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BACKGROUND

Augusta as an Age-Friendly Designation

Summary

The numbers and proportions of older people in cities, towns, and rural communities are increasing. The first wave of baby boomers began turning 65 last January, and by 2030 all 77 million boomers will be 65-plus. The age-friendly community initiative was started by the World Health Organization in 2006 and involved 33 cities of varying sizes throughout the world. Making communities age-friendly is one of the most effective strategies to promote healthy and active aging, and it contributes to the creation of sustainable, healthy communities that benefit all residents in communities.

Partnering to Support Age-Friendly Living

AARP Georgia and the City of Augusta are taking action to accommodate the changing needs of older residents to ensure that their communities will remain attractive places to live, with features that benefit seniors and support the health, safety, and participation of residents of all ages.

Supporting communities to become age-friendly is one of the ways AARP is working to ensure that more communities are healthy, thriving places for families to live, work, learn, and play. In an age-friendly community, policies, services, settings, and structures enable older people to age actively by:

- recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older adults
- anticipating and responding flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences
- respecting decisions and lifestyle choices
- protecting those who are most vulnerable
- and promoting inclusion and contributions in all areas of community life.



Augusta's Community as a Beneficiary

Members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities become part of a global network of communities committed to giving their older residents the opportunity to live rewarding, productive, and safe lives.

AARP views our participation in this global project as a means to advance our public policy goals in a wide range of areas, including mobility and housing, caregiving, health care, community engagement, volunteering, and combating isolation among older people.

Demographic Data Addressing Augusta's Designation

Urbanization (US Census data - 2012), urban areas – defined as densely developed residential, commercial and other nonresidential areas – now account for 80.7 percent of the U.S. population, up from 79.0 percent in 2000.

- The Atlanta region is one of the 10 most populous urbanized areas in the US according to the Census Bureau. Both Macon and Augusta are considered urbanized areas by the Census Bureau.
- Augusta is the second largest city in the state

Georgia data (The American Community Survey 2012)

- 2012 population 9,992,167
- 65 and older = 11.5% (the number of 65 + doubled from 2000 to 2010)
 - Atlanta Region 8.49%
 - Augusta 11.8%
 - Macon/Bibb County 13%
- Disability rate for 65+ = 39.4%
- 26.4% of 60+ in labor force
- 11.6% of 60+ below poverty with additional 11% at 100 to 149% of poverty
- 80% of 60+ own their own home
- Adult obesity rate 29.1% (CDC)

Process for Age-Friendly Admission

AARP is the institutional affiliate for the World Health Organization's program within the United States. Because of that, the World Health Organization will automatically admit any AARP-designated community into its network. The process for admission is as follows:

1. AARP state offices identify cities, towns or counties they believe can commit to a continual cycle of improvement in the eight domains. They inform municipal officials about the program and ascertain their interest.
2. The mayor or municipal administrator writes a letter to the AARP State Office indicating their commitment.



3. AARP advises the World Health Organization of the municipality's intent and the city, town, or county is admitted to the network.
4. A certificate of membership from AARP and the World Health Organization is issued. Public events or ceremonies recognizing the membership can be arranged.
5. Once admitted, the communities must:
 - establish an advisory committee that includes actively engaged older adults
 - secure a local municipal council resolution to actively support, promote, and work toward becoming age-friendly
 - establish a robust and concrete plan of action that responds to the needs identified by older adults in the community
 - commit to measuring activities, reviewing action plan outcomes and reporting on them publicly
6. At the end of the first five years, participating communities submit a report of progress to AARP and the World Health Organization.

The Member List

The following communities have joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities:

- Fayetteville, Arkansas
- Washington, D.C.
- Macon/Bibb, Georgia
- Augusta, Georgia
- Honolulu, Hawaii
- Des Moines, Iowa
- Wichita, Kansas
- Auburn Hills, Michigan
- Highland Park, Michigan
- St. Louis County, Missouri
- New York: Brookhaven, Chemung County, Elmira (city), Elmira (town), Great Neck Plaza, New York City, Suffolk County, Westchester County
- Portland, Oregon
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Texas: Austin, Brownsville, San Antonio
- City of Newport, Vermont

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by



selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our **members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services.** A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. **AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates.** The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.