



## 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](mailto: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:** 7/15/2019

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY:** Yellow Springs

**STATE:** Ohio

**POPULATION SIZE:** 3,487

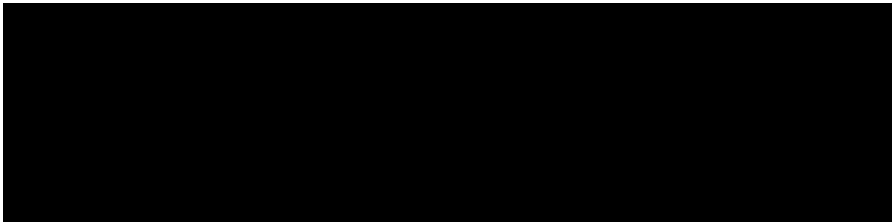
**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60:** 45%

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:** Pam Conine, Mayor

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER:** 100 Dayton Street

### 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:**

Toni Dosik is the convener of the Age Friendly Yellow Springs Project, an initiative of the Yellow Springs Senior Center. While formally retired from a 30 year career as an Executive Director of medium sized nonprofit organizations, she continues to work as a consultant, advisor, convener, and project director. Her role will be to: 1)Obtain commitments from Village and Township officials; 2)identify and establish Stakeholder Group (Project Team) using her knowledge of the Yellow Springs community; 3)review previous community assessments to identify Strengths, Opportunities, and Aspirations around the Eight Domains and summarize those findings in preparation for the Community Assessment; 4)establish the Advisory Committee with the project team; 5)determine the best way to organize and conduct the Community Assessment with the project team and advisory committee;6) oversee the community assessment effort and the development of the Action Plan, including evaluation; 7)oversee the implementation of the Action Plan with other stakeholders and responsible agencies and organizations, and oversee and monitor the cycle of implementation, evaluation, and planning.

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](http://AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe).

Her recent experience includes: Consultant, Admission Office, Antioch College, 2018 to present, Interim Executive Director and Consultant, Yellow Springs Community Children's Center, 2016-2019, Project Director, Dementia Friendly Yellow Springs, 2017-2019, Consultant, Gem City Market, Dayton, 2018-2019. In addition, she has led over 10 strategic planning efforts for nonprofit groups using SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) based on Appreciative Inquiry. She is experienced in leading and participating in large collaborative efforts, including three federally funded initiatives: Continuum of Care (Homelessness and Housing) in Dayton and Springfield, Ohio and

Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team (DVERT), a collaboration between police, district attorney, and domestic violence agency in Springfield, Ohio. She, herself is an elder, born in 1944.

