



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: 5/30/2019

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: City of La Crosse

STATE: Wisconsin

POPULATION SIZE: 51,928

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 18.4%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mayor Tim Kabat

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 400 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, WI 54601

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.

[Redacted contact information]

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

Noreen Holmes retired after a 20 year career as a county Aging Unit Director in Wisconsin. She is an active member of the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) and the State Aging Advisory Council in addition to teaching gerontology at Western Technical College in La Crosse and is an active AARP volunteer. Noreen has been active in creating an Age-Friendly Community since 2007/2008 when La Crosse was a designated community for the online conference "Creating Age-Friendly Communities". This event was in coordination with City of La Crosse Planning, City Transit Department, MTU, the University of Wisconsin and the county of La Crosse. Follow up events on housing and transportation commenced over several months and included a city bus full to capacity of participants who used the WHO concept of evaluating if La Crosse was age-friendly. Noreen's interest and dedication to this concept is keen and long-standing. Noreen will continue to coordinate with the City of La Crosse Planning Department, the Mayor, AARP, the academic, medical, human services, religious, cultural, neighborhood, philanthropic communities, to implement programs, outreach and participation with citizens. She understands the importance of input from older people and works to achieve this through sponsored events, focus groups and townhall meetings, always in cooperation with the city. Noreen is a team player and is well connected in the community.

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](https://www.aarp.org/Livable-Subscribe).

Agingadvocate@yahoo.com, Noreen Holmes, already subscribes to the AARP Livable Communities weekly e-newsletter. Please add: Larry White white.lpw@gmail.com ; Linda Downer lindowner@gmail.com ; Kathy Helgerson Kathy@simpsteps.com ; Cindy Killion ckillion@winona.edu ; Beth Cherne cherne.beth0@gmail.com

011019

Membership Application: AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities – Page 1

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 La Crosse with a population of 52,000 includes 13.5% residents 65 and over. With an eye towards the future when we know the number of older people will comprise 25% of the population by 2030, the City of La Crosse envisions making the city a better place in which to grow old. This is an opportunity to enhance the quality of life for older people and for the community as a whole. While just completing the “Age-Friendly Survey”, December 2018, the city is planning to enhance the results by conducting focus groups, planning events to interact with older people, concentrating on where older people are, and raising the consciousness of aging issues with articles in the newspaper, on television and radio and through additional outreach to seniors themselves, living in senior housing, apartments and retirement complexes. The city may use event titles like “Vital Aging”, “Getting Your Just Desserts”, “Aging Café”, “Progressive Aging” to invite older people to express what they would like to see in the city as they age. The La Crosse Parks & Recreation Department sponsors events for seniors, including music concerts by local musicians, classes for caregivers, for those with dementia, painting, drawing, learning to use your computer, your phone, playing games and cards. The La Crosse Library also sponsors events for seniors. Mondays on Main is a weekly event with diverse topics, Mark Twain, River Boat memorabilia, history of the university at La Crosse, to name a few. The library also sponsors concerts that are very popular. La Crosse is served by two major healthcare centers: Gundersen and Mayo. Both accept Medicare assignment, to make healthcare more affordable, and both celebrate aging by offering events that focus on the health of older people. We will be reaching out to the fire, police, first-responder communities, to the University of Wisconsin La Crosse as they have a gerontology curriculum as does Viterbo University and Western Technical College, both in La Crosse. We will also connect with churches, civic, philanthropic, fraternal, art, and cultural organizations. Our outreach will be comprehensive, transparent, public and welcoming. Services that support older people are available in La Crosse, including home care, assisted living and nursing homes. An Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) connects people to supports and services by providing information, assistance and referral for older people and their families. Long-term care options counseling is also available to help older people plan for the future. The ADRC also manages Older American Act programs that provide direct services through home-delivered and congregate meals, caregiver support, transportation, employment programs, health and wellness programs and more. Coordination will occur with the City of La Crosse Planning Department, the mayor, the academic, medical, human services department, religious, cultural and

011019

Membership Application: AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities – Page 2

neighborhood communities along with philanthropic and public services entities. The City of La Crosse wants to celebrate aging with informative fun events that encourage older people to participate while developing more intergenerational participation to help prevent isolation, loneliness and depression while learning more about what older people want to see in this wonderful city positioned to become a more dynamic age-friendly community.

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

The Lacrosse AARP Leadership Team (comprised of 14 older people representing education, government, religious, volunteer, and aging services) will host two major events in 2020. Aging Information Exchange....will be an on-line and on-site forum for the over 200 programs and services for older people, aging advocates, health care, education, recreational professionals, age-based coalitions (Caregivers, Dementia Friendly Communities, Falls Prevention), Veteran and disability groups, policy-makers, public officials, community leaders, and media to:

1. Exchange information on current resources which contribute to livable communities;
2. Create vehicles (e-newsletters, websites, Facebook page, etc) to get the livable community implementation strategy to local aging networks and community constituents;
3. Develop a plan of collaboration to make La Crosse more age-friendly by establishing a core team to identify priorities, write vision and mission statements, create goals, and develop actions and an evaluation process to implement Livable Lacrosse For All. Vital Aging In Lovely Lively Livable La Crosse....An annual celebration of age-friendly communities planned by older people for older people showcasing the resources, services, walkability, housing options, safety, cultural, educational, recreational programs for people of all ages in La Crosse.

