



## Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities** and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

**Application Submission Date: July 26, 2018**

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

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

**STATE: Wyoming**

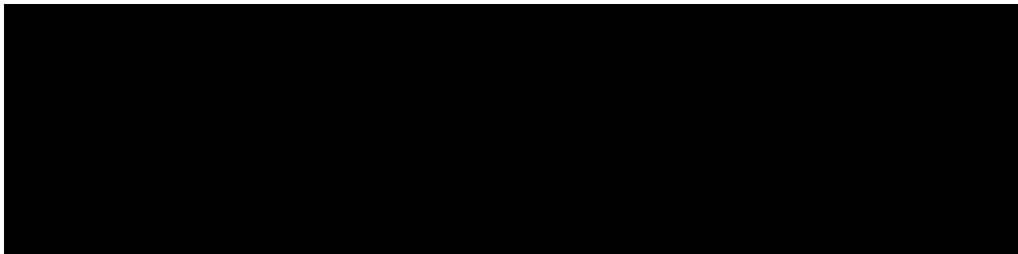
**POPULATION SIZE: 32,306 (2017 estimate, American Community Survey)**

**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 11.5% (2016, ACS)**

**NAME AND TITLE OF ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Andrea Summerville, Mayor**

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: City of Laramie, 406 E. Ivinson Ave., Laramie, WY 82070**

### Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES



**Please describe the named person's role in the city or community's age-friendly initiative:**

Dr. Steinman is a professor in the department of Family and Consumer Sciences, and Research Director at the Wyoming Center on Aging. He has organized early community visioning sessions in which residents were introduced to the Age-Friendly Laramie (AFL) Initiative, and invited to share their concerns and priorities with regard to aging in the City of Laramie in the future. Additionally, Steinman has convened a coalition of leaders from organizations that address issues of concern to older adults. This team includes representation from the Wyoming Center on Aging (University of Wyoming), the Eppson Center for Seniors (senior center), and the Foster Grandparents of the Wyoming Rockies. Steinman has also begun collecting names and contact information for prospective volunteers, and/or otherwise interested parties. Currently, this mailing list is used to keep residents informed about AFL activities, and updated on progress of the initiative. Moving forward, Steinman will continue in a leadership role, organizing committees and meetings, and providing information and updates to stakeholders in the community. As interest grows, and the project becomes more established and visible to the general public, Steinman will likely hand off leadership roles to volunteer members of the community.

### 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:**

Preliminary visioning meetings have revealed an array of valued resources within Laramie that are targeted to older residents. Generally, residents are satisfied with the resources that are available to them, including programs and services provided by the Eppson Center for Seniors (health/exercise programs, meals, transportation), volunteer opportunities (e.g., Foster Grandparents program), and medical services (e.g., Iverson Memorial Hospital). The city also boasts amenities that older residents see as important assets for maintaining high quality of life as they age. These include, downtown business, accessible parks, the public library, the University, and exercise and recreational facilities. Despite general satisfaction, participants of visioning meetings also recognized shortfalls that will need to be addressed as part of this initiative. Notably, shortfalls that were expressed tended to fall within the 8 domains of livability developed by WHO. Most participants agreed that transportation is an important issue and will become more so as the number of older adults in the city increases. Creative solutions to this ubiquitous problem will be discussed in a citizen committee on transportation, in collaboration with other appropriate stakeholders (e.g., the City of Laramie). Aging in place in the home or community also requires adequate housing. Recognizing a shortage of appropriate, safe, and affordable housing, several visioning participants have already formed a committee whose purpose is to seek solutions to this basic, but multifaceted problem. Another priority that was revealed in visioning meetings was the need for educating the community and communicating residents at large to raise awareness about the experiences of older adults in the city. A significant part of AFL's initiative will include educational programs for residents as well as businesses within the community.

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

Prior to this application, AFL has held three two-hour visioning meetings, in which residents of any age were invited to come share their experiences and concerns, and well as their priorities for aging well in the city. These meetings were held at multiple venues to encourage participation by older adults in different wards of the city. Visioning meetings have been widely attended by proactive older women and men who are interested in community development. We have previously advertised the AFL initiative in the local newspaper (Laramie Boomerang), on the University of Wyoming website, the AARP website, and on Wyoming Public Radio. Currently, we have not developed social media as a means for attracting interest; however, in the future we plan to develop a presence on Facebook and Twitter, as well as develop and maintain a website for the project. In our initial meetings, participants expressed concerns about how information is communicated to older residents, and AFL stakeholders are aware of the importance of appropriate media for communicating. Nevertheless, meetings have yielded a substantive e-mailing list, which we have also used to announce meetings. Early in the process, we expect word-of-mouth to also increase interest and awareness in the project.

**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.**

Our preliminary plan is to form committees made up of resident stakeholders. Committees will be organized around the 8 domains developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP. Thus, leadership of AFL will be dispersed among citizenry who have specific interests in or concerns about issues covered within the domains. Committees will reach out to partner with appropriate agencies and departments, as priorities are identified, and plans for addressing issues are developed. AFL has attained commitment of support from the city's government (see Letter of Commitment, and Resolution No. 2018-35), and we expect collaborations with municipal agencies to be productive and fruitful. Other agencies within the city, including AFL partners, Eppson Center for Seniors and Foster Grandparents of the Wyoming Rockies have also express commitment to achieving the goals of AFL—fostering independence, livability, and a physical and social environment that encourages engagement in civic affairs, and aging in place.

**Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP**

**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?**

In partnership with AARP Wyoming, AFL is currently led by a coalition that includes the Eppson Center for Seniors, Foster Grandparents of the Wyoming Rockies, and the Wyoming Center on Aging at the University of Wyoming (UW). We think this coalition is unique relative to other age-friendly initiatives. Whereas the Eppson Center and Foster Grandparents provide direct access to many older residents in the city, staff from the UW have expertise in researching and evaluating programs for older adults. We expect AFL to be a great opportunity to produce and disseminate knowledge about age-friendly communities, especially in extremely rural or remote regions of the country. This knowledge will support other similar communities as they join the AARP age-friendly community network.

**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?**

Like many communities across the US, Laramie is experiencing a rapidly aging population. Despite being the state's sole university-city with a large younger population, 21% of residents are age 50 and older. Additionally, older residents make up the fastest growing segment of the city's population. Members of the AFL coalition recognize that as our city's baby-boomer's age and retire, it will be important for the city to adapt in order to facilitate

aging-in-place for older adults, and encourage greater livability for people of all ages. As our initiative progresses, we visualize providing a formal structure that will support the city's older adults who may wish to age in place. Our goal is to prevent older adults who want to stay in Laramie from leaving the city in which they may have spent their lives, where families and friends still reside, for a lack of other options and opportunities.

**6) Please provide a digital (JPG, PNG, or PDF) file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.**

Currently, there is no logo for AFL. This will be developed upon entry into the network.