### 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.

Yellow Springs is an incorporated village of just under 4,000 residents in southwest Ohio, 25 miles from Dayton. Throughout its history, which dates back to the early 19th century, Village planning efforts have been formulated using three principals: 1) a continuing awareness of the need for long-range planning, 2) a continuing emphasis on the desire to maintain open space, and 3) the desire to keep the community relatively small and relatively self-sufficient. In addition, over the years, there has been a commitment to supporting a diverse population, race, age, and income. These commitments and principals have led to both challenges and opportunities. In July 2017, Yellow Springs became a Dementia Friendly community. Over the following 18 months, we established an Advisory Committee of 27 members from all sectors of the community, completed 12 separate trainings with 179 participants, including the Library, Fire/Rescue, Village staff, Chamber of Commerce members, faith-based organizations, and the Yellow Springs Senior Center. We were accepted as members of Dementia Friendly America in February 2018. There are a number of ongoing initiatives that are a result of that 18 month effort: A Caregivers Support Group that meets twice a month in a local church; a joint project with Glen Helen, the 1,000 acre nature preserve in Yellow Springs and Five Rivers Metro Parks in Dayton to bring a Dementia Adventure program from the UK to the Miami Valley, and a collaboration with the Advance Care Program, a joint project of the two major health care systems in the Miami Valley, Kettering Health Network and Premier Health Partners. The project is in Stage 3, community participation, and Yellow Springs is the first community in the Miami Valley to be involved in this Stage. This is in addition to the on-going programs and projects of the Yellow Springs Senior Center, which includes: 1) an active transportation program that transports over 2,500 passengers to various medical appointments, grocery stores, and activities. The program relies on over 30 volunteers who drive close to 14,000 miles per year; 2) supportive services to seniors that includes Medicare/Medicaid counseling, assistance to remain in homes, assistance with everyday living situations, and assistance with planning for end-of-life; 3) programs that provide a variety of activities for all ages, such as activities to promote physical health, brain health, socialization, and information on topics such as financial literacy, recognizing scams, travel, book reads, and support groups. The Village has also recognized the need to become more age-friendly. In its most recent Land Use Plan, it acknowledges the challenges of being a community with a rapidly aging population and has recently approved plans to build 50 units of affordable housing for older residents. The units will be built by Home, Inc., the local nonprofit affordable housing organization, which has completed 31 units of affordable housing (both rental and ownership) in the last 20 years. As part of the Safe Schools project, the Village recently completed the expansion of crosswalks and pedestrian signage throughout the Village. An extensive effort to provide curb cuts on all streets within a 1 mile range of downtown was completed in the fall of 2018. In late 2018, a major funder in the Village, the Yellow Springs Community Foundation, and Antioch College, located in Yellow Springs, launched the Encore Miller Fellow Program. The program is modeled after the Encore Fellow Program through The Dayton Foundation with an important addition -- the five Encore Miller Fellows work closely with the Student Miller Fellows, part of Antioch College's Co-operative Education program, to support both the students and the nonprofit organizations in the Village where they work. The five Encore Miller Fellows work within Antioch's five areas of practice: Environmental Sustainability, Wellbeing, Deliberative Democracy, Diversity, and Social Justice, Work, World, and Resilient Community, and Creativity and Story. These five areas of practice have much in common with the 8 Domains of an Age Friendly Community and we plan on utilizing that overlap to build collaboration and engagement. Becoming an Age Friendly Community will provide an opportunity to continue to work deeply and collaboratively to become more age-friendly in its broadest sense. It will set up a more formal structure, linking existing programs and services and add new programs and services to bring about a more coherent

and “formal” structure. Yellow Springs values and honors elders. The downtown is friendly, accessible, and thriving with services and retail establishments that support seniors – and people of all ages -- a drug store, a full service grocery store, a bank and credit union, hairdressers, clothing stores, restaurants, a library, a movie theatre, art galleries, churches, doctors and dentists offices. The Senior Center is in the center of town. The nonprofit Friends Health Care Center provides a variety of living and care options for seniors, including skilled nursing, assisted living, and independent living on a 23 acre campus in the Village. Through the Greene County Transportation Department, there is bus service that stops in the Village and the Senior Center has a busy and effective transportation service. The extensive bike/walking trail that runs alongside the Village is heavily used by people of all ages and is part of a large network running from Columbus to Cincinnati. The community supports a Village band, a chamber music series, a movie theater, restaurants, coffee houses, and nonprofit organizations. People of all ages are actively engaged in politics and social action. There are more than 300 nonprofit organizations in the Village, all of which have active boards of directors, whose membership reflects our aging population.

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

Older people are already engaged in a wide variety of activities in Yellow Springs. At times, in fact, it can be a challenge to more actively engage people under the age of 65 in the wide variety of planning and related activities that routinely occur in Yellow Springs. Thus, we will gear our outreach to demonstrate the value of engagement by all ages in becoming an Age Friendly Community. All of us will age; age friendly communities are good places to grow up and grow old. We will build on our strengths and successes to engage and involve older people at all levels. In fact, as a very small town known for its activism, it is actually easy to enlist people’s involvement in collaborative projects, particularly those that are broad based and result in real action. We will engage and involve older people by: 1)reaching out to existing collaborations and partnerships as described above; 2) using their mailing lists, newsletters, social media and other means to announce the project and describe involvement opportunities; 3) developing and distributing the Survey through an insert in the Yellow Springs News, the weekly paper that is read by the majority of the population, as well as on the websites of collaborating partners; 4) collaborating with the Yellow Springs News to have a weekly column about opportunities and activities of the project; 5) reconstituting the Dementia Friendly Advisory Committee with a broader mandate and membership. The Advisory Committee includes the Mayor, Village Manager, a member of Village Council, the Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Department of Transportation, Greene County Jobs and Family Services, a member of the faith community, the Director of the Senior Center, the Director of the Green County Council on Aging, the public library, and the schools. The expanded Advisory Committee will provide advice and suggestions about partners, funding sources, and resources; 6) forming a Task Force to provide direct, day-to-day support to the Project Director and have responsibility for building the Action Plan. The membership will include two representatives from the Advisory Committee, the Director of the Senior Center, the Village Manager, a member of Village Council, an Encore Miller Fellow, and at least two Village residents over 65 and two under 65. It may be that additional people will be added if the need arises. While having more “hands on” responsibility, this smaller group will provide advice and suggestions and help to engage partners, funding sources, and resources; 7) conducting a Survey using methods described above, holding at least two public forums, based on the findings of the Survey to garner more information and personal experiences, focusing on Strengths and Opportunities; 8)formulating a Mission and Vision and using SOAR as the planning approach to develop a draft Action Plan; 9) adding additional partners, based on the draft Action Plan, to identify additional leadership and establish measurable results, review the need for additional collaborations, and identify reasonable timetables; 9) participating in Age Friendly Webinars and meetings, particularly those related to small and rural communities. We will visit and collaborate with Age Friendly Columbus and Age Friendly Oxford.

