



## Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly 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@aarpp.org](mailto:livable@aarpp.org) or call 202-434-2430
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 2/9/2016

### Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY:** Newton

**STATE:** Massachusetts

**POPULATION SIZE:** 85,146 (2010 census)

**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60:** 21%

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT:** Setti D. Warren, Mayor

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER:** Newton City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., Newton MA 02459

### Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY 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:** Jayne Colino and Deborah Youngblood

**POSITION:** Director of Senior Services and Commissioner of Health & Human Services

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [jcolino@newtonma.gov](mailto:jcolino@newtonma.gov) and [dyoungblood@newtonma.gov](mailto:dyoungblood@newtonma.gov)

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 617-796-1660 and 617-796-1420

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

We have named two individuals who are critical to our efforts on behalf of seniors to play the leadership role as our community contacts for the Age-Friendly Communities program. One is Jayne Colino, our Director of Senior Services, who has been a leader in our city and in the state of Massachusetts on behalf of seniors and programming for seniors, primarily through our Senior Center. Jayne served as Chair of the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging and Senior Centers (MCOA) and received the "Director of the Year Award" in 2014. She has been instrumental in the strategic planning effort undertaken by the Senior Services Department and the Council on Aging. Deborah Youngblood is our Commissioner of Health & Human Services. The social services component of the Senior Center is under the supervision of the Health & Human Services department so Deborah is a critical member of our team to understand and meet the needs of seniors. In addition, she has been charged by the Mayor to direct the Economic Growth for All initiative, which includes a benchmark for having at least 70% of previous income saved for retirement in order that seniors enjoy financial sustainability.

### **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 Newton Department of Senior Services and the Newton Council on Aging contracted with UMASS Boston Gerontology Institute to conduct a needs assessment of Newton residents age 50 and over. Those findings from “Living and Aging in Newton: Now and in the Future” (2014), representing the voices of older residents themselves, inform a long-term, ongoing strategic plan to guide the City’s services, activities and advocacy efforts for older adults. •The City of Newton commissioned a demographic projection study by Northeastern University’s Dukakis Center to help inform the Newton LEADS 2040 initiative so that as we plan for the next 25 years of our city’s infrastructure, our knowledge of the population we will need to respond to is accurate. In 1990, 15% of Newton’s population was 65 years of age or older. By 2030, 24% of Newton’s population will be 65 or older. Thus, our aging friendly agenda has become deeply integrated into our overall city wide action plan that focuses on promoting economic self-sufficiency across the lifespan. •The City of Newton has commissioned a comprehensive Housing Strategy plan for the next 25 years that includes a specific focus on the needs of older adults and will be released in February 2016. Preliminary analysis clearly indicates that our housing stock consists predominantly of single family homes and that 65% of all housing units in the city have 3 or more bedrooms. These data show that available housing is not aligned with our aging demographic and addressing this mismatch is a key priority. The development of this housing strategy plan has included multiple community meetings to gather input and has included strong representation from the older adult community. (continued on separate sheet)

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

•Currently we have representation by older residents on our Council on Aging; senior volunteers at the Senior Center and in community outreach; and on our Age Friendly Strategy Group. •Our active Council of Aging and Department of Senior Services work collaboratively under a common age-friendly mission, vision and goals; staff and Council members work together on specific projects. More than 200 older people volunteer to help all Newton seniors and their families in a variety of social, educational, and health activities. We will continue to expand our volunteer base to serve all Newton seniors and those who care for them. •Data from the Newton Department of Senior Services and the Council on Aging needs assessment of older adults using surveys and focus groups and including responses from over 1,000 residents aged 50 years and older provides information about arenas to focus on such as affordability, availability, and appropriateness of housing for seniors; transportation needs; community engagement options; the risk for loneliness and isolation among older adult; and the role of the Department of Senior Services into the future. • The city is conducting community meetings on a future housing strategy held on multiple occasions with strong representation from Newton’s older population. •The city is conducting community meetings on a future transportation strategy held on multiple occasions with strong representation from Newton’s older population. •There is representation of older residents on the Transportation Advisory Group •The Department of Senior Services collects data from our current population who attend our Senior Services programming and our Veterans Affairs programming with emphasis on aging friendly recommendations •Additional focus groups and surveys with seniors and people who care about them.

**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.**

There are two important interconnected initiatives occurring in Newton. One has a longer-term focus and the other focuses on immediate and shorter-term issues. 1. Newton has launched an extensive cross-sector collaboration effort through our new Newton LEADS 2040 initiative. This initiative has well over 20 members to date, including a strong mix of city departments, non-profits, academics and businesses. The coalition is focused on promoting Newton as a model city for promoting economic self-sufficiency across the life span and includes a specific focus on older adults and retirees. The coalition includes Newton's Senior Services, nonprofits serving older adults, academic partners with a focus on aging and retirement, and hospitals and health care professionals. We are confident that this diverse and committed group will move forward our two over-arching aging friendly goals: A. Planning for and maintaining retirement in terms of financial stability and self-sufficiency, housing needs, and transportation needs B. Promoting vibrant older adulthood through community engagement, promoting positive social networks, and creating opportunities for meaningful lifelong learning, volunteering, and/or working. 2. The Newton Age-friendly Strategy Group is considering recommending the re-institution of a City-wide Collaboration Group (name to be determined) of agencies and institutions that provide hands-on services to older adults and those people who care for and about them. A previous group which was comprised of agencies that serve seniors met several times to begin the process of learning about each other and finding enhanced ways to communicate and collaborate. This group was called "LiNCC-AGES" (Livable Newton Community Coalition Across the Generations). A newly re-constituted group will have a common goal to focus on Age-friendly/Livable communities concepts. It will include a broad range of agencies such as Springwell (the local AAA); police and fire departments; community engagement agencies such as SOAR 55; churches and synagogues; planning and development; members of the City Council; Parks and Recreation; seniors and family representatives; among others. The Newton Leads 2040 and the City-wide Age-Friendly/Livable Collaboration group will work closely together on specific projects and to assure that there is ongoing communication and information sharing.

## Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

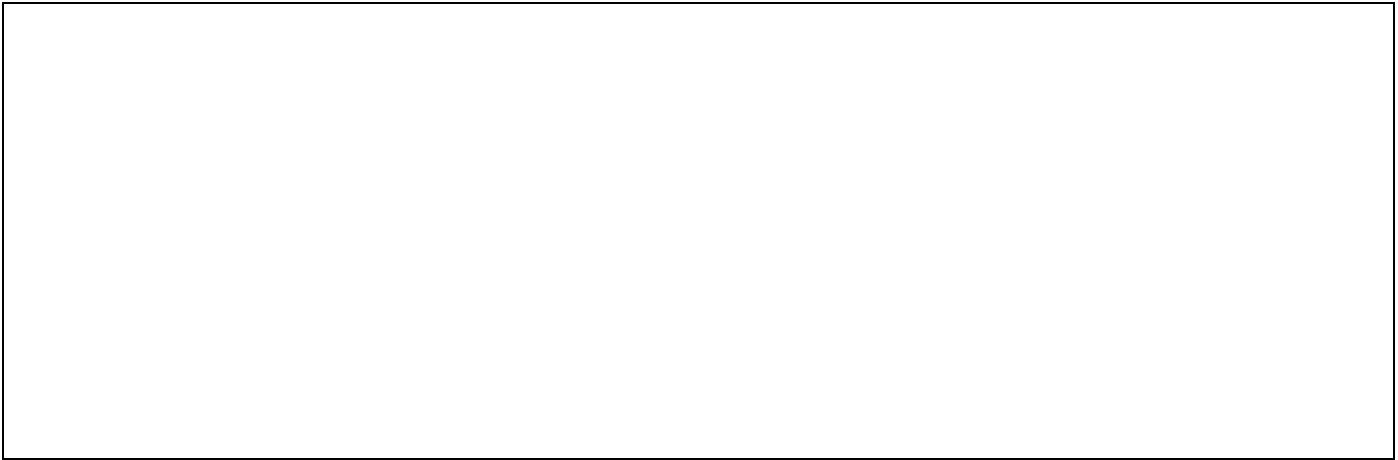
Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

### 4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Newton has a long, dedicated history of serving older adults and the people who care for and about them. Newton's Department of Senior Services (NDSS) was formed in 2005 to assure that there was a designated function to serve the increasing numbers of seniors. In those many years of experience, the Department has gained extensive knowledge on the issues facing elders and the programs, services and activities needed to respond. We have recently conducted a needs assessment for seniors with the University of Massachusetts Boston as well as commissioned a demographic study and projection by Northeastern University. Our population of seniors is growing and we are explicitly directing attention to preparing for financial sustainability through retirement and utilizing the talents and interests of our older population to continue to live in and contribute to the community. Newton has the Council on Aging (NCOA) comprised of involved volunteers of all ages who have expertise in the multiple facets of aging. Newton's Mayor has initiated several long-term strategies to address the needs of our older residents, specifically around economic stability, housing, and transportation. When the NDSS and the NCOA developed its long-term strategic plan, they used the concepts of Age-Friendly/Livable Communities as a guiding framework. We want to share our own experiences and insights with other Network communities, particularly those that are suburban in character. However, more importantly, we believe we will learn a great deal from others who are in the process of creating their own visions and actions for becoming Age-Friendly. It will be through the back and forth dialogues among communities that we will be able to contribute in the most meaningful ways.

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

More than six years ago, the city of Newton, along with the NDSS and the NCOA, began to educate itself on our growing aging population. Considering that the percentage of Newton's older residents was somewhat higher than the state average, we knew that we had to begin to think about how to prepare best for this shifting demographic. We studied various age-friendly and livable models that included appropriate housing, transit oriented residences, sustainability, walkability, and smart streets, among others. We began to see that the concepts behind all of these models shared common elements. In our explorations, we saw that the Age-friendly and Livability models best suited our own strategic planning process. It became clear that the notion of age-friendliness was not only good for seniors but for anyone of any age who wanted to live in a community that provided housing options, was near public transportation, had safe walkable sidewalks, valued diversity, and where everyone was respected regardless of ethnicity, socio-economic status and age. Gradually, members of the community began to come forward to advocate for the city to apply for participation in the Age-Friendly/Livable Community movement overall and the AARP Network specifically. We have listened to and are responding to that community desire and are excited to be moving forward.



**6) Please provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.**

The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours >



Click here to paste the JPEG image or the link to one.