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.

We are in the process of forming a Livable Communities steering committee, with the help of Darin Wasniewski the AARP Associate State Director. We recently conducted a survey of 752 La Crosse residents age 45+. The information gathered from this survey will guide our update of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of La Crosse. The Associate Planner will work with us to conduct focus groups with AARP members, neighborhood associations and other groups to better customize how the survey results are conveyed to the public. We will disseminate information to the public based upon this feedback from these AARP member focus groups. In addition to focus groups we will schedule town hall meetings, public hearings, utilize social media and conduct personal outreach to older people through the community and social service programs currently serving older people. We are collaborating closely with the La Crosse County Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program because seniors and children are overrepresented in pedestrian and bicycle crash statistics, therefore, creating a safer place to walk serves the entire community age 8 to 80. We have worked and continue to work with the La Crosse Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to create safer, more walkable, bikeable, livable, urban areas and neighborhoods.

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 City of La Crosse, working in partnership with the La Crosse AARP Leadership Team, hopes to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities by making the city a well-designed, livable community that promotes health and sustains economic growth. The city's designation as an age-friendly community will provide the city with the capacity to assist other communities throughout the United States and the world that are networked through the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities. The city's designation also will enable it to contribute to the WHO network by providing mentoring and peer-review evaluations to other network members. Efforts by elected officials and the AARP Leadership team in La Crosse also contribute to WHO's focus on healthy aging, as policies will be geared toward optimizing opportunities for physical, social and mental health that enables older persons to take an active part in the city's economic, political and cultural life without discrimination. The AARP Leadership Team, working with city officials, will contribute and support AARP's goal of being recognized by elected officials and others as a leading resource for how to improve the livability of communities for people age 50+ and their families. The latest demographic data for the city of La Crosse indicates 24% of the population in La Crosse is 55 years and older while those 25 to 34 years of age is 14.1% of the population. People ages 18 to 24 is 29.3% of the population. This demographic data has prompted the city's elected officials to actively work toward making the La Crosse community a great place for people of all ages, and its designation as an age-friendly community will support and make public its commitment to creating and implementing policies that benefit older populations but also contributes to a community environment that encourages all ages the opportunity to live rewarding, productive and safe lives.

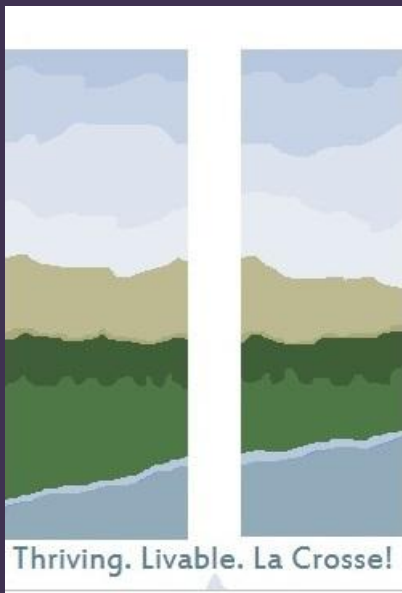
5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The City of La Crosse would like to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities because it is a movement that meshes beautifully with what La Crosse has exemplified as a city and where it aspires to be in upcoming years. La Crosse is a community that is rich in world-class healthcare, two universities and a top-ranking technical college along with the amenities that help an individual stay where they have worked, played, raised a family, and progressed through the aging process we call life. Being a community that still has a large base of family-owned businesses and caring staff at larger retailers, big box stores offer a caring for older consumers while offering services that help older individuals remain independent in our community. A further example of the City of La Crosse being proactive for its aging residents is its efforts in training first responders, law enforcement, emergency personnel, business owners and their respective employees to create a Dementia Friendly Community. As its citizens age and are unable to drive a personal vehicle, the City of La Crosse has stayed mindful of their need for transportation options. This transportation, whether a direct service of the City of La Crosse or included in its planning, offers the MTU and the La Crosse County Mini Bus for transportation. In its Planning Department through road construction plans, the City of La Crosse has included green options for individuals who wish to walk or use a non-motorized option of travel. Concrete sidewalks, bike lanes, signals at crosswalks and reducing speed limits all combine to provide a safe option for its citizens to age in the City of La Crosse. La Crosse has a long-standing interest in Age-Friendly Communities as a designated site in the online conference “Creating Age-Friendly Communities” in 2007/2008 including three additional conference workshops on transportation, housing and an event “Age-Friendly Tour” of La Crosse. A city bus was filled to capacity as it visited sites in La Crosse for participants to evaluate for age-friendliness. The dedication of this community to conduct outreach, evaluation and implementation of ideas and concepts that enhance the quality of life for older people and essentially for all people of the community has been well established. The city recognizes that if this community is age-friendly it is everyone friendly.

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:

Sending a JPEG, PDF or PNG of your logo by email attachment to livable@aarp.org.





Thriving. Livable. La Crosse!