

## **AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE**

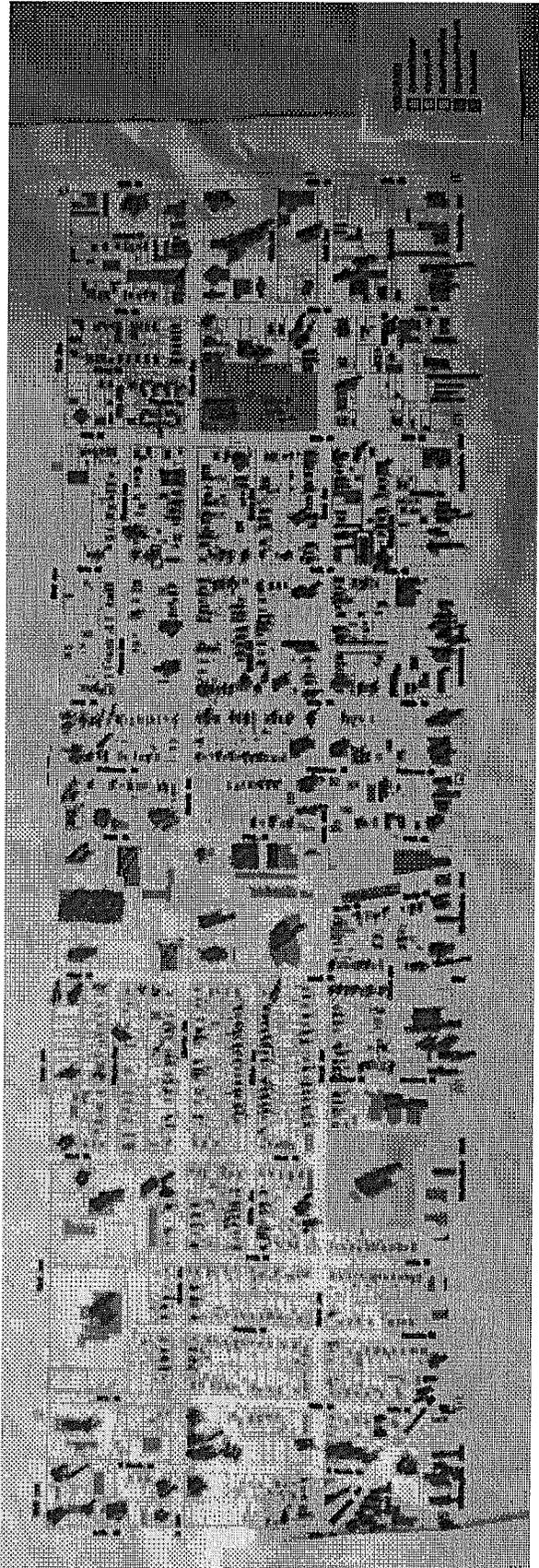
Grants to make communities livable  
for people of all ages

[aarp.org/CommunityChallenge](http://aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)

**“AARP has teams on the ground in communities across the country who hear from mayors, community leaders and local residents about the value of getting quick wins to create long-term change. We developed the AARP Community Challenge to answer that call and help build momentum for more livable communities nationwide.”**

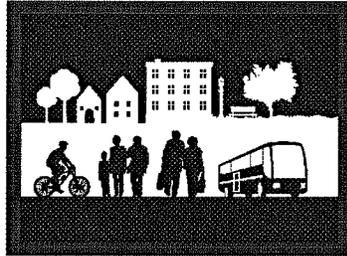
**— Nancy LeaMond**  
AARP Executive Vice President  
Community, State and National Affairs

**AARP**<sup>®</sup>  
Real Possibilities



**2018**

The AARP Community Challenge funds projects that build momentum for local change to improve livability for all residents



**AARP  
COMMUNITY  
CHALLENGE**

Grants to make communities livable for people of all ages  
[aarp.org/CommunityChallenge](http://aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)

**GRANTEES**

**AARP<sup>®</sup>**

Real Possibilities

AARP staff and volunteers are working throughout the nation, engaging and mobilizing community residents, delivering technical assistance and expertise to local leaders and organizations, and supporting the work of the more than 300 towns, cities, counties and states that have enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.

The AARP Community Challenge Grant program is part of the AARP Livable Communities initiative that helps communities become great places to live for residents of all ages.

Each year's challenge typically begins in the early spring with the application period announced in the free, award-winning AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter. The winners have four months to complete the projects.

For the first-ever AARP Community Challenge in 2017, AARP received nearly 1,200 applications and chose 88 winning grantees, through which AARP invested nearly \$780,000 to create change and improve the quality of life for people of all ages in communities across the nation. The "quick action" projects resulted in immediate changes, with the impact continuing throughout the year.

In 2018, for the second challenge, AARP received more than 1,600 applications, resulting in a highly competitive selection process. A total of \$1.3 million has been distributed to fund 129 quick action projects, helping communities make immediate improvements and jump-start long-term progress to support residents of all ages.

The winning grantees from 2018 are described in this booklet. See page 36 to read the eligibility rules.



Real Possibilities

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social welfare organization with a membership of nearly 38 million that empowers people to choose how they live as they age.

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## The 2018 AARP Community Challenge Grantees

**Community projects achieve one or more of the following outcomes:**

- Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options through permanent or temporary solutions that increase connectivity, walkability, bikeability and/or access to public and private transit.
- Create vibrant public places through permanent or temporary solutions that improve open spaces, parks and access to other amenities.
- Support the availability of housing through permanent or temporary solutions that increase accessible and affordable housing options.

**Grants support the following types of projects in the community:**

- Permanent physical improvements
- Temporary demonstrations that lead to long-term change
- New, innovative programming or services

**This summary booklet is organized by state and location, followed by the name of the grantee organization and a brief project description.**

### ▶ ALABAMA

**COMMUNITY: Montgomery**

**GRANTEE: City of Montgomery Planning Department**

Residents of the neighborhoods near Mulberry Street find it difficult to safely cross the roadway, except for two times a day: in the morning, when a crossing guard is on duty for Forest Elementary Schools opening bell, and when the guard returns at the end of the day. Otherwise, neighbors, shoppers and people traveling to and from the campus of Alabama State University choose to drive. To help calm traffic and make walking more inviting, AARP funding was used to create a whimsically colorful crosswalk on Mulberry Street and for the installation of a solar-powered, pedestrian-activated traffic signal with controls on both sides of the street.

**COMMUNITY: Oxford**

**GRANTEE: City of Oxford**

Within the past 30 years, Oxford has experienced unprecedented growth along Interstate 20, U.S. Highway 78, U.S. Highway 431 and State Route 21. The city has proudly adopted the nickname "Crossroads of the Future." This project provided bench seating and bike racks in a three-block radius of the Oxford Senior Citizens Center in downtown Oxford. The center is located in an area of the city that is undergoing renovation and finding new life, with small specialty shops in historic buildings and excitement in the air.

► **ALASKA**

**COMMUNITY: Bristol Bay Borough**

**GRANTEE: Carnal Community Health Center**

The remote region of Bristol Bay receives only about six hours of daylight during the long winter months, and there are few outdoor lit spaces. The Fitness Trail is the central activity spot for the three sections of the borough, yet it lacks adequate lighting. AARP funding provided for installation of wooden solar light posts along the trail, making it safely accessible in winter, plus construction of StoryWalk exhibits — laminated pages from a book that are interspersed along the path. The exhibits can be found on the first half mile of the trail, an optimal distance for small children and older adults.

**COMMUNITY: Kenai**

**GRANTEE: Kenaitze Indian Tribe**

The Old Town Kenai campus is home to the Denaina Wellness Center, as well as the Yotkas Elders Center. Medicinal plants are an important tradition for the Kenaitze Indian peoples, who have inhabited the region for more than 1,000 years. On the campus, AARP funding allowed the construction of six raised-bed garden boxes containing 12 native Alaskan medicinal plants. This has enabled tribal elders to grow the plants without having to stoop over. Each plant species is selected for its medicinal properties and to address specific ailments. Walking-tour maps of the plant species are available to all members of the community plus summer tourists, an important element in the region's economy.

