Community Access Channel.

**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.**

A) A memorandum of understanding between the University at Buffalo and Division of Senior Services and Office of Disabled Services has been instituted to nurture a comprehensive interdisciplinary program of investigation, education and mentorship on aging related topics. Additionally, the City has partnerships with the Wellness Center, the Senior Planning Advisory Council and Erie County Department of Senior Services to enhance services to the elderly. As a result of the Health Fair, a new partnership was created this year to coordinate the Senior Symposium. The Symposium consisted of various presentations and workshops facilitated by Social Workers, University at Buffalo faculty and the staff of the City's Senior Centers. B.) The City recognizes the importance of physical infrastructure to the well-being of all its residents. Since 2006, the Department of Public Works has invested over \$6 million to make curb cuts, which help pedestrians. The City of Buffalo Division of Buildings has made \$1.44 million in improvements to City buildings, which included: adding ADA compliant seating to city's baseball stadium and adding ADA compliant elevators to various buildings across the City. Over \$66 million has been invested in the Buffalo Parks systems and pools. The Fire department purchased equipment and training modules for community members, including older residents, that allowed them to facilitate classes on the importance filing life forms so first responders can deliver the appropriate level of medical care when responding to medical emergencies. In 2017, the Department of Taxation and Assessments provided \$34,781,628 in tax credits through the Enhanced STAR program, which alleviates property taxes for older residents in certain tax brackets. Additionally, the Division of Housing provides information regarding low income housing to eligible residents and \$439,053 has been allocated for free weatherization upgrades that helps older residents lower their heating bills.

#### **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?**

**Buffalo is the second largest city in New York State and the largest—and most densely populated—municipality in Erie County. Because of its significant number of older residents, it is well positioned to provide critically needed data and input to policy makers at the County, State and National levels. By being designated as an Age Friendly Community we will have demonstrated that the City of Buffalo is committed to providing a great quality of life and delivering excellent City services, while also tapping into a global network of local governments to explore new ways to enhance those services. Additionally, we would like to offer and receive insight on best policies and practices employed in other Age Friendly Communities.**

**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?**

In 2014, Mayor Brown signed the pledge with other mayors from around the country to improve the lives of older residents in Buffalo. Armed with this pledge, the Division of Senior Services, sharpened its focus and developed policy and programmatic steps the Administration could take to enhance the lives of every resident, from cradle to grave. The Mayor also committed each department head to develop plans to ensure that the well-being of the City's aging population is addressed in their respective missions. As a result of this work and the pledge, it was determined that the City must formalize that commitment even further and join the growing network of Age Friendly Communities. Through these efforts, Buffalo will move further towards its goal of making our City safer, more affordable and more comfortable for older residents through access to resources that promote health and wellness, employment, entrepreneurship, education and other needed services to make our older residents more financially secure, offer housing options that suit the varied needs of our older population, improve access to transportation and mobility options for older adults. It is also our goal to promote the engagement of older adults in volunteer and paid positions that serve the needs of our City and residents, utilize partnerships with higher education and workforce development to help this population refresh their skills, train and transition to a new stage of work or volunteerism focused on strengthening our city. Additionally, to recognize older adults as an asset and celebrate their contributions to improving the lives of all generations.

**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](mailto:livable@aarp.org).*