



TOWN OF CARBONDALE
511 COLORADO AVENUE
CARBONDALE, CO 81623

June 26, 2019

Mr. Bob Murphy
AARP Colorado State Director
303 East 17th Avenue - Suite 510
Denver CO 80206

Dear Mr. Murphy,

On behalf of the Town of Carbondale, Colorado, I am pleased to submit our application to become designated as a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.

Carbondale is a small, rural town (population 6820) in the Roaring Fork Valley of Garfield County and lies 170 miles west of Denver and 30 miles north of Aspen. Between 2000 and 2010, Carbondale's population increased 24%, and it is expected to continue growing. It is estimated that Garfield County's senior population will increase from the current ~6500 to ~14,000 by 2030, and Carbondale will certainly be impacted by this increase.

Carbondale is governed by an elected Mayor and Board of Trustees; various Commissions comprising volunteer residents as well as city officials advise the Mayor and Board. Carbondale's Comprehensive Plan and The Department of Parks and Recreation Master Plan recognize the need to plan for the growing senior demographic. To this end, the town is working on strategies to make the town walkable and accessible and to prepare for a steadily growing senior population that will need various types of housing. The Parks and Recreation Department provides programs for older adults and a low-cost recreation center. The town also provides partial funding for Senior Matters, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation dedicated to improving the quality of life for seniors in Carbondale. The Roaring Fork Transit Authority provides free bus transportation for citizens 65 and older throughout the Roaring Fork Valley and the Colorado River Valley, from Glenwood Springs to Rifle.

In February 2019, the newly formed Carbondale Age-Friendly Community Initiative (CAFCI) attended the Board of Trustees working session on mobility and identified five areas of concern related to senior mobility: sidewalk clearance, encroachment, and interference; bike-pedestrian-auto conflicts; the need for more accessible benches around town; unsafe intersections; and a lack of bus stops available to seniors with limited mobility. Since then, we have worked with CAFCI in the following ways: created a senior resources page for the town website; discussed a process for obtaining and installing more senior-friendly benches around town; encouraged a bike education project; invited CAFCI to advise us about seniors' priorities for the next budget.

We recognize that the concerns of Carbondale seniors are not unique. Being a member of the AARP Age-Friendly Network would provide us with ideas, resources, and connections to others, enabling us to be more efficient and effective. We are enthusiastic about continuing to work with CAFCI and all our senior citizens to make Carbondale a more age-friendly community for citizens of all ages.

We appreciate your review of our application and look forward to becoming part of the Network.

Sincerely,

Dan Richardson, Mayor