► **ARIZONA**

**COMMUNITY: Tempe**

**GRANTEE: City of Tempe**

In Arizona, approximately 120,000 people are living with Alzheimer's disease, and his number will double in the next decade. In Tempe alone, some 1,500 people over age 65 have dementia. Tempe is working to become the first dementia-friendly city in Arizona. An AARP grant helped move the city toward that goal by:

1. Installing identity and directional signs and wayfinding enhancement at the Tempe library and senior center
2. Creating a training and education video to increase the number of "dementia friends" and "dementia champions"
3. Funding enhancement and assessment of existing programs, activities and services in accordance with dementia-friendly criteria

**COMMUNITY: Warehouse Arts District, Tucson**  
**GRANTEE: Living Streets Alliance**

The historic Warehouse Arts District has many cyclists and pedestrians who cross its car-centric intersection daily. South of the intersection is a dark underpass used by motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. On the other side of the underpass is a transit center serving thousands of mostly older and/or disabled people, plus a low-income housing complex with many older tenants on fixed incomes. AARP provided funding for a temporary transformation of the area over the course of one weekend that demonstrated the possibilities for repurposing roadways. The grant paid for colorful crosswalks to improve motorists' visibility, painted curb extensions to shorten pedestrians' path and pop-up outdoor cafe seating. The makeover inspired people in the district and across the city to think about ways their own streets can be made safer without a huge price tag.

► **ARKANSAS**

**COMMUNITY: Conway**

**GRANTEE: Conway Downtown Partnership**

Conway is home to a vibrant bicycling community and has created extensive bike lanes and trails to accommodate the explosion of riders — particularly those over 50. Downtown Conway serves as the crossroads of many of these trails and lanes and is a shopping and dining hub. AARP provided funding for construction of the Downtown Neighborhood Bike Corral, which consists of two racks that hold 20 bikes. The corral also contains benches and greenery and serves as a public space for residents of all ages to gather and for cyclists to safely park.

**COMMUNITY: Little Rock**

**GRANTEE: City of Little Rock**

Residents want to walk and bike through the Little Rock metro area, but safety concerns are the most frequently cited reason for not doing so. AARP provided funding for the BikePed-Friendly Driver outreach program to educate drivers about how to safely navigate streets — many containing new types of infrastructure — shared by bicyclists and pedestrians. Safer driver behavior is encouraging more people to bike and walk, a bonus for Little Rock residents.

**COMMUNITY: Morrilton**

**GRANTEE: City of Morrilton Parks and Recreation**

Morrilton installed several hammock farms to provide safe places to relax and enjoy the outdoors. The farms were spread around the town and varied from 1- to 10-person units. AARP funding was used to purchase and install the hammocks, including poles, hooks, signage and raised-mulch beds. The hammock farms helped create new vibrant public spaces where people of all ages could relax, enjoy nature and socialize outdoors.

## ► CALIFORNIA

### **COMMUNITY: Bayview-Hunters Point, San Francisco** **GRANTEE: Florence Fang Asian Community Garden**

When the Florence Fang Asian Community Garden in the Bayview Hunters Point section of San Francisco opened in 2014, it filled a need for green open space, being the only San Francisco neighborhood with two freeways cutting through it. Gardening provided a welcome activity for residents, particularly older adults, to get exercise and eat fresh vegetables. The garden is primed for its next phase. AARP funding will increase space to grow crops, improve growing techniques, upgrade distribution facilities, and conduct community outreach to promote healthy eating. The poverty level in this area is double the citywide average.

### **COMMUNITY: Chula Vista**

#### **GRANTEE: City of Chula Vista**

Many people 50 or older in Chula Vista miss out on opportunities to engage their community because of a reluctance to use public transit. AARP funding provided a video demonstrating how to use public transportation. The video was shot during two field trips for older adults, including one to the city's only dedicated senior center. Older adults were also given one-month passes, enabling them to use public transportation for free. The video was distributed throughout the city at locations where those 50 or older gather. The goal was to make them comfortable with using public transportation and thereby increase their participation in community events.

### **COMMUNITY: City Heights, San Diego**

#### **GRANTEE: City Heights Community Development Corporation**

The eastern San Diego neighborhood of City Heights is an enclave for refugees from Somalia and other East African countries. Local residents, particularly ones 50 or older, gather in parking lots and on sidewalks at the busy area along University Avenue, home to shops, markets and mosques. AARP funding allowed the installation of permanent seating and greenery, improving this cultural hub. More "eyes on the street" in this area encourage motorists to reduce their speed, resulting in a greater sense of safety for pedestrians.

### **COMMUNITY: Long Beach**

#### **GRANTEE: Walk Long Beach**

The health benefits of walking are proven, and walking advocacy groups want to get as many of Long Beach's half-million citizens reaping those benefits. With AARP funding, Walk Long Beach held a 10-mile trek from two historic sites with the goal of inspiring people to learn about the health, recreational and functional benefits of walking. The walk employed two temporary crosswalks to demonstrate what enhanced safety and aesthetics could look like and inspire discussion about creating walkable neighborhoods. One other benefit: Interactions with the city's ethnically diverse neighborhoods brought people together at a time when cooperation is in short supply.

### **COMMUNITY: West Sacramento**

#### **GRANTEE: City of West Sacramento**

Feedback from older residents in West Sacramento has targeted transportation as a key concern. It can be a challenge for city buses to meet all of the community's needs. Ride-sharing apps promoting new ways to get around the city are becoming more available. However, older adults aren't always comfortable with this technology. AARP funding enabled older residents to receive instruction and free trial use of two new transit programs: the on-demand, ride-sharing car service Via, with a wheelchair-accessible van available, and the Jump Bikes rental program, which provides dockless, electric-assist bicycles. The city is also analyzing which modes are more effective and working to make prices affordable, particularly for low-income older residents. Broader transportation options are expected to facilitate participation in overall engagement in the community.

## ► COLORADO

### **COMMUNITY: Colorado Springs**

#### **GRANTEE: Innovations in Aging Collaborative**

In the southeast neighborhoods of Colorado Springs, the rates of obesity, diabetes, and fair or poor health exceed the state averages. There are also lower-than-average rates of physical activity. An ideal spot for walking and biking is the Sand Creek Trail, which runs through the heart of these neighborhoods, connecting several hubs. The AARP grant helped reduce trash and overgrown foliage along the trail and allowed the installation of two benches, plus lighting under a bridge to increase safety. The funds were also used to sponsor an intergenerational 5k along the trail in the summer and establish a walking group for older adults. All of this helped support the community's age-friendly initiative.

### **COMMUNITY: Larimer County**

#### **GRANTEE: Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities in Larimer County**

Many residents of Larimer County, some 80 miles north of Denver, travel to the Denver metro area for medical appointments, social engagements and other things. However, driving on Interstate 25 can be daunting, particularly for older adults. AARP funding was used to educate people age 50-plus about public transportation in the area. A core group of 50 riders traveled to Denver by bus while videographers recorded the event. Video clips posted on YouTube were subsequently shown throughout the county to support the community's age-friendly effort. The core riders also spread the word to others about how to fully utilize transportation options in the community.

### **COMMUNITY: Regis and Chaffee Park neighborhoods, Denver**

#### **GRANTEE: WalkDenver**

The neighborhoods adjacent to Federal Boulevard in north Denver have a traffic fatality rate 20 times the average for an urban street in Colorado. They are located near several schools and have high concentrations of older adults and people with disabilities. AARP funding helped create a demonstration of ways to calm traffic. That improved walkability. Data was then collected to determine the most viable permanent methods of improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

## ► CONNECTICUT

**COMMUNITY:** Hebron

**GRANTEE:** The Town Center Project, Inc.

The downtown historic district in Hebron is the heart of the town, within walking distance of many schools, businesses, the senior center and housing developments for older adults. But it is short on resting spots. AARP funding allowed the purchase and installation of wooden Adirondack-style chairs throughout the area. The chairs were painted by volunteers and local artists as part of a public art project that engaged residents of all ages. The ultimate goal was to make downtown Hebron an inviting and vibrant destination.

**COMMUNITY:** New Milford

**GRANTEE:** Town of New Milford

New Milford wanted to enhance the recreational opportunities and walkability of the downtown area for residents over age 50. AARP funding thus allowed the installation of two park benches and two game tables along the walking route from the New Milford Senior Center to Young's Field Park and the Riverwalk. A third game table was installed at the senior center. While these amenities are available to the general public, their proximity to the senior center encourages participation by the residents of the nearby 140 housing units for older adults and the neighborhoods in the downtown area.

**COMMUNITY:** Stafford

**GRANTEE:** Citizen's Advisory Committee and Town of Stafford

Stafford residents, particularly older adults and young families, struggle to find options for safe walking amid so many fast-moving vehicles. Many residents say the creation of safe walking spaces through the development of crosswalks and sidewalks is a priority. AARP funding was therefore used to develop the River Walk Trail project, a six-foot-wide, stone-dust walkway parallel to Middle River in Hyde Park, helping to create a safe corridor for pedestrians.

