

TO: AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
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SUBJECT: AARP NETWORK AGE-FRIENDLY NETWORK
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What is the AARP Network of Age-friendly States and Communities?

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities helps states, cities, towns and counties to prepare for the shift by focusing on the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the well-being of older adults. An age-friendly community/municipality has policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment designed to support and enable older people to “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.

What Are the Criteria?

AARP Age-Friendly Designation follows the framework developed by the [World Health Organization](#), which establishes **8 Domains of Livability**. The 8 Domains established by the WHO and AARP help municipalities and counties organize and prioritize their work to become a better livable community for residents of all ages. These 8 domains are:

- 1) Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- 2) Transportation
- 3) Housing
- 4) Social Participation
- 5) Respect and Social Inclusion
- 6) Civic Participation and Employment
- 7) Communication and Information
- 8) Community and Health Services

Examples: There is no “one size fits all” intervention across any of these 8 Domains, but AARP maintains several examples of policies or investments that an Age-Friendly Community may pursue:

- **Housing:** An ADU, Accessory Dwelling Unit, is a small independent housing unit within a single-family home or on the property. Some ADUs may help residents age in place. For example, Portland, Oregon waived municipal fees and adjusted the city’s zoning codes to make it easier for a homeowner to add an ADU to his or her property.
- **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** Multiple generations may live together in the same municipality and even the same neighborhood, but children and older adults do not always have the chance to interact. Public space can create this area for interaction. For example, Wichita, Kansas built a Grandparents Park to create a space for seniors, children, and daytime caregivers to socialize together.
- **Community and Health Services:** Adults are living longer, but as they age, they may develop physical impairments or memory issues that reduce their participation in the community and increase emergency services cost. Municipalities can create more resources for their residents. For example, Des Moines, Iowa manages a 50 & Better Health Fair to provide free medical screenings and health information in a friendly, social atmosphere.

AARP provides case studies and subject matter expertise across all 8 Domains in its Age-friendly Communities Network.

How Can My Municipality Join The Network?

The primary contact must submit both of these documents to the AARP staff member whom the municipality has been working with. If the municipality has been working independently, they may submit their documents as attachments to the email Livable@aarp.org

Submit a membership application; *application download available online AARP webpage*

Submit Letter of commitment; has to be signed by the jurisdictions highest elected official. (*example town mayor*)

Primary contact has to be a volunteer or local official who will take lead the initiative

The AARP Network of Age-friendly Communities Network Cycle

Step 1: Entering the Network: The community must be committed to serve as a catalyst in educating, encouraging, promoting and recognizing improvements to make cities towns and counties supportive to residents of all ages.

Step 2: Planning Phase (1-2 years): During the planning phase, a community undertakes four steps:

- Conduct a baseline assessment of the age friendliness in the community
- Develop a 3-year plan of action based on assessment findings
- Establish mechanisms to involve older people throughout the age friendly cycle process
- Identify indicators to monitor progress

Step 3: Implementation and Evaluation (3-5 years): Once planning phase is completed, communities will have to submit their action plan to *World Health Organization* for review and endorsement. Progress report is required after implementation period is over.

Step 4: Continuous Improvements (year 5+): Age-friendly communities continue their work by entering into further implementation cycles targeting the eight Domains of Livability.

What Are the Age-friendly Communities in Illinois?

COMMUNITY	YEAR JOINED
ALTON	2018
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS	2018
CHAMPAIGN	2017
DANVILLE	2018
EVANSTON	2015
URBANA	2017
WOODSTOCK	2019

Resources

For more information, please visit the following websites:

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>

<https://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world/en/>