Mike Olender, AARP NC State Director  
5511 Capital Center Drive, Suite 400  
Raleigh, NC 27606  
March 16, 2020  

Re: Lenoir County AARP & World Health Organization Partnership  

On behalf of my fellow commissioners and myself, it is with great pride that I announce our intention to proceed forward in building an Age Friendly Network as LIVABLE LENOIR through this wonderful partnership. After various forums, surveys, conversations, collaborations and research, we are in the midst of developing a Master Aging Plan with Transportation as our number one priority.  

To complete this Master Aging Plan, we have convened major stakeholders to include the following: Council on the Aging – Betsy Griffin – Executive Director; Lenoir Community College – Dr. Alexis B. Welch, RN, Dean of Health Sciences & Nursing; City of Kinston – Mayor Don Hardy; Lenoir County Commissioners – Linda Rouse Sutton, Chair; UNC Lenoir Hospital; Department of Transportation, Lenoir County Transit System; Lenoir County DSS; Kinston – Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce; Lenoir County Community Health Center; Lenoir County Public Health Department; Government officials from; LaGrange, Pink Hill, Grifton, Seven Springs, etc.; Greene Lamp Community Action Agency – Foster Grandparent Program; Kinston-Lenoir County Parks & Recreation and Lenoir County Public Schools.  

Our Council on the Aging is a 5013-C organization governed by a 3-member Advisory Board, and plans to include all stakeholders in Lenoir County. This creates a very exciting opportunity to create a comprehensive plan that will help us educate the public regarding Seniors as well as address the eight domains of livability with transportation being our number one priority.  

We are indeed excited to begin on this very exciting and promising adventure to serve the aging in our county which accounts for approximately a third of our population. Thank you for the opportunity to assist us in improving the quality of life for our aging citizens.  

Sincerely,  

[Linda Rouse Sutton]  
Linda Rouse Sutton  
Chair, Lenoir County Commissioners
February 25, 2020

Mike Olender
AARP NC State Director
5511 Capitol Center Drive, Suite 400
Raleigh, NC 27606

Dear Mr. Olender:

On behalf of the city of Kinston, NC, I am very happy to write a letter of support regarding our partnership with AARP and the World Health Organization. After I attended the meeting held in Lenoir County during the fall of 2019 I am equally excited about becoming an Age-Friendly Community. Transportation was determined to be the top issue in our county regarding older adults.

We have already conducted some surveys in various areas and are in the process of completing additional surveys. We are excited to collaborate with many entities in our county to produce the first Master Transportation Initiative. Also, in Lenoir County we do not have a designated Department to develop A Master Aging Plan.

With approximately a third of the Lenoir County population being over the age of 55, the need is great. Many of these citizens live within our City of Kinston. We are excited to move toward providing a better quality of living for our Senior Citizen population. This will assist us in allowing them to be more independent while at the same time integrating aging services that includes holistic transportation and navigation needs.

This is an issue of extreme importance for our Senior Citizens and we are excited about our entire county working together to address this topic. By addressing this priority issue, we hope to truly enhance the lives of our more mature citizens and make this a friendly county for the aging.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mayor Don Hardy
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:

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Lenoir County

STATE: North Carolina

POPULATION SIZE: 57,800

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 55 to 64-14.7% Above 65-18.6%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:

Linda Rouse Sutton, Chair Lenoir County Commissioners

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: PO Box 3289, Kinston, NC 28502

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.

NAME: Betsy Griffin

POSITION: Executive Director, Lenoir County Council on Aging, Inc.

EMAIL ADDRESS: director@lenoirccoa.org

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 252.527.1545

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

The Executive Director with LCCOA in collaboration with the county and city entities will be responsible for the implementation of the county’s master transportation initiative. Ms. Griffin in conjunction with the government officials will participate in the planning process for transportation in Lenoir County between July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Partners to be convened to plan for transportation needs of Lenoir County include the following: UNC Lenoir, Lenoir County Transit, Kinston Community Health Center, Lenoir Community College, Lenoir County Public Schools, Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce, Lenoir County Transportation, Association of Congregations, Lenoir County Cooperative Extension, Towns of Pink Hill, La Grange, Grifton and Seven Springs’s officials, DSS and City of Kinston.
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.

[Email addresses provided]

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.

Lenoir County does not have a designated department to plan for and develop a master aging plan. Lenoir Council on Aging a 501 3C, is an independent private non-profit agency. LCCOA provides services through the HCCBG for transportation (non-medical), senior nutrition (congregate and home delivered meals), In-home aide Level 1 and senior center operations (Kinston, Pink Hill and La Grange). One goal for Lenoir County is to develop a strategic plan for integrating aging services to include holistic transportation and navigation needs. A Master aging plan to ensure that county, city, college and provider services are coordinated and focused on supporting older adult resident’s quality of life.
2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

The planning process for the Lenoir County master aging plan will involve communities of interest. Needs assessment surveys and engaging focus groups have already begun to include Lenoir County Transportation, Lenoir County Schools, Lenoir County Complete, Lenoir County Council on Aging Advisory Board and Livable Kinston/Lenoir Committee. A broad-based advisory committee will be used to develop the master aging plan. It has already been determined by the communities of interest that transportation is the number one priority and need to be addressed.

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 Lenoir County Master Aging plan must be developed by the communities of interest. An advisory committee comprised of governing decision makers, relative agencies/groups, health care providers, faith-based organizations, volunteer organizations and special interest groups. Will be utilized in developing the master aging plan.
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?

In the first Livable Kinston/Lenoir committee meeting a realization that a collaborative effort for a master aging plan had never been considered. Lenoir County desires to utilize AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization of Age Friendly Communities for the resources and leadership expertise to make Lenoir County age friendly. This will allow Lenoir County constituents to be a participant in a larger network of communities and work for the greater good of the whole

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?

This initiative will be a first attempt for Lenoir County to develop a master aging plan. As a tier one county designated with socio economic poverty the needs of our aging population are profound and known. A comprehensive master aging plan is critical for the wellbeing of our aging population which has never been addressed collaboratively. Our hope is that a comprehensive master aging plan can be used as a model for other rural areas to promote age friendly global communities. The Executive Director of LCCOA is a champion and spokesperson for aging populations and will be instrumental in the development of the master aging plan.