## **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.**

In the last two years, through the leadership of the Yellow Springs Senior Center and the Yellow Springs Community Foundation, there have been a number of collaborative initiatives that have more fully focused on aging, the contribution that elders make to the community, and the need to build both infrastructure, services, programs and opportunities for people over 65. The Dementia Friendly Yellow Springs Project, the Health Communities Initiative, and the Encore Miller Fellows program are examples of recent collaborations of public, private, and nonprofit organizations. Because we are a very small town, we have less issues of “silo mentality” than larger communities. Our Village Manager is required to live in the Village, as are members of the Village Council. Similarly, the local school board and most employees of the Village also live in town. All are our friends and neighbors. While there are controversies and lively discussions about such issues as affordability, land use, and the role of Village government in economic development, there is truly a genuine commitment to working together to tackle and resolve challenging issues. The Project Director has extensive experience organizing and facilitating collaborative planning and implementation (see above). She has long standing relationships with and is respected by all of the potential partners: the Yellow Springs Community Foundation (which partially funded Dementia Friendly Yellow Springs), the Senior Center, the Children’s Center, Glen Helen, the 1,000 acre nature preserve, the local public schools, Antioch College, Village Council and Mayor, Yellow Springs Historical Society, Greene County Council on Aging, WYSO, the local public radio station, Yellow Springs News, etc.

#### **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?**

We are a small community and will contribute knowledge that relates specifically to better understanding the challenges and opportunities that communities like us face. In addition, we will be using a specific planning approach, SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) which is based on Appreciative Inquiry, an organizational development approach developed at the School of Management at Case Western University in Cleveland, Ohio. SOAR approaches planning from a mutual and collaborative examination of what is working well and how to make more of it. It is an uplifting and dynamic approach that supports using a community's existing assets and advantages to build knowledge and action leading to measurable results. It has been used extensively throughout the world since the 1980's and could form a model of planning for Age Friendly Communities of all sizes.

#### **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?**

We initiated the Dementia Friendly Yellow Springs Project in the middle of 2017. In April 2018, after attending the Alzheimer's Association of the Miami Valley's annual luncheon, we were approached by Jennifer Heston, a postdoctoral fellow at Scripps Gerontology Center of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. She told us about the Age Friendly project and urged us to consider joining. At the May 2018 Dementia Friendly Yellow Springs Advisory Committee meeting, we reviewed a number of possible initiatives that the community could undertake after DFYS was formally completed in December 2018. Becoming an Age Friendly community was voted as the #1 initiative, followed by Dementia Adventure and Memory in a Box. We eventually expect to accomplish all three, starting with Age Friendly Yellow Springs. We acknowledge that despite our strong history of community planning and collaboration, we have not systematically focused on issues such as the need to build and expand infrastructure, services, programs, and opportunities for people over 65. Becoming an Age Friendly Community will allow us to do that. We are a very small town. While there are a growing number of small towns that have become Age Friendly, we are still in the minority. We will help both the AARP and WHO understand the challenges and opportunities faced by small towns and help to develop processes that reflect these special circumstances.

**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:**

*Click here to add a link to where we can find your logo. Or, send a JPEG, PDF or PNG of your logo by email attachment to [livable@aarp.org](mailto:livable@aarp.org).*