## ► DELAWARE

**COMMUNITY:** New Castle County

**GRANTEE:** Claymont Community Center

One of the signature features of the Claymont Community Center is the Brandwine Senior Center. More than 300 people age 50 or older, many of them from low-income households, utilize the center's vast array of services each year. Getting to the facility, along with its amenities behind the center, is a struggle, however, due to a steep incline leading to the area. AARP funding created a 300-foot walking path and ramp leading directly to the area. This enables older adults to more easily access the walking track, watch local school sporting events and take their dogs to the dog park.

## ► DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**COMMUNITY:** Washington, D.C.

**GRANTEE:** Capitol Hill Village

There are several new modes of transportation, as well as older ones, that many people 50 or older do not know how to navigate. Examples include an app for hailing ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft, getting walking directions by using a smartphone app and even using MetroAccess, a ride-sharing service for the disabled. With the help of an AARP grant, the Village reached out to older adults to provide instruction through training and handouts aimed at expanding their mobility and confidence in using transportation options. The training took place at two low-income older-adult housing communities and two D.C. villages.

## ► FLORIDA

**COMMUNITY:** Historic Springfield

**GRANTEE:** Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council

Main Street in Historic Springfield — currently undergoing revitalization with new business growth — is heavily used each day by pedestrians, bicyclists, people in wheelchairs and many residents traveling to bus stops. There are only a few bike racks on the street, no bicycle/wheelchair maintenance stations and only one gas station with an air pump, which is often broken. AARP funding provided additional bike racks and air pumps. The grant was also used to purchase much-needed trash cans, which the city has agreed to empty. These improvements have enhanced walkability and bikeability on a street utilized by many residents.

**COMMUNITY:** Little Havana, Miami

**GRANTEE:** Urban Health Partnerships, Inc.

Little Havana residents use public transit three times more than the general population in Miami-Dade County. The corridors of N.W. 7th Street and N.W. 10th Avenue are key routes to major businesses and facilities and are served by multiple county bus lines and free trolley service. Yet there are few benches in the area where residents, particularly older adults, can rest. AARP funding allowed the purchase and installation of 12 benches along these corridors, where 70 shade-providing trees were recently planted.

**COMMUNITY:** Upper Keys, Monroe County

**GRANTEE:** The JOY (Just Older Youth) Center

Monroe County has a high concentration of older adults living alone, and many struggle to find healthy meals. AARP funding helped create an intergenerational community garden at the senior center of the newly opened JOY Center. The eight raised-bed garden boxes and nine planter boxes have been used to grow vegetables for a group meal while, at the same time, bringing older adults and children together to plant, tend and harvest the crops.

## ► GEORGIA

### COMMUNITY: Atlanta

#### GRANTEE: MicroLife Institute

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), also known as backyard bungalows, in-law suites and several other names, are small, secondary structures on the same grounds as, or attached to, a single family house. They are most commonly used to house an older family member, or else the caregiver of that member, while the member lives in the primary house. Or else the ADU provides rental revenue. AARP funding helped construct two ADUs for low-income and/or elderly homeowners in the Atlanta Beltline area.

### COMMUNITY: Augusta

#### GRANTEE: August Recreation & Parks Department

Henry H. Brigham Park serves a large, diverse population with its multitude of activities. But unauthorized traffic in the park, where vehicles are prohibited, is a growing problem. Drivers utilize these passageways to park closer to the picnic shelter or basketball courts. In addition to threatening the safety of park users, the vehicles damage paved and vegetated recreational surfaces. AARP provided funding for 10 bollards and five benches that prevent traffic from entering the park at key locations and serve as resting places for park users. The funds were also used to plant 20 trees at key locations throughout the park and to create a pilot program or outdoor tai chi classes.

## ► HONOLULU

### COMMUNITY: Honolulu

#### GRANTEE: Bikeshare Hawaii

Less than one year after its introduction, Bikeshare Hawaii has become the eighth-most heavily used bike-share system in the U.S. Cycling reduces traffic congestion and carbon emissions and adds an affordable, outdoor physical activity that eliminates like Hawaii's, can be enjoyed year-round. Bikeshare wants to introduce the program to older adults who have been hesitant to try it out. AARP funding was used to launch an introductory workshop for adults age 50-plus. Included was an overview of cycling laws and a group ride along a protected bike lane. The workshop also featured testimonials from members who have used Bikeshare.

### COMMUNITY: Honolulu (City and County)

#### GRANTEE: The Trust for Public Land (Hawaii office)

The three parks within Honolulu's urban core are underutilized because they are not connected. Residents of this area, more than half of whom are over 55, would greatly benefit from more open space and a trail where they can walk and bike. AARP funding provided a temporary connection between these parks through spray chalk, mats, traffic signs and the like. The event was meant to build community interest and demonstrate how inexpensively this area could be enhanced, making it more user-friendly to a large number of local residents.

## ► IDAHO

### COMMUNITY: Caldwell

#### GRANTEE: Destination Caldwell

Destination Caldwell wants to put its low- to middle-income community on the map by making the downtown area a vibrant gathering spot. A more robust downtown area would entice residents to patronize local businesses. AARP paid for the supplies and agenda of two intergenerational events downtown. In the first, local artists helped members of the public create art pieces for display around town. The second, called Ultimate Game Night, involved the creation of life-sized games that could continue to be used during weekly game nights.

### COMMUNITY: Pocatello

#### GRANTEE: NeighborhoodWorks Pocatello

When the six low- to moderate-income neighborhoods of Pocatello want to gather to work on an outdoor improvement project or hold a block party, the largest obstacle is always finding the necessary equipment, which is scattered in various locations. An AARP grant helped purchase an enclosed trailer to store and transport equipment, including tables, chairs, canopies and a propane grill, to these events. The trailer is available for use by groups throughout the community, but priority goes to the low- to moderate-income neighborhoods.

### COMMUNITY: Woodland

#### GRANTEE: Carrot Ridge Volunteer Fire District

The farming and logging community of Woodland built a new fire station, constructed entirely by volunteers and funded by donations. The station also serves as a meeting space and a training center and home for the volunteer fire department. The tract of land was donated by a resident who stipulated that it be used to promote the community and that it welcome all community members. Woodland (population 300) recently had an influx of new residents, most of them retirees. AARP funding helped furnish the building with the purchase of eight foldable tables, 40 chairs, a refrigerator and an oven.

## ► ILLINOIS

### COMMUNITY: Chicago

#### GRANTEE: Chicago Department of Transportation

People Spots are temporary platforms adjacent to sidewalks, typically within existing parking lanes. By expanding the sidewalks, they create seasonal space for outdoor seating and dining. People Spots help increase pedestrian volume, foster walkability, promote economic development and strengthen a community's sense of place. Many communities are interested in installing People Spots, but can't afford to hire a state certified professional for their design. AARP funding allowed the construction of a People Spot in an economically challenged neighborhood in Chicago as well as the development of a standard People Spot design that is available online for free so other communities can replicate the effort.

► ILLINOIS (CONT.)

COMMUNITY: Chicago

GRANTEE: Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), also known as backyard bungalows, in-law suites and several other names, are small, secondary structures on the same grounds as, or attached to, a single family house. They are most commonly used to house an older family member, or else the caregiver of that member, while the member lives in the primary house. Or else ADUs provides rental revenue. Residents in at least 11 towns in the Chicago area have expressed interest in learning about ADUs. An AARP grant was used to develop a demonstration of an ADU in the Chicago area and create three educational workshops on the topic, plus relevant materials, for the public and elected officials. The workshops covered cost, design and how the ADUs can be used to help adults age in place.

► INDIANA

COMMUNITY: Gary

GRANTEE: City of Gary Redevelopment Commission

Downtown Gary has a large population of older adults and several efforts underway to revitalize public space. The area of the Genesis Towers senior living facility is an informal gathering spot, and changes to the area could increase its vitality. An AARP grant was used to help convert that space into a beautiful park for older adults and people of all ages. Among the new features being developed are ADA-accessible pathways, seating, signage, lighting and raised-bed garden boxes. The park will also host outdoor events and activities for the whole community, but with a focus on those 50 and older.

COMMUNITY: Indianapolis

GRANTEE: IndyGo

Indianapolis has made significant investments in expanding access to transportation in recent years, with more bus routes and walking and biking connections. However, it can be difficult for public buses to cover the entirety of a city; Indiana Avenue Apartments and Goodwin Plaza Apartments — low-rent public housing projects for older adults — are in a neighborhood that does not have direct access to public buses, making it difficult for residents to get to medical appointments, the grocery store, recreational facilities or anywhere else. However, ride-sharing companies like Uber and Lyft provide adequate coverage to the area. AARP funding helped create a pilot program through which residents can receive a ride-share credit for local trips. The grant also provided resources to help residents who do not own a smartphone to book rides.

► IOWA

COMMUNITY: Avoca

GRANTEE: Avoca Public Library

The Avoca Public Library hosted the National Library Summer Reading Program and wanted to broaden the audience by adding interactive music to the event. AARP funding allowed the purchase of Freenotes Harmony Park oversize instruments — real, playable instruments like xylophones that double as sculptures and are often installed in playgrounds, community gardens and other public places. These instruments, meant for outdoor use, have a permanent home in front of the library, where they're accessible to the community. The spot is becoming a destination for families, groups from assisted-living facilities in the area and disabled adults, some of whom visit the library regularly.

COMMUNITY: Keokuk

GRANTEE: Keokuk Parks Foundation

The abandoned tennis court complex in Keokuk is an eyesore and not usable. AARP funding converted the space into six pickleball courts — pickleball being the fastest growing sport in the U.S. This paddle game is particularly popular with older adults because it involves moderate exercise and is not hard on the joints. Usage of the courts is free, as are the introductory lessons that are being offered. The funding also provided for a water fountain, trash can and four benches. Equipment can be checked out at the nearby library.

COMMUNITY: Manning

GRANTEE: Main Street Manning

Main Street, with its ADA-accessible, midblock entry points, has become a popular gathering spot for neighbors of all ages, including residents of the nearby Plaza Nursing Home. AARP funding added ambience to the area with the purchase of 10 light structures that were designed by students at Iowa State University.

COMMUNITY: Woodbine

GRANTEE: Woodbine Main Street

Woodbine's Main Street was recognized as a National Great American Main Street in 2014 by the National Main Street Center, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. AARP helped showcase the town's historical past by funding an interpretive sign program. The signs consist of photos and text mounted on buildings and on stands in parks, telling the history of the community. The funds were also used to print walking guides for residents and tourists as part of the organization's mission to promote Woodbine as a walkable community.

## ► KANSAS

### COMMUNITY: Gardner

#### GRANTEE: City of Gardner

The citizens of Gardner want to maintain the traditions of their small but fast-growing community while creating new spaces to meet the changing needs of residents and visitors. AARP funding helped create a portable parklet as a sidewalk extension in the heart of the community, offering a place to rest in the shade near many facilities. The readily accessible parklet included shade canopies, removable seating, plants, bicycle parking and art. It encouraged outdoor gatherings and created awareness for the large-scale greenery planned for the area.

### COMMUNITY: Johnson County

#### GRANTEE: Parks & Recreation Foundation of Johnson County

With the goal of getting more people to bike to school, work and for recreation, more bicycles are needed for the new BikeWalk Share Program. AARP funding was used to support the launch of four bike-share locations, including the purchase of 70 Smart Bikes, seven kiosks, and 17 bike racks in four locations. The county's older-adult population is expected to grow by 144 percent over the next 20 years.

## ► KENTUCKY

### COMMUNITY: Danville

#### GRANTEE: Heart of Danville, Inc.

Public art displays had always been prohibited in downtown Danville. But that regulation changed recently, and the Heart of Danville, which has supported more than 100 major renovation projects, has plans to install the community's first mural. AARP funds paid for the materials for the mural, which has been painted on the side of a downtown building in a parking lot. The organization has already enlisted a national artist, who invited the public to participate in a "community painting day." The mural will be the first in what is planned as an artist alley.

### COMMUNITY: Lexington

#### GRANTEE: Division of Aging and Disability Services

The city's older-adult population is rapidly growing, but, as in many communities, providing a range of accessible and affordable housing is a challenge. Eighty-five percent of the city's older adults want to age in place, yet many need in-home support in order to do so. And an affordable housing option is the addition of an ADU: a secondary dwelling on the same lot as the primary dwelling. AARP funding is used to create a manual for homeowners and builders on planning for and constructing an ADU in the Lexington area.

### COMMUNITY: Louisville

#### GRANTEE: Louisville Metro Government

Louisville has invested in expanding the walkability and bikeability of downtown in recent years, with additional changes to street layouts continuing. One of those roads is 9th Street, which, at a width of 150 feet, has the feel of a thoroughfare. AARP funding was used to improve the safety and aesthetics at the large intersection of 9th Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard. Funds have been used to upgrade crosswalks and explore sidewalk expansions in order to decrease crossing distances. The funds have also been applied to the purchase of benches for the underutilized green space in the median around the existing piece of public artwork. This created a new public space for nearby residents, who have declared that "a place to sit and rest" in the area one of their preferred amenities.

## ► LOUISIANA

### COMMUNITY: Deridder

#### GRANTEE: City of Deridder

Downtown Deridder is the community hub, where government offices, the library, a farmers market and just about every social and basic-needs facility is contained within three city blocks. An AARP grant is being used to create new ADA-accessible sidewalks, easily identifiable faux brick crosswalks and wayfinding signage. These upgrades benefit the entire city by improving walkability and bikeability.

### COMMUNITY: North Baton Rouge

#### GRANTEE: Center for Planning Excellence

One third of the population of this low-income neighborhood is age 50 or over. While improvements to Longfellow Park are planned, the absence of crosswalks, lighting and last-mile connectivity are barriers to safe access, separating the nearby neighborhoods from both the park and other amenities. AARP funding is helping provide "missing links" by adding ADA-accessible high-visibility crosswalks, relevant signage and lighting at key intersections near Longfellow Park.

## ► MAINE

### COMMUNITY: Blue Hill

#### GRANTEE: Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Blue Hill is the commercial center of the region and the largest town center of the nine-town region. Most residents visit Blue Hill regularly for shopping, employment, medical care and entertainment. An AARP grant is funding construction of a 1,700-foot trail wide enough and stable enough for users who need a more substantial, smoother surface. Following Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines, the trail will accommodate pedestrian traffic, strollers and wheelchairs. In addition, there will be benches strategically placed for those who need a place to rest and rejuvenate.

► **MAINE (CONT.)**

**COMMUNITY: Eastport**

**GRANTEE: City of Eastport**

The four-acre beachfront area that was Cony Park became a landfill in the 1960s. Eastport residents reclaimed the space in 2015. Believing in the importance of this park, volunteers of all ages donated time and materials to convert the landfill back to a park. An AARP grant is improving the park even more by enabling the purchase and installation of three oversized, fiberglass outdoor musical instruments. The music park is becoming a draw for residents of all ages, including those from neighboring communities.

**COMMUNITY: Gardiner**

**GRANTEE: City of Gardiner Age-Friendly Committee and Gardiner Public Works Department**

While Gardiner's brick sidewalks add to its historic charm, some can be a safety hazard for people walking through town. One of those sidewalks is near the downtown public library, an especially high-traffic area for older adults and families. An AARP grant is being used to purchase paving material for the area's sidewalk to be installed by the library and a pop-up demonstration identifying options or future sidewalks. This project is making sidewalks safer for all while building community support for future sidewalk improvement projects.

**COMMUNITY: Raymond**

**GRANTEE: Raymond Village Library**

The library wants to make gardening more accessible to the town's 1,100 older adults. An AARP grant funded the creation of an adaptive community garden so that they can garden while standing up. Among the site's features are four waist-high planters, one garden bed at wheelchair- and scooter-accessible height, four benches with backs and a shaded area. And of course there are the fresh vegetables, which are donated to a local food pantry. The garden is located next to the Children's Garden, and intergenerational activities are part of the plan.

**COMMUNITY: Readfield**

**GRANTEE: Town of Readfield Age Friendly Committee**

The Fairgrounds, formerly the site of a major agricultural fair, is becoming a hub of the community, with multiple uses, and the infrastructure serves many groups, including older adults and people with disabilities. To make the space more accessible, AARP funding was used to purchase two sets of low, three-tier aluminum bleachers accommodating up to 60 spectators at the recently completed ball field. The field also serve as a venue for concerts. The funds were also earmarked for two eight-foot picnic tables near the ball field to provide additional seating and eating options, two 10-slot bike racks to encourage cycling, and four benches with backs and arm rests for placement along the trail network that runs through the site.

**COMMUNITY: Saco**

**GRANTEE: Age Friendly Saco**

Though Saco has two public beaches, covering seven miles, residents who use wheelchairs, canes or walkers cannot access the shoreline due to the lack of a stable surface on which they can safely travel. The Bayview public beach took an initial step toward accommodating them with its recent construction of accessible public restrooms. And now an AARP grant has made possible three ADA-compliant beach mats, which provide a nonslip, semi-rigid roll-out walking surface. The mats take individuals directly from the handicapped parking spaces to the high-water mark on the beach.

► **MARYLAND**

**COMMUNITY: Annapolis**

**GRANTEE: Annapolis Arts District**

This Arts District is a destination for city residents and tourists. But a lack of bike racks limited the number of visitors. A park, community center and housing for older adults were among the destinations that did not have one. An AARP grant paid for locally designed and manufactured artistic racks and their installation throughout the district. This has increased the opportunities for exercise, shopping and peace of mind for bicyclists when they are away from their wheels.

**COMMUNITY: Berlin**

**GRANTEE: Town of Berlin/Berlin Main Street**

Residents and tourists descend on Berlin during the 40 outdoor events and festivals held on Main Street each year. Several residential facilities for older adults bus their residents into town for these popular events. It may not be a problem for young people to relax and eat a sandwich while sitting on the curb, but for the 50-plus population, the lack of real seats can cut short a festival visit or be a deterrent to attending in the first place. AARP funding was used to purchase chairs and tables, making Main Street events much more accessible.

**COMMUNITY: District Heights**

**GRANTEE: City of District Heights**

The recently opened Youth Services Bureau building includes a patio rooftop space for gatherings, fundraisers and other activities. The space also serves as a quiet space for reflection. AARP funding was used to purchase a gazebo, three tables with chairs, a four-piece lounge set and outdoor storage benches. In addition, four all-weather rocking chairs were purchased for the front porch of the building. These furnishings have added to the comfort and aesthetics of the facility, providing a communal space for people of all ages.

► **MARYLAND (CONT.)**

**COMMUNITY: Old Severna Park**

**GRANTEE: Olde Severna Park Improvement Association, Inc.**

Emergreen Road has a sidewalk along its entire length, but only on one side. With nearly 18,000 vehicles using the road daily, and a 30-mile-per-hour speed limit that is commonly exceeded, the current white paint markings and standard crosswalk warning signs needed to be bolstered. An AARP grant funded one LED flashing pedestrian crossing warning sign and one handheld neon warning flag at each of two key crosswalks, one within 40 yards of Severna Park Elementary School. These systems trigger higher-visibility warnings to approaching vehicles. The hundreds of pedestrians who use the road daily benefit, particularly older adults and children, who are often unable to quickly cross the street.

► **MASSACHUSETTS**

**COMMUNITY: East Bridgewater**

**GRANTEE: Old Colony YMCA**

The Hiking Viking Trail is a five-mile loop that begins at the Town Hall, links to the Council on Aging headquarters and ends at the YMCA. The trail is used by people of all ages, but community members have identified changes that can make the trail more age-friendly. These include adding additional benches along the route, removing roots and brush, and adding wayfinding signage. AARP funding provided the benches, added planks to portions of paths for a smoother walk and to prevent falls, and signage to guide walkers along the continuation of the trail.

**COMMUNITY: Lowell**

**GRANTEE: Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell, Inc.**

In 2011, Habitat for Humanity expanded to include a Critical Home Repair (CHR) program, which addresses issues that present a safety risk or limit access within the home. The program serves low-income homeowners, particularly older adults, veterans, the disabled and families with children. Currently, there is just one trailer containing tools, usually kept at the Habitat's building site. An AARP grant enabled the CHR to employ its own trailer and tools and take on projects without needing to schedule around building projects. More homes can now be serviced, particularly those of older adults who want to age in place.

**COMMUNITY: Springfield**

**GRANTEE: Pioneer Valley Transit Authority**

Two thirds of Springfield's transit riders lack other means of transportation, and many need a place to sit while waiting for transportation. To help improve the infrastructure, AARP funding paid for 10 benches for three neighborhoods where the poverty level is greater than 50 percent.

► **MICHIGAN**

**COMMUNITY: Detroit**

**GRANTEE: Eden Gardens Block Club**

The Eden Gardens community, located in a district where 35 percent of households live in poverty, is home to more than 500 children. However, the playgrounds in the area can only be reached by crossing two busy highways, and the nearest city park is two to three miles away. An AARP grant funded a playground right in the neighborhood and allowed the purchase of swings, slides and monkey bars.

**COMMUNITY: Flint**

**GRANTEE: Carriage Town Neighborhood Association**

Carriage Town is the walkable gateway from the neighborhood to the downtown restaurants and entertainment. Many residents, especially older adults, like to traverse the neighborhood on foot and have expressed a desire that a safe area around the footbridge that crosses the Flint River be created. Safety is a priority with the residents, who feel the lighting is inadequate. They also have cited the need to rest at the midpoint of their walk. AARP funds were used to buy two new LED streetlights and two benches, making the area more safe and accessible.

**COMMUNITY: Rochester Hills**

**GRANTEE: City of Rochester Hills**

Rochester Hills is making investments to improve intergenerational public space in the city. The objective for this project was to foster relationships among community members, particularly the more than 25,000 residents age 50 or over, by creating Rochester Hills' first multigenerational play and activity area. The site selected works well for adults 50-plus, with ample nearby parking, restrooms, paved paths and benches, plus a picnic area. An AARP grant helped acquire outdoor fitness equipment designed for older adults and also suitable for younger people, encouraging multigenerational interaction. Contributing to this is the area's proximity to a large children's playground.

► **MINNESOTA**

**COMMUNITY: Burnsville**

**GRANTEE: City of Burnsville**

The city has put in place a new pedestrian crosswalk policy and has identified crosswalks in need of the highest level of safety upgrades. These crosswalks require maximum visibility due to heavy, high-speed traffic. AARP funding is improving the safety of crosswalks here by allowing the purchase and installation of pedestrian-activated flashing beacons. All pedestrians and cyclists in the community benefit from these improvements.

► **MINNESOTA (CONT.)**

**COMMUNITY: East Saint Paul**

**GRANTEE: District 1 Community Council**

The city is upgrading a section of Margaret Street for pedestrians and cyclists. It is the final segment of a 27-mile bike loop that connects all parts of the city and makes it safer to travel through them by bike. This residential road is home to many families and older adults, who greatly benefit from the project's aim to slow traffic down. One part of the initiative is the installation of traffic circles with gardens at the center of five intersections. An AARP grant paid for the gardens. These gardens, planted by community members, enhance the aesthetics and make this a more engaged community.

**COMMUNITY: Eight municipalities**

**GRANTEE: Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota**

ikeMN's Bikeable Community Workshop program is one of a kind. It provides leaders and advocates with the resources to make their towns accessible to biking. An AARP grant funded workshops in eight of the municipalities that applied. The workshops help community members and leaders take simple steps to make bicycling more convenient and safe. Living in a bike-friendly community provides outsized benefits for all residents, particularly those over age 50.

**COMMUNITY: New Ulm**

**GRANTEE: Downtown Action Team/Minnesota Main Street**

The community's hub is the 12-block downtown district, home to many businesses and residences, including two apartment buildings for older adults. However, the area had just two benches per block. To make it more welcoming, an AARP grant allowed the benches to be moved so that they would face each other, and a table was added in between, making better use of the space. One side of the table remains open for use by those in wheelchairs. The back of each bench has a picture and a story about downtown's history, attached in a weatherproof frame, creating a self-guided walking tour through the district.

► **MISSISSIPPI**

**COMMUNITY: Gulfport**

**GRANTEE: City of Gulfport, Office of Economic Development**

Twelve years after being destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, the once-vibrant low-income area around Brickyard Bayou Park languished — at least until the AARP-funded Bark Park was built in 2017. The overwhelming response from the community demonstrated the need for additional outdoor activities in the neighborhood. Once more an AARP grant, in conjunction with other funds, aided the community. This time it was for construction of an outdoor amphitheater-style classroom, plus benches and ground-surface materials for a nature trail connecting the new structure to the Bark Park. There are five schools within a two-mile radius that these amenities serve. They also provide space for older adults to exercise and congregate.

**COMMUNITY: Jackson**

**GRANTEE: City of Jackson**

Congress Street in downtown Jackson has a dense population of people, many over the age of 50, who live and/or work in the area. The city wants to create a more vibrant street life and last year launched an experimental program to that end. One block of Congress Street was closed during lunchtime and food vendors and musicians were welcomed in. In an effort to expand on the program, an AARP grant was used in 2018 to purchase furniture, planters and landscaping.

► **MISSOURI**

**COMMUNITY: Kansas City**

**GRANTEE: Better Block KC**

A temporary "mobility lane" was set up along Oak Street to demonstrate how traffic can be improved and safety increased by creating space for bicyclists as well as electric scooters, or e-scooters, and other new forms of transportation. An AARP grant helped section off a lane through this highly visible and heavily populated neighborhood for a month. The goal was to reduce traffic speeds, increase parking, enhance crosswalks and add sidewalk seating, in addition to the lane for travelers.

**COMMUNITY: Raymore**

**GRANTEE: City of Raymore**

Municipal Circle is the "City Center," which houses a number of government offices. An AARP-funded project improved pedestrian safety and traffic flow while increasing parking capacity. The AARP grant specifically paid for the following: construction of a paved, clearly demarcated crosswalk connecting City Hall to the new community building; installation of two solar-powered flashing beacons and ADA ramps; and improved pedestrian lighting.

## ► MONTANA

### COMMUNITY: Browning

#### GRANTEE: Blackfeet Eagle Shield Center

The Blackfeet Reservation, headquartered in Browning, is home to the largest Native American population in Montana. The Eagle Shield senior center serves the native reservation and is a hub for activity in the community. But the community lacks outdoor venues. An AARP grant helped create a park next to the center — the first park for older adults on the reservation. The funds were used for fencing, vegetation and canopy swings. Now the Blackfeet elders have a place where they can exercise, socialize, maintain their tradition of storytelling and plant a community garden.

### COMMUNITY: Helena

#### GRANTEE: Bike Walk Montana

This project developed a trailer with a kit for staging pop-up demonstrations on how to make a neighborhood safe for biking and walking. The AARP grant funded the trailer along with materials such as markers for temporary bike lanes, parklets, roundabouts and crosswalks. Two initial demonstrations were staged in Helena — one for a protected bike lane along a busy artery, the second for a crosswalk at a busy spot on the Centennial Trail. The two showed how safety, comfort and mobility could all be easily improved for people of all ages and abilities.

### COMMUNITY: Missoula

#### GRANTEE: Missoula Parks and Recreation

Rx Trails is a program that collaborates with medical providers, physical therapists, nutritionists and health care facilities to get patients to combat obesity and other chronic health conditions by walking. Rx Trails are located in places that have amenities such as benches, water fountains, ADA-approved restrooms, flat trails, minimal street crossings and convenient parking. While the trails are open to all ages, there is an emphasis on the older community and those facing significant health challenges. An AARP grant was used to enhance two larger trails with existing infrastructure, adding wayfinding signage, mile marker plaques, program incentives, benches and printed maps.

## ► NEBRASKA

### COMMUNITY: Omaha

#### GRANTEE: City of Omaha

The project was intended to aid a busy, low-income northeast neighborhood, home to a high-rise housing structure for older adults, a Salvation Army Community Center and several other activity centers. An AARP grant was used to purchase two benches or heavily used bus stops, concrete planters suitable for gardening from a standing or sitting position, and a temporary chalkboard wall on which residents are invited to suggest additional uses for the site.

### COMMUNITY: Omaha

#### GRANTEE: ONE Omaha

A large knowledge gap about policies and procedures for community development exists throughout Omaha. The goal of NeighborFest is to increase the activism of young and inexperienced leaders through mentorship with experienced community leaders. This daylong event includes project demonstrations that teach residents to identify and address neighborhood problems. An AARP grant helped fund demonstrations on planting trees; adding wayfinding signs and potted plants; getting supplies for a Little Free Library; and arranging installations of public art.

## ► NEVADA

### COMMUNITY: Winnemucca

#### GRANTEE: Age- and Dementia-Friendly Winnemucca and Humboldt County

Winnemucca is adding a children's playground and splash pad at a new park. An AARP grant paid for an outdoor fitness cluster and walking/jogging route to the park. The fitness cluster area includes instruction sign posts with numerous exercise stations. Ultimately, that will include equipment such as push-up bars, a sit-up bench and and the like. On the walking path distances are marked and workout stations are being added along the route. With the splash pad and playground nearby, grandparents can watch their grandchildren play as they engage in their own exercise regimen.

## ► NEW HAMPSHIRE

### COMMUNITY: Manchester

#### GRANTEE: Manchester Connects

There has been strong community support for developing more recreational space along the Merrimack River. Arms Park is the only city park adjacent to the river. This project was designed to supply fixtures such as tables, chairs, umbrellas, planters and community message boards to create a gathering and event space at the park, the city's primary access point to the river. An AARP grant helped reach the goal of creating a venue that sets a standard for age-friendliness in the region.

► **NEW JERSEY**

**COMMUNITY: Bloomfield**

**GRANTEE: Bloomfield Department of Health and Human Services**

WALK Bloomfield is a program that encourages residents of all ages, particularly older adults, to walk more. Participants mark their progress at “JobClocks” located throughout the township, thereby establishing their walking paths. An AARP grant was used to purchase and install seven JobClocks, helping the BDHHS increase participation in local walking groups.

**COMMUNITY: Bound Brook**

**GRANTEE: Healthier Somerset-Somerset Health Care Foundation**

A group of students proposed building parklets to promote intergenerational interactions in the community. AARP funding helped pay for supplies to build the parklets throughout the town. The mobile, inviting spaces encourage interactions among all community members while creating additional green spaces.

► **NEW MEXICO**

**COMMUNITY: Albuquerque**

**GRANTEE: Historic Bridge MainStreet South Valley**

The largely Hispanic neighborhood around Bridge and Isleta boulevards has rich cultural traditions but grew blighted over time. Now it is slowly being revitalized. An AARP grant aided the regeneration, specifically at La Familia Growers Market, where 75 percent of the farm vendors are over the age of 50. By purchasing tables, chairs, a storage shed, cafe lights, materials to make a permanent horno (traditional adobe outdoor oven) and other materials, the market is attempting to become a community gathering place. In addition, investing in the market is providing greater access to fresh, local produce for those older adults who receive food assistance.

► **NEW YORK**

**COMMUNITY: Bethlehem**

**GRANTEE: Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy**

Art of the Trail’s mission is to provide art installations along the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail, enriching users’ lives and encouraging further use. AARP funding backed the installation of a mural on the piers of the Cherry Avenue Bridge, which passes over the trail. The long-term goal is to install at least one mural a year on a building structure along the trail. Rail trails are ideal locations for public art projects as they create natural themes that can be captured in the artwork.

**COMMUNITY: Binghamton**

**GRANTEE: Center for Technology and Innovation**

The Big Map Mura, part of TechWorks!, is a destination experience meant to attract residents and visitors alike. AARP funds were used to install a large-format topographic map of Central New York on the face of a structure on the Chenango River Trail. The mural reinforces community identity and stimulates viewers of all generations to consider the geographic and social context that led to the development of the many technology companies with roots in the central part of the state.

**COMMUNITY: Castleton-on-Hudson**

**GRANTEE: Village of Castleton-on-Hudson**

Volunteers at the Repair Café fix broken items brought in by residents. The cafe was on the second floor of a building with no elevator — a challenge for the many volunteers over 50 and the few who are disabled. However, it recently moved to the first floor of a building nearby. AARP funds were used to add amenities to an adjacent vacant lot, including a bench, a planter and, for those who don’t use social media, a community bulletin board.

**COMMUNITY: Dryden**

**GRANTEE: Town of Dryden**

The goal was to add amenities to a recently opened section of the trail linking Dryden and the village of Freeville. AARP funding provided three gable-rooted kiosks displaying maps, wayfinding information and trail rules, plus seven park benches near the kiosks and at intervals along the 2.9-mile trail section. These amenities increase connectivity, walkability, bikeability and access to public and private transit along the trail, benefiting community members of all ages.

**COMMUNITY: Freeport**

**GRANTEE: Long Island Arts Council at Freeport**

A new mural was needed to transform an underutilized, unappealing public space into a place for residents to gather, talk and enjoy art. An AARP grant made it possible, from selecting the location and artist through completion of the mural. Introducing a vibrant, site-specific mural within the town has encouraged residents to relax, interact with one another, shop within the community and more.

**COMMUNITY: South Bronx**

**GRANTEE: BronxWorks**

BronxWorks recently got stewardship of the Morris Avenue Community Garden, which had long been chained shut and overgrown with weeds. AARP funding was used for the start-up phase of the project: clearing out the garden, restoring the shed and gardening equipment, and purchasing and installing new plant beds and benches. The project is being run out of BronxWorks’ senior center, across from the garden. Because of anti-predator laws, adults are not allowed on local playgrounds unless they are accompanying a child. Thus, the garden benches provide much-needed outdoor seating.

## ► NORTH CAROLINA

### COMMUNITY: Charlotte

#### GRANTEE: City of Charlotte

Before the advent of air conditioning, the Southern home was not complete without a front porch containing a swing. Neighbors could build community, communicating from porch to porch. That's still the case at bus stops. An AARP grant funded two ADA-compliant porch swings at the stops along Belmont Avenue, the community's primary bus route, where many older adults rely heavily on public transit. The swings create a unifying, communal atmosphere, turning turning back the clock.

