



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: February 4, 2020

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: York County

STATE: Pennsylvania

POPULATION SIZE: 440,604

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 16% are age 65+; 30% age 55+

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: The Honorable Julie Wheeler, President, York County Board of Commissioners

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: York County Administrative Center, 28 E. Market Street, York, PA 17401

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:

Cathy is honored to carry on the legacy of Anna Gardner, who over 100 years ago gifted her estate to be used to care for older single women in York County. This legacy has now evolved into York County Community Foundation's long-term Embracing Aging (EA) initiative, which launched in fall 2013.

With over 30 years' experience as a strategic thinker, facilitator, and innovative problem-solver in both for-profit and nonprofit settings, Cathy works with community stakeholders to improve how people experience aging in York County by:

- changing the way people think about aging,
- making people aware of ageism and its impact, and
- ensuring the community is considerate of, and accessible to, the needs and wants of older people.

Cathy has specialized training in human-centered design/design thinking, facilitative leadership for social change, strategic planning, grantmaking, project and performance management, diversity education, re-engineering business processes across the entire supply chain, and WOW customer service. She is currently being trained in collective impact for systems change.

As managing director of Embracing Aging, she's contributed to, presented at, and/or attended national, regional, and local aging publications, conferences, webinars, and radio/television shows, as well as engaged with leaders in reframing aging, such as Dr. Bill Thomas and Ashton Applewhite. Cathy is also a member of Grantmakers in Aging.

At the invitation of Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Casey, she was one of four witnesses selected to present testimony at the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing – *Aging with Community: Building Connections that Last a Lifetime* in May 2017 ([link](#)). Embracing Aging was one of six communities chosen to participate in the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's (n4a) Livable Communities Collaborative in fall 2013 through fall 2014, and was featured in n4a's national report, *Making Your Community Work For All Ages: What's Working*, released in May 2015 ([link](#)).

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.

EA's work is organized around two goals; each goal has three outcomes designed to make York County more age friendly.

Goal 1 – Improve attitudes on aging.

The outcomes for this goal are:

1. Negative thinking of aging is disrupted; ageism reduced
2. Increased understanding and caring about older adults' needs/wants
3. Enhanced quality of life for older people

Goal 2 – Reduce barriers to aging well.

The outcomes for this goal are:

1. Decisions are considerate of the needs/wants of older adults
2. Increased number of age-friendly physical environments, with emphasis on adapted and new quality housing options
3. Older people are prepared to age in community

York County Community Foundation (YCCF) is looked to as respected community change leaders. In this role, we provide strategic and visionary thinking to community concerns and convene, facilitate, advocate for, and fund initiatives designed to create systems change.

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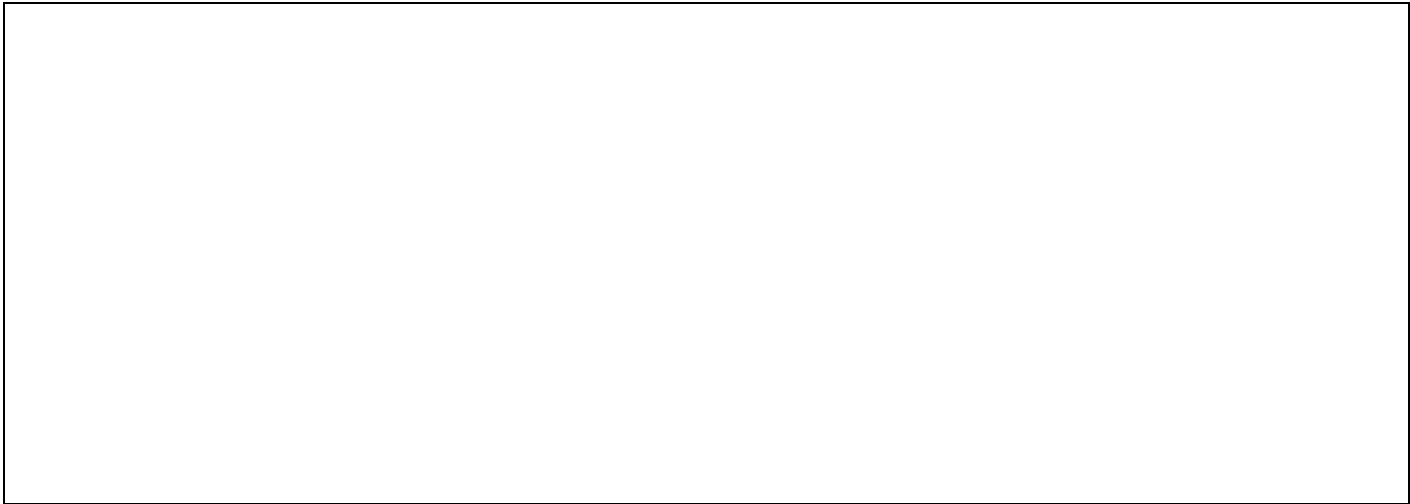
2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

Older people, and community stakeholders from various sectors including those outside traditional aging service providers, have been engaged in EA since its launch.

