



Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and 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@aarp.org
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 9/5/2019

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Chicopee

STATE: Massachusetts

POPULATION SIZE: 56,100

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 23.9%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mayor Richard J. Kos

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: Chicopee City Hall, 17 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and 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:

Ms. Manyak is the Executive Director of the Council on Aging + RiverMills Senior Center. Sherry manages the day-to-day operations of the Senior Center and has been a collaborative team member for the Age-Friendly Application process for the City of Chicopee.

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the [AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter](#), which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe.

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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.

The City of Chicopee currently holds programs for seniors at the RiverMills Senior Center. This building has many rooms for meetings and programs, and also includes a Wellness Health Center. RiverMills also offers transportation which includes regular trips to grocery stores, discount outlets, and other local destinations. Additional programs and services include low cost hot lunches, support groups, a travel club, a Senior Companion program, and SHINE (for health insurance needs). There are also numerous exercise, recreational, and social activities with expanded programming into the evening and weekend hours, while “clubs” are taking advantage of the Chicopee River environment to expand recreational offerings beyond the Center. The City of Chicopee also hosts a Veterans Services Department to assist veterans and their families in obtaining services through the Veterans Administration. Chicopee plans to become more age-friendly by responding to the input from the community that will come from the Livable Communities survey and public forums that will be held as part of the 3-community Age Friendly Communities Initiative. The City is currently finalizing its Municipal Vulnerability Plan, and is in the beginning phases of developing its first ever City-wide Comprehensive Plan. Making the city more pedestrian friendly for all users will be part of the new Comprehensive Plan. City departments are also actively working on redevelopment of properties in neighborhood centers, as well as streetscape and transportation improvements.

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

The City of Chicopee is working with the City of Holyoke, the Town of South Hadley, and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to distribute the AARP Livable Community Survey and held public forums in each community in the Spring of 2019 to receive feedback from community members on the areas that each City and Town should focus on to become more age friendly. Regular community meetings and outreach efforts have been included in all City Planning initiatives.

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 Steering Committee of Age Friendly Chicopee, Holyoke and South Hadley includes staff from several City departments including Council on Aging, Police and Fire departments, the Mayor's office and others as we plan to expand as needed. The final result of this project will be an Action Plan that assigns action items to applicable departments and local organizations. The Steering Committee will also play a role in the upcoming City-wide Comprehensive Planning Process by representing a variety of stakeholders and providing advocacy for the Council on Aging and Friends of the Senior Center.

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 States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The 3-community group will be able to contribute their experience as two small cities (Chicopee and Holyoke) and one large town (South Hadley) by working collaboratively to share established resources and programs. Chicopee and Holyoke also have a large Hispanic population, so outreach will also include translation services. Using the different backgrounds of each City and Town our group will be able to provide AARP valuable information on the ever changing landscape in the Pioneer Valley. There is also a unique collaboration between the three (3) municipalities and the Pioneer Valley Planning commission who is the regional planning commission for the group.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative made a presentation to several community leaders and a representative from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) in the City of Chicopee. The Mayor of Chicopee asked how they could start such an effort and suggested that the effort be organized by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC).

6) Provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights. The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours:

<https://www.chicopeema.gov/204/Senior-Center>