### COMMUNITY: Durham

#### GRANTEE: Habitat for Humanity of Durham, Inc.

The Repairs Program services some 55 owner-occupied homes a year for low-income, disabled and/or older people. The program has helped countless residents live in place with dignity. An AARP grant funded the purchase of a previously owned work truck that will enable the program to service an additional 20 homes per year. Interest in the program — there is currently a waiting list of 60 homeowners and dozens of phone inquiries weekly — shows the need to increase the number of home owners who can be helped.

### COMMUNITY: Iredell County

#### GRANTEE: United Way of Iredell County, Inc.

Of the top 10 causes of death in Iredell County, 7 are related to chronic conditions. One of the most effective ways of preventing or delaying the onset of such conditions is maintaining physical activity. An AARP grant helped fund a quarter-mile fitness walking trail in East Iredell Lions Club Community Park, which will be the first and only accessible walking trail in this area once open. The trail could become a life-changing entity for many residents in the community, which traditionally has lacked such resources.

## ► NORTH DAKOTA

### COMMUNITY: Buxton

#### GRANTEE: Buxton Park Board

A new safe and modern playground be an effective, welcoming amenity for this community of 300 (with 200 nearby rural residents). It has been 25 years since the last playground was built, so an AARP grant played a vital role in the community, helping develop a new playground with intergenerational equipment and soft landing material. The playground will be near recently funded handicap-accessible park shelters.

### COMMUNITY: Grand Forks

#### GRANTEE: City of Grand Forks

A pop-up demonstration in the heart of Grand Forks was designed to show how walking and biking can be improved and how streets can be better utilized prior to investing significant resources. Projects are most successful when there are representatives from several organizations involved, as was the case with this one. An AARP grant helped fund curb extensions, crosswalk stop bars, a bike corral and conversion from front-in angle parking to reverse-angle parking. The project was intended to employ short-term, low-cost, scalable interventions to promote long-term changes that would benefit all residents.

### COMMUNITY: Hettinger

#### GRANTEE: Hettinger Area Chamber of Commerce

The community is working to attract more residents to the plaza at the core of Main Street which has greenery, tables, and a sound system. An AARP grant would fund the purchase of several outdoor games, including lasso golf, bocce ball, washer toss, and giant chess and checkers. Making games available in the center of town, where many elderly people take their daily walks, is a way to activate current public space and engage intergenerational social activity.

► OHIO

**COMMUNITY: Cleveland**

**GRANTEE: Silver Spokes: Cycling For Seniors With Bike Cleveland**

Many older adults in this area are interested in cycling but are concerned about how to navigate newly installed bike lanes. An AARP grant helped fund a series of bike events, enabling adults 50 and over to try different styles of age-friendly bikes. They also learned about safe bike-riding techniques and bike repair. In addition, the project aimed to teach older drivers — fewer than 20 percent of whom have had driver-education refresher courses — how to navigate the lanes and safely share the streets with cyclists. Through these events, cycling is being introduced, or reintroduced, as a healthy physical activity and an alternate mode of transportation for Clevelanders 50 and over.

**COMMUNITY: Findlay**

**GRANTEE: City of Findlay**

Pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in the country, particularly with older adults, due to its low impact yet aerobic nature. This project added amenities to a new, eight-court pickleball facility in the main city park. There are only two other primary places to play the sport in Findlay, both either fee-based or age-restricted. An AARP grant funded windcreens, small bleacher seating and landscaping for the new courts. These additions greatly enhanced the court area and have helped attract eagues and tournaments.

**COMMUNITY: Ohio City, Cleveland**

**GRANTEE: Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority**

This neighborhood is experiencing a revival, and there are efforts underway to insure that residents of Riverview Tower — a nearby low-income public-housing structure in which all residents are 50 or older — are part of the revitalization. The project calls for the conversion of an unused sand volleyball court behind the tower into a community garden. The AARP grant made amenities such as a raised-bed garden, benches and an accessible path possible. In addition, the vegetables and fruit seeds purchased yield an estimated 500 pounds of fresh produce annually, which is being used to ensure that Riverview Tower residents have greater access to healthy food.

► OKLAHOMA

**COMMUNITY: Vinita**

**GRANTEE: City of Vinita**

The project converted a seldom-used alley into a walking, bike riding and public gathering. The AARP grant helped fund street bollards, tables, benches, planters, lighting, signage and art displays. The Vinita Hotel is within one block of the site and is currently being renovated for older-adult housing.

► OREGON

**COMMUNITY: The Heights, Hood River**

**GRANTEE: City of Hood River**

The Streets Alive project closed parts of the Heights neighborhood to traffic for four hours to promote walking and bicycling. An AARP grant helped fund a demonstration of traffic-calming devices as well as pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Intended as a recurring event, the program is intended to galvanize public support for transportation improvements and promote walking and biking as viable, healthy transportation options.

**COMMUNITY: Cully Portland**

**GRANTEE: Verde**

While much of Verde's work promotes environmental health in low-income communities, such improvements often attract development that replaces low-income housing with new, more expensive residences. To counteract potential displacement, the Mobile Home Repair Extravaganza was launched. The program organizes residents from the neighborhoods six mobile-home parks to help each other with critical home repairs. Residents are trained by volunteer experts. Funding from AARP helped purchase supplies and materials to repair six to eight homes, with priority given to older adults, families with children and residents with disabilities. When residents work together like this, it's been found, it not only improves their homes but their relationships with one another.

**COMMUNITY: Prineville**

**GRANTEE: Crook County on the Move**

Forty-one percent of the county's population is over 50. There is also a large population here of disabled veterans. Many older adults want to walk more in the community, but need seating and places to rest along the way. So, with the aid of an AARP grant, benches were added to a 1.5-mile stretch of walking path that had recently been refurbished. The funds went toward the purchase and installation of the first 4 of 20 planned benches, helping make the pathway accessible to the entire community.

## ► PENNSYLVANIA

### COMMUNITY: Beechview

#### GRANTEE: Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging

While Beechview is a site of tremendous diversity, a fissure has opened between lifelong residents and newcomers, many of whom are young professionals or immigrants. This community design project sparked much-needed dialogue among all members of the neighborhood by creating a public art intervention at the local senior center. AARP funding was used to engage residents in Color Beechview, which had two goals: creating a colorful, welcoming public space and building connections among residents in this neighborhood as it undergoes rapid demographic change.

### COMMUNITY: Philadelphia

#### GRANTEE: Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Associations Coalition

The community's elders program serves Asian emigrants and refugees age 60 or over. Ninety-eight percent of the elders are low-income, and 95 percent are not fluent in English. This project created Elders Story Cafe, a weekly intergenerational gathering under a tent in Millfin Square Park, the neighborhood's green space. Storytellers were recruited primarily from the elders program, along with a translator. AARP funding provided furniture and equipment and other project costs. The project helped keep elders' personal stories and histories alive, involved them in outdoor activities and increased intergenerational use of the park.

## ► PUERTO RICO

### COMMUNITY: San Patricio

#### GRANTEE: Coalición Comunidad San Patricio, Inc.

Vehicle speed and pedestrian right of way are ongoing key concerns in this community of 4,000, where 58 percent of residents are 50 years of age or older. AARP funding was used to create 20 distinctly marked crosswalks at six intersections and one crossing, which is directly in front of a condominium for older adults. All are on San Patricio Avenue, the heart of the community. The crosswalks were a first step toward reducing vehicle speed and thus a major improvement in pedestrian and cyclist safety. Residents have been encouraged to be more mobile with the addition of the crosswalks, which also benefit the many visitors to this vibrant community.

## ► RHODE ISLAND

### COMMUNITY: East Providence

#### GRANTEE: City of East Providence

The neighborhood that includes Central Avenue Park has the city's highest concentration of poverty, older adults living alone and households with grandparents responsible for grandchildren. Since 2013, improved safety and amenities have been a priority for the park. In 2018, an AARP grant filled a critical funding gap, benefiting older adults in particular with the purchase of five park benches, two game tables and replacement tops and benches for two existing picnic tables. Two of the benches were placed next to a newly installed splash pad so parents and grandparents could supervise children, and three benches were placed along a walking path commonly used by older adults.

### COMMUNITY: Smithfield

#### GRANTEE: Rhode Island College Foundation

The Smithfield Senior Center, located in the heart of town, headed a project aimed at introducing ride-sharing to older residents. An AARP grant funded biweekly education sessions on how to use an app for ride-sharing, along with materials to reinforce the lessons once the recipient returns home. There were also safety tips from the local police. The objective was to improve the social health of those no longer able to drive by providing a viable transportation option, thereby improving mobility.