Examples of this include:

- Serving on EA’s Steering Committee to advise EA strategies
- Leading and/or participating in focus groups
- Leading and/or serving on EA topic specific committees (e.g. housing, transportation, etc.)
- Participating in community-wide coalitions
- Developing and/or presenting EA programs (e.g. ageism training, aging in place sessions, etc.)
- Chairing and/or volunteering at EA events (e.g. Re-discover York)
- Conducting age-friendly audits
- Assisting with research (e.g. Quantifying the Economic Benefits of Older Adults in York County)
- Reviewing and scoring grant applications
- Applying age-friendly guidelines for communications
- Participating in EA specific campaigns, including a campaign to address what term should we use to name an aging adult

As shared in a previous question, YCCF creates community change. One method to solving community-wide social challenges is collective impact, a proven approach to collaboration that builds the commitment of leaders from different sectors to a common agenda. It brings people together in a structured way to establish common goals and achieve uncommon results. Embracing Aging is applying this approach to its work.



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.

2020 priorities for EA include:

Navigating Aging Model

We’re in the process of developing a model to support older adults in York County to stay connected as they age. Navigating Aging aspires to be a hub connecting older adults in York County to information and services to support them in living well, in whatever way each person might define it. The development of this model includes community experts from across various sectors (housing, health and wellness, employment, transportation, community services, and volunteering), as well as older adults informing the process through initial focus groups. The community-at-large will engage in a larger data collection survey, scheduled for later in 2020.

EA is an advisor on a project funded through YCCF’s Memorial Health Fund to create a meaningful innovation for seniors related to reducing depression and isolation. The strategy being explored is a digital platform that connects seniors with other community members who want to learn from the senior’s skills and experience. This aligns with the Navigating Aging model and includes various community stakeholders.

Senior Housing Partnership

We’ve partnered with the York County Planning Commission (YCPC) to address senior housing needs. We hired a design thinking consultant to approach housing conversations through a different lens and conducted focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of barriers to housing for seniors.

Focus group participants included municipal representatives, market rate and affordable housing developers, aging service providers, community representatives, and older adults.

A community coalition was organized, with three working groups:

- 1. municipal awareness
- 2. development partnerships
- 3. aging in place/community

The municipal awareness workgroup is creating profiles of each municipality regarding senior data. The goal is for municipalities to be more proactive and innovative on housing ordinances.

Within the aging in place/community workgroup, community experts join EA in presenting educational programs to people regarding factors to consider to age in place/community. Included in this program is a template of a tool to help people:

- assess their current situation in housing, finances, transportation, health and wellness, and social interaction/engagement
- determine their wishes for how and where they want to live
- proactively plan now, before crisis, to fill the gaps
- connect with services to assist them

EA and YCPC met individually in August 2019 with candidates running for the Office of County Commissioner. We shared the findings of the focus groups, informed them of the work of this initiative, envisioned what success looks like, and asked for their support. As part of this work, EA helps develop messaging to assure we are framing both the terms *aging* and *affordable* to address the stigma often associated with both.

Campaign to Disrupt Aging

EA is developing a social marketing campaign designed to:

- create more conversations regarding aging
- develop a higher recognition of ageism and understanding of its negative impact
- motivate organizations and advocates to begin developing programs or incorporating changes in their current operations that support aging in York County

Older adults helped EA create a session titled, *Dismantling Ageism for Age-Friendly Communities*. EA presents this in business, education, and organizational settings.

ALPHA

Launched in summer 2017, ALPHA (which stands for Alliance for Low Income Personal Care Home Advancement) is a community collaborative formed to respond to a critical shortage of low-income personal care home beds. EA is actively engaged in the strategic decision making to support ALPHA, including setting standards, problem solving, navigating new challenges, and vetting processes.

EA recently led ALPHA's strategic planning process and is chairing ALPHA's newly formed Innovation Action Group; whose purpose is to translate strategic and visionary thinking into recommended action to best support the population currently managed through the personal care service model. The work of this action team will lead to an increase of sustainable, quality personal care service and housing options that meet the needs and wants of York County.

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?

As shared in response to a previous question, Cathy has over 30 years' experience as a strategic thinker, facilitator, and innovative problem-solver in both for-profit and nonprofit settings. She has specialized training in human-centered design/design thinking, facilitative leadership for social change, strategic planning, grantmaking, project and performance management, diversity education, re-engineering business processes across the entire supply chain, and WOW customer service. She is currently being trained in collective impact for systems change.

For the past six years, she's been working with community stakeholders to improve how people experience aging in York County. She develops strategies and leads Embracing Aging grantmaking to disrupt negative views on aging, increase the understanding and caring about the needs of older adults, enhance quality of life for older people, increase age-friendly public policies and physical environments, and help older people plan for how they want to age in community. She's also contributed to, presented at, and/or attended national, regional, and local aging publications, conferences, webinars, and radio/television shows, as well as engaged with leaders in reframing aging, such as Dr. Bill Thomas and Ashton Applewhite.

Through these experiences, Cathy looks forward to learning and sharing alongside other communities working to create communities that are great places to age!

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?

EA launched around the same time AARP's Livable Communities did. As you know, starting an initiative from scratch is no easy feat. Combine that with the stigma around aging, we felt we needed to take time to get our footing, establish our priorities, and prime the community to ensure we are in the best position to create impactful change.

David Kalinoski, Associate State Director – AARP Pennsylvania has been engaged with EA since its launch. He's a great asset to our community and EA's work. We've partnered on several initiatives and through David, EA has had the opportunity to engage with professionals within AARP's Livable Communities team and network. This included attending AARP Livable Communities conferences and a Team Better Block installation project.

We believe the timing is right for us to join the network so York County is in the best position to succeed as an age-friendly community.



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:

