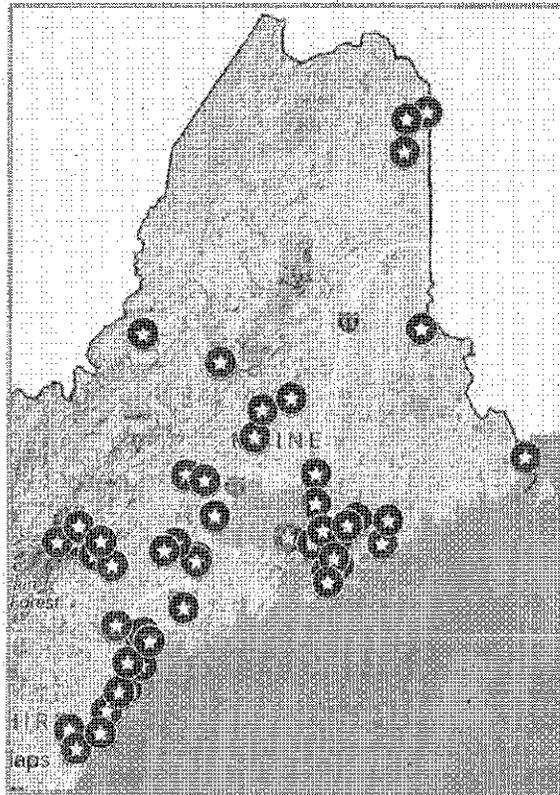


Age-Friendly Maine



Maine Members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

Augusta	Dexter	Paris
Bangor	Dover-Foxcroft	Penobscot
Bar Harbor	Eastport	Portland
Belfast/Waldo County	Eliot	Presque Isle
Berwick	Ellsworth	Raymond
Bethel	Gilead	Readfield
Biddeford	Greenville	Saco
Blue Hill	Greenwood	Sedgewick
Bowdoinham	Hallowell	Skowhegan
Brooklin	Jackman	Stonington
Brooksville	Kennebunk	Sullivan
Bucksport	Limestone	Surry
Caribou	Madison	Waterville
Castine	Milo	Wayne
Cumberland	Newry	Westbrook
Danforth	North Yarmouth	Woodstock
Deer Isle	Ogunquit	Yarmouth
	Old Orchard Beach	

In a Livable Community,

people of all ages can

GO FOR A WALK

GET AROUND WITHOUT A CAR

ENJOY PUBLIC PLACES

WORK OR VOLUNTEER

FIND THE SERVICES THEY NEED

SHOP, SOCIALIZE, AND BE ENTERTAINED

LIVE SAFELY AND COMFORTABLY

...and make their town city or neighborhood

a lifelong home

AARP Livable Communities and the Network of Age-Friendly Communities

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities supports the efforts of neighborhoods, towns and cities to become great places for people of all ages to live, work, play, and do business.

We believe that communities should provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life. Once in place, these resources enhance personal independence, allow residents to age in place, and foster their engagement in the community's civic, economic and social life.

Livable Communities

AARP research consistently shows that older adults want to age in their current homes or, if that is not possible, to stay in their community. However, many places in Maine do not have the policies, infrastructure, or services older residents need to age in their community safely and comfortably.

Maine communities that have joined the Network of Age-Friendly Communities work to promote active, healthy, and engaged living by residents of all ages, but especially older people.

Cities and towns use different tactics to meet community needs. Low-cost changes to the environment—such as increasing the number of designated parking spaces in the downtown or adding benches to a park walkway—encourage people to spend time in the community. Zoning and building code changes that allow families to add an “in-law” apartment make it easier for people to age in the community where they want to live. Communities have increased access to services by partnering with regional service providers to increase local awareness or by engaging volunteers to provide services to meet a gap identified in the age-friendly assessment.

Eight Domains of Livability

Research conducted with people 50+ living in communities around the world concluded that there are eight aspects of community life that are essential for the health and well-being of older residents:

Stay informed – *for free!* – by subscribing to the award-winning **AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter**, which contains a mix of best practices, research, ideas, community resources, slideshows, interviews, how-tos, and information about livable community efforts from places near and far. Subscribe now by e-mailing livable@aarp.org. Please type “Subscribe Me” into the subject line.



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Accessible, inviting parks and public buildings affect the independence and quality of life of residents of all ages, but especially older adults. They are also good for property values. Homes close to newly developed parks increase in value by about 5%. Some Maine communities have increased the width of paths and added accessible benches. Others have increased the number of designated parking spaces near key services, promoted age-friendly businesses, and added accessible features to municipal buildings.



Transportation

Age-friendly transportation makes it easy for people to get the places they want to go whether they prefer to walk, bike, roll, or drive. Safe streets are good for the economy. A one-point increase in walk score increases home values by up to \$3,000. When it is easy and convenient to shop locally, retail sales go up. Age-Friendly Maine communities have created safer crosswalks, advocated for bike lanes, increased awareness of local transportation options, and developed volunteer transportation programs.



Housing

Safe and affordable housing conveniently located near amenities promotes health and well-being. Some communities have developed building and zoning codes that encourage lifelong housing or advocated for affordable housing options for different life stages. Voluntary organizations and age-friendly teams have partnered to offer free or no-cost home repair and modification programs. These approaches help people age in their community and attract new residents. One new job is created for every 1.8 new retirees who move to a community and they add about \$59,000 into the local economy during their first year in town.



Social Participation

Connecting with friends and neighbors is good for your health, no matter what your age. Socially isolated children have poorer health in middle-age than their connected peers. Lacking social ties in adulthood is as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes/day. Some cities have started a community center. Others have partnered with local organizations, such as an art center or library, to increase social opportunities for all ages.



Respect and Social Inclusion

Older people who feel welcomed and respected for their contribution are more likely to remain actively engaged in the economic, social and civic life of the community than those who do not feel included. Maine communities have partnered with schools and other organizations to provide intergenerational activities. One group of older women teach sewing to young people at the Boys and Girls Club; in another town the school service club delivers sand buckets to older residents and helps with outdoor chores.



Civic Participation and Employment

Older people do not stop contributing to their community when they turn 65 or 85 or 105. The local economy benefits when employers hire and retain workers who want or need to work past traditional retirement age. Mobilizing older volunteers to share their skills strengthens the community. Age-Friendly cities and towns have hosted job fairs to encourage older people, if they choose, to work for pay and have increased awareness of opportunities to engage in a variety of meaningful volunteer activities.



Communication and Information

Staying connected with activities, resources, and people is key to active, engaged aging. Age-friendly cities and towns in Maine have developed information portals on their town website, designed Facebook pages, or created age-friendly resource manuals that make it easy for people to find information about local activities, services, and programs. Not everyone has a smartphone or Internet access; some towns offer paper copies of monthly calendars or newsletters or write a recurring column in their local paper.



Community Support and Health Services

At some point, everyone gets hurt, becomes ill, or needs a bit of help. While it's important that care be available nearby, it's crucial that residents can access and afford needed services. Maine's age-friendly communities have emphasized food security, increased awareness of elder abuse prevention, and focused on disaster preparedness. Some communities have developed transportation programs to increase access or have partnered with the Area Agency on Aging to make evidence-based programs available locally.

Consider your own life in the community where you live. Are the eight domains of livability important to you? Do you prefer to live in a place where civic engagement is encouraged? Where public spaces are safe and attractive? Where recreational opportunities abound? Research by AARP shows that places that provide what older adults need to age happily in their communities are places that provide what people of all ages are looking for when they first move to a community. That is why AARP develops resources to help community activists and municipal governments address each of the domains of livability.

Learn more about
**AARP Livable
Communities**
(<http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/>)

In a livable community, policies, services, settings, and structures encourage people to remain as active as they want to be at any age and to live life to their own satisfaction regardless of individual challenges. This is achieved by:

- Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among residents.
- Anticipating and responding flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.
- Respecting the decisions and lifestyle choices of people of all ages.
- Protecting and supporting the most vulnerable older adults.
- Promoting the inclusion and contributions of older adults in all aspects of community life.

Furthermore, because aging is a lifelong process, a livable community is not just a great place to grow old. It is a great place to live, work, and play at any age. Livable communities improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for Mainers of all ages.

For towns and cities that commit to using the framework of the eight domains as they think about planning for the changing age-structure in their towns, AARP has created a special way to recognize them through their membership in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities provide residents of all ages and abilities the opportunity to live rewarding, productive, and safe lives by using the framework of the eight domains of livability as a tool for community planning and economic development. They recognize the experience and skills of older residents and include them in all phases of age-friendly community and economic development.

Some communities are interested in tackling one or two of the livability issues raised in the eight domains and not looking at all eight. AARP Maine celebrates all community efforts to increase the livability of Maine's towns and cities.



Maine Network of Age-Friendly Communities Member Benefits

AARP and AARP Maine offer ongoing support for the work you are doing.

Technical Assistance and Guidance

- ❖ **Livable Communities Newsletter:** <https://aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-community-news-alerts/>
- ❖ **Livable Communities Facebook Workgroup:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AARPLivableWorkGroup/>
The closed Facebook group for AARP staff, volunteers, and communities that are working with AARP on livability issues and/or are part of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. It is a great place to get ideas!
- ❖ **Maine Guide to Building Age-Friendly Communities:** (<https://tinyurl.com/AARPMaineAge-FriendlyGuide>) and AARP **Roadmap to Livability** (<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/>) series.
- ❖ **Technical Assistance by AARP Maine staff** to move your work from Assessment to Planning and Implementation
- ❖ **Ask Age-Friendly Tech Talks.** Peer learning to help your initiative achieve specific goals – such as starting a home repair service, creating a property tax abatement program, or finding ways to help caregivers.
- ❖ **AARP Maine Age-Friendly Newsletter:** <https://tinyurl.com/MaineAge-FriendlyNews>. Learn what other communities are doing and get tips & ideas for your initiative.
- ❖ **Age-Friendly Maine Facebook Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/AgeFriendlyMaine/>
 - Send us your age-friendly news and events to share and promote.
 - Stay up-to-date with age-friendly work in Maine communities and across the US.

Networking Opportunities

- ❖ **Annual Age-Friendly Communities Statewide Meeting**
- ❖ **Regional Meetings and Age-Friendly coffees** for nearby communities to get together and share ideas.
- ❖ **AARP Sponsored events** – All are welcome! To learn more: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPMaine/>

Funding the Age-Friendly Work

- ❖ **AARP Maine Panning Grants.** Mini grants to cover the expense of age-friendly assessment and developing a plan.
- ❖ **AARP: Challenge grant** competition to fund “quick actions” that will help you move the age-friendly work forward.
- ❖ **Assistance finding grants** for ideas that will increase the livability of your community.

Creating a Resource Guide

- ❖ **Professionally-designed template** that lists state-wide resources and includes plenty of space for your committee to add local and regional programs and services. FMI: Contact Andrea Cooper
- ❖ AARP provides an electronic version and 100 printed copies.

Engaging Your Community

- ❖ **Annual book donation to your local library** on an aging topic, i.e. Caregiving and Financial Security
- ❖ **AARP-Sponsored local events:** Community Shred Day, Coffees, and On-Taps
- ❖ **Free Promotional items featuring your Age-Friendly Team:**
 - Stickers with your age-friendly logo.
 - Tablecloth with the AARP Maine logo and your city or town initiative name for events.
- ❖ **Emails and postcards to AARP Members** in your community.
- ❖ **Find volunteers** and explore ideas for community projects at **Create the Good** (<http://www.createthegood.org/>)

Preparing Membership Materials

Does your town, city, or county want to join the Network of Age-Friendly Communities? Congratulations on making the commitment to actively work to make your municipality a better place for people of all ages to live, work, play, and do business!

Joining the NAFC is a simple process. It only requires two documents – an application from the community and a letter of commitment signed by the highest elected official(s) in your jurisdiction.

The application is short and easy to complete:

- **Your municipality.** The application asks for some basic demographic information about your municipality and about the individual who will be the primary contact person for the age-friendly work.
- **The age-friendly planning process in your jurisdiction.**
 - What are some of the programs, policies, and services that already make your village, town, city, or county a great place to grow old?
 - How does the jurisdiction plan to become more age-friendly?
 - How will older adults be included in all aspects of the age-friendly planning process?
 - How is the age-friendly initiative going to collaborate with agencies and municipal departments?
- **Participation in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.**
 - How will the age-friendly initiative in your jurisdiction contribute to the peer learning community that is the core of membership in the NAFC?
 - What motivated your village, town, city, or county to join the NAFC?

Download the Membership Application:

[Application to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities \(https://tinyurl.com/AARP-NAFC-App\)](https://tinyurl.com/AARP-NAFC-App)

The Letter of Commitment shows that the elected officials in your village, town, city, or county are committed to including an aging lens in municipal planning. The Network of Age-Friendly Communities recognizes that elected officials are change leaders. It is key for them to make a commitment to changes in the physical and social environment of the community that will make it a better place to live for people of all ages.

In some municipalities, a group of elected officials want to sign the application. Additional signatures are welcome because it indicates the extent of support for the age-friendly planning process. However, they cannot replace the chair of a town's select board, city mayor, governor, county commissioner, or other top elected official. The signature of the

highest elected official has to sign any application made to the Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Each letter of commitment should be worded in a way that rings true for the municipality. AARP doesn't want you to use boiler-plate language but to write a letter that reflects the jurisdiction that is applying. However, as with the application, there are a few things that should be included in the letter.

1. Establishing mechanisms to involve older people
2. A baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the community
3. The development of a community-wide action plan based on the findings of the assessment
4. Identification of indicators so progress can be monitored against the action plan

The following letter can be used as an example. Communities should feel free to add other pertinent information while retaining the commitments in the second paragraph.

(Date)

Lori Parham, AARP Maine State Director

Dear Ms. Parham,

On behalf of the (town/city of ---), I am pleased to submit this letter of interest and commitment in the AARP/World Health Organization Network of Age-Friendly Communities. (Town or city name) recognizes the importance of encouraging and promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address changing demographics and to enhance independent living and is committed to a process of continual improvement to support active and healthy aging.

As part of our involvement and commitment we will conduct a base assessment of the community's age-friendliness and develop a community action plan based on the findings of the assessment. We will involve older residents deeply in the planning process and we commit to monitoring progress toward implementing the action plan.

Sincerely, (Signature by highest elected official or town manager)

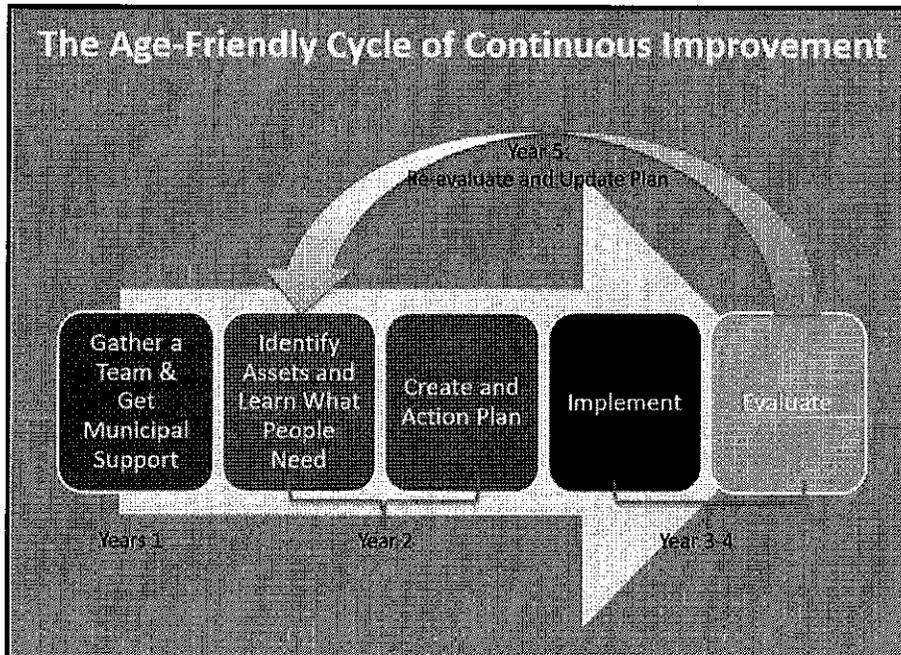
Submitting the Application and Letter of Commitment

The application and the letter of commitment are submitted to the AARP state staff member with whom you have been working. The application packet is then sent to the National Livability and to the World Health Organization for review.

Communities that are working independently may submit their documents via email attachment to livable@aarp.org.

You have Joined the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, Now What?

Age-friendly planning is a five-year cycle of continuous improvement. The first two years are spent engaging the community, establishing a core team to guide the work in your community, and completing your assessment.



The assessment is structured by the eight domains of livability that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. It includes:

- An asset inventory that lists resources that the age-friendly team can build on to address needs.
- A demographic profile of the community
- Information about what older people need and want to thrive in the community and how residents prefer changes to be made.

The work done to engage the community and the data gathered during the assessment contributes to the development of the action plan at the end of year two.

After the action plan is adopted and approved, the core team continues the work in years three to five with implementation and evaluation. By the conclusion of the initial five-year period, the community should have made tangible and meaningful progress toward the goals laid out in the action plan and be able to revise the plan and the next five-year cycle begins.

To guide your work, AARP has developed the *Roadmap to Livability Series* and the *Maine Guide to Building Livable, Age-Friendly Communities*.

Maine

AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

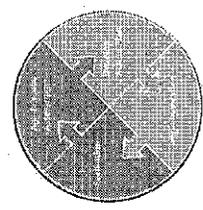
An Introduction

NETWORK PROFILE

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities includes 200 villages, towns, cities, counties, and states that have made a commitment to age-friendly community and economic development. The Network of Age-Friendly Communities advances efforts to help people of all ages live safely and comfortably in their communities and encourages older people to take an active role in changes that will make their community a better place for everyone to live, work, play, and do business.

PLANNING PROCESS

Organize Age-Friendly Team and secure support by local elected officials for application and membership.



- **An age-friendly assessment** identifies community strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Develop an action plan.**
- **Implement** changes that encourage older adults to remain as involved with the community as they want to be.
- **Evaluate** your work and identify areas for celebration and improvement.
- **Cycle of Continuous Improvement** to identify and meet emerging needs

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE NETWORK

AARP Maine works with committees making their town or city more livable by providing:

1. **Recognition by AARP and others** that your town or city includes an aging lens in planning and economic development.
2. **Technical support** from AARP Maine for age-friendly planning and implementation.
3. Guidance and best practices in the Livable Communities Newsletter and AARP Age-Friendly toolkit.
4. The Roadmap to Livability and Maine Guide to Building Livable Age-Friendly Communities contains tools and strategies for the age-friendly journey.

5. **Peer Learning** at the Annual Age-Friendly Maine Conference, Regional Meetings, and monthly Ask Age-Friendly Tech Talks.

6. Eligibility for small **Planning Grants** and quick-action Implementation Grants.
7. **Book donations** to community libraries on aging topics such as caregiving, financial security, and disrupting aging.
8. **Promotional items**, stickers with your logo and AARP event tablecloth, help spread the word about the work you are doing.

LEARN MORE at aarp.org/livable-communities

WEB: www.aarp.org/me
Facebook: facebook.com/agefriendlymaine
EMAIL: me@aarp.org

9. **Help Increasing Community Engagement** by offering resources for volunteer recruitment and ideas to spread word about the age-friendly work in local media.
10. AARP Maine Monthly Newsletter and Maine Age-Friendly Facebook Page keep you up-to-date with the latest information.
11. **Local Community Resource Guide**
12. **Advocacy** for local age-friendly policies and technical assistance from national experts.

53 AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN MAINE:

Augusta, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Berwick, Bethel, Biddeford, Blue Hill, Bowdoinham, Brooklin, Brooksville, Bucksport, Caribou, Castine, Cumberland, Danforth, Deer Isle, Dexter, Dover-Foxcroft, Eastport, Eliot, Ellsworth, Gilead, Greenville, Greenwood, Hallowell, Jackman, Kennebunk, Limestone, Madison, Milo, Newry, North Yarmouth, Ogunquit, Old Orchard Beach, Paris, Penobscot, Portland, Presque Isle, Raymond, Readfield, Saco, Sedgewick, Skowhegan, Stonington, Sullivan, Surry, Waldo County, Waterville, Wayne, Westbrook, Woodstock, Yarmouth.

If your community wants to prepare for Maine's changing demographics by joining the NAFC ...
 Contact AARP Maine. Phone: 1-207-776-6312

Lori Parham: lpaham@aarp.org
 Patricia Oh: paoh@aarp.org
 Andrea Cooper: acooper@aarp.org
 Sara Grant: sgrant@aarp.org

EIGHT DOMAINS OF LIVABILITY



Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Accessible, inviting parks and public buildings affect the independence and quality of life of residents of all ages, but especially older adults. They are also good for property values. Homes close to newly developed parks increase in value by about 5%. Some Maine communities have increased the width of paths and added accessible benches. Others have increased the number of designated parking spaces near key services, promoted age-friendly businesses, and added accessible features to municipal buildings.



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