



## 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: 4/2/2020**

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Ottawa**

**STATE: Kansas**

**POPULATION SIZE: 12,275**

**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 2.332**

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Sara Caylor/Mayor Pro Tem**

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 101 S. Hickory, PO Box 60, Ottawa, KS 66067**

### 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:**

Wynndee Lee is the Community Development Director for the City of Ottawa. She has been coordinator of the city's many livability programs including Play City, Let's Move, Active Transportation and more. As a Planner, she is also instrumental in development of the city's Comprehensive Plan which includes vision statements for the quality of life for 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](#).

*Click here to enter text.*

**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.**

1) The City of Ottawa is a small rural community that is very committed to providing a community that has the best of policies, programs, and services to citizens of all ages and interests. To this end, the City is proactive in policies for development, as well as offering guidance and in some cases incentives, to obtain these goals. For example, the city requires sidewalks on one side of all local streets, thus providing the amenity, but not requiring on both sides unless the street carries significant traffic, enhancing the affordability of the neighborhood at the same time. The city also provides incentives for repairing/replacing sidewalks to enhance mobility options for all by paying one-half of the cost of the sidewalk. The City also has a zoning category for senior housing which requires better livability in the units targeted to senior needs, such as higher locations for electrical outlets and safer shower amenities in bathrooms. In housing incentives, the city offers through the Neighborhood Revitalization Program a 95% rebate of the increased taxes for ten years for new construction or renovation. Examples of services include the Fire Department installation of smoke detectors for older persons, and ample opportunities to serve on the many volunteer boards for the community. The city provides live updates to the local radio station and carries all meetings live on the station as well. In addition, we use several forms of social media from Facebook and Twitter, as well as information to the local newspaper. The city website is ADA compliant for those with issues of sight or hearing. One of our boards, Accessibility Advisory Board, already does work with issues and challenges the often face our senior citizens, working to eliminate barriers in many ways.

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

2) Moving forward, the city will continue its sponsorship of Friday Forum, a monthly meeting coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce for persons to come and hear speakers as well as get updates from each elected body in the county. The city will also continue its other outreach as those are the primary way our senior citizens engage with us now. Moving forward, the city can consider the membership of each board to ensure there is at least one member over the age of 55. The Play Task Force has been planning for a Senior Playground for enhancing flexibility and mobility of our senior citizens. This group had also asked for feedback from seniors participating in programs at the Recreation Commission on the proposed units. As the initial survey was unable to get broad input due to Covid-19 affecting senior services and participation, a simple online poll will be taken. One benefit to rural communities is that we have fairly active senior citizens that get involved in policy making as well as encouraging ideas for servicing our seniors.

**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.**

3) The City has already reached out to the Area Agency on Aging (serving Ottawa as well as persons in six counties), the Recreation Commission, and the Chamber to partner on initiatives for Age Friendly goals, and all have agreed. It is anticipated that this group will function collaboratively like our Play Task Force, which represents the Parks, Recreation, Library, Schools, Parents, and Businesses. The Age-Friendly group would likely include some of the same organizations, but also the Area Agency and other senior organizations. We have found that by having a group that sets goals each year, is aware of the other organization's efforts, and is collaborative, we are able to greatly leverage the individual organizations efforts to better the outcome for our rural community.

**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?**

4) With the Playful City national organization, we found that while we were smaller, we were able to suggest ideas that some of the larger communities hadn't considered. We all gain from ideas we can scale for our respective communities. However, we do believe that smaller communities are often more able to impact citizens quickly due to size. What we often lack is funding, but our energy and relationships to improve the community for maximum impact is strong. For over ten years we have been working in Ottawa on issues of health, from healthy food availability to access to sidewalks, trails and playgrounds. This opportunity simply builds on our strengths already of working together with agencies and organizations "in the ring" on such issues.

**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?**

5) When looking for possible funding for our proposed Senior Playground (balance, mobility, flexibility), we came upon this site after finding the Community Challenge site. We know that being a part of the Playful Cities helped with our funding of playgrounds, but it did far more with learning, encouraging, and enthusiasm to make a difference in our children's health. We think that being a part of the network for Age-Friendly States and Communities would offer the same "bonus" to collaborative community with new ideas and thoughts that then can be molded to fit our community. As a Planner, Ms. Lee has had presentations at Planning Conferences about AARP programs as well as Planners always looking for ways to engage all community members.

**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:**

*Sent by email*