## ► SOUTH CAROLINA

### COMMUNITY: West Ashley

#### GRANTEE: Charleston Moves

The West Ashley Greenway (WAG) is a former rail line converted to a bicycle and pedestrian trail that connects businesses, parks, schools, municipal facilities and neighborhoods. AARP provided funds for upgrading select intersections with artistic crosswalks. The goals were to slow down automotive traffic and draw attention to the safety needs of pedestrians and cyclists. With the increasing numbers of retirees and families in the neighborhood interested in nonmotorized transportation within the community, improving the WAG has become a vital need.

### COMMUNITY: West Greenville

#### GRANTEE: City of Greenville, Parks and Recreation Department

On any given weekend, more than 100 older adults can be found playing in daylong horseshoe tournaments in Walker Park. Yet the park has only a few benches and a single horseshoe pit. AARP helped fund a project that will include the renovation of a shelter house, installation of ADA-accessible tables for board games, creation of an additional horseshoe pit and the refurbishing of the park's existing benches and horseshoe pit. The project amplified the park's role as a venue for social gatherings, particularly for residents of the 169 nearby residential units that cater to residents 55 and older.

► **SOUTH DAKOTA**

**COMMUNITY: Sioux Falls**

**GRANTEE: Sioux Falls Health Department**

Sioux Falls has a 20-mile bike/walk trail that is an excellent connector for different parts of the city, as well as an important site for physical activity. And with the local population growing by 3,000 to 4,000 annually, upkeep is vital. AARP funding was used to add four benches, two bike maintenance stations and two wheelchair changing stations, promoting use of the trail by all members of the community — young as well as old, newly arrived and well-established.

**COMMUNITY: Vermillion (Prentis Park)**

**GRANTEE: City of Vermillion**

Prentis Park is the largest and most heavily used public space within city limits. As part of a larger project at the park, AARP funding was used to renovate and convert a horseshoe pit to the very popular cornhole bag toss game and pave a concrete sidewalk for better accessibility to the pit. These renovations at what is considered the prized jewel of the Parks and Recreation Department improved a green space where diverse groups of residents commonly come together.

► **TENNESSEE**

**COMMUNITY: Memphis**

**GRANTEE: City of Memphis Parks and Neighborhoods**

Many older adults in the Crosstown neighborhood travel by foot and bus and do not own a car. Walking or riding a wheelchair to the popular Josephine Lewis Senior Center can be a challenge due to cracked, uneven sidewalks in the neighborhood. In addition, there are few venues for outdoor activities. AARP funding was used to repair and replace sidewalks around the senior center, design and install Walk-N-Wheel signage to promote low-impact exercise along an existing walking path, and design and install a rest point along the path to encourage outdoor gatherings and social cohesion.

► **TEXAS**

**COMMUNITY: Dallas**

**GRANTEE: buildingcommunityWORKSHOP**

Downtown Dallas, which is becoming increasingly residential, can be a difficult place to walk, especially for those with mobility issues, due to sidewalks in disrepair. AARP funding was used to install several temporary bridges, opening up walkways that had been inaccessible. This project also included the installation of a new art piece, creating a focal point for interaction in an underutilized public space.

**COMMUNITY: Elsa**

**GRANTEE: City of Elsa Economic Development Corporation**

When residents want to board a city bus within a one-mile stretch of State Highway 107, they have to stand on the side of the highway and flag it down, endangering not only themselves but those already on the bus. The buses are frequently used by students from two nearby colleges and residents en route to the local Social Security office and Veterans Affairs medical facility. The AARP grant paid for the construction of four bus shelters with benches, which now provide protection from traffic as well as the hot Texas sun.

► **UTAH**

**COMMUNITY: Ogden**

**GRANTEE: Habitat for Humanity of Weber and David Counties**

The Jefferson Park area, a low-income neighborhood where many older adults and disabled veterans reside, has more than its share of homes in need of repair. AARP funding helped organize 700 volunteers who repaired 100 homes — painting, cleaning up yards, planting and building ramps where needed. They also helped clean up the local community center, playground and park, and some were taught carpentry techniques that they will use during construction of a home planned for the area. These improvements have not only inspired residents to improve their homes but also their ties within the community.

**COMMUNITY: Taylorville**

**GRANTEE: Salt Lake County Aging and Adult Services**

Gardening and farming are common activities in the home countries of many Taylorville Senior Center clients, who come from Sudan, South Sudan and Burundi, among other places. A community garden, launched with AARP funding, was a particularly welcome addition among this group of older adults. The grant paid for garden supplies, materials, and the construction of four raised-bed garden boxes at the senior center. Though the emphasis has been on refugees, use of the garden is open to all senior center participants.

► **VERMONT**

**COMMUNITY: Bethel**

**GRANTEE: Town of Bethel Recreation Department**

When students walk or bike from school to the local recreation center here, they must pass through several high-traffic areas as well as a wooded section. AARP funds were used for phase one of a project meant to make their travels safer. The opening phase involves the design, layout and creation of a quarter mile of trail in what will eventually become a network of trails through this small town.

► **VERMONT (CONT.)**

**COMMUNITY:** Swanton

**GRANTEE:** Village of Swanton

This was a demonstration project that preceded a downtown redesign plan. AARP funds were used to illustrate the effect of slowing vehicular traffic, thereby improving pedestrian access and safety, and also improving the area's aesthetics. Specific features included traffic-calming devices such as raised flower beds; the separation of travel lanes from parking areas by adding potted trees; and the use paint and plants to widen crosswalks, thereby reducing the distance pedestrians must traverse to cross the street, which particularly aids those with mobility issues. All this not only increases safety but is expected to give local businesses an economic boost.

**COMMUNITY:** West Rutland

**GRANTEE:** Town of West Rutland

The West Rutland recreation area is being renovated, and one of the first recommendations from residents who were surveyed was that access from the south be improved. Pedestrians and cars long shared the entrance road there, so AARP funding was used to create a pedestrian path into the recreation area. Not only does the path now lead to the park, it provides a gateway for hiking, biking and dog walking. In addition, it is relatively flat, making it accessible for residents of all ages.

► **VIRGINIA**

**COMMUNITY:** Green Park, Richmond

**GRANTEE:** Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition

A recent survey showed that residents of this neighborhood, which has a large population of older adults, are interested in gardening. Thus, AARP helped fund a demonstration project whose components included the construction of raised-bed planter boxes; educational forums in which older residents with gardening experience passed on their knowledge to newer gardeners; and neighborhood youth were encouraged to help create the garden on the grounds of an apartment community for older adults. Connecting these neighbors bolstered community relations and also helped beautify the neighborhood.

**COMMUNITY:** Roanoke

**GRANTEE:** Northwest Neighborhood Environmental Organization Inc.

Crime and abandoned houses have long been issues of concern in Roanoke's northwest neighborhoods. One response could not have been more basic: increase local greenery through gardening. AARP helped make an existing community garden more accessible to senior citizens by providing funds for four raised-bed garden boxes, four benches, a picnic table and portable toilet facilities. This encouraged community members, especially ones from two nearby living centers for older adults, to garden and take part in healthier lifestyles.

**COMMUNITY:** Woodbridge

**GRANTEE:** Keep Prince William Beautiful

In this two-part project at the Woodbridge Senior Center, AARP funding was used to develop a vegetable garden that supplements the meals provided to residents and adds opportunity for physical activity. The second part of the project involved improvements in an outdoor area that lacked sufficient seating and landscaping. Making those changes is encouraging more social activity.

► **WASHINGTON**

**COMMUNITY:** Port Orchard

**GRANTEE:** Kitsap County Commissioner's Office

The affordable housing crisis has hit Washington State, including Kitsap County, hard. And of course older adults and families are generally hit the hardest. This pilot project involved the remodeling of three construction trailers with the help of an AARP grant. One of the trailers was transformed into an ADA-compliant shared kitchen with an adjoining community room. The community room has become a gathering space for meal preparation, encouraging positive intergenerational interaction.

**COMMUNITY:** Seattle

**GRANTEE:** Seattle Neighborhood Greenways

In a part of North Seattle with the highest concentration of older adults in the city, AARP funds were used for a demonstration project that made streets temporarily safer. Large planter boxes were used to restrict car access to local residents. Signs were posted to help people find to key destinations and also to encourage them to walk and bike for transportation. An intersection was painted with a colorful mural. Most importantly, perhaps, residents observed how their neighborhood could be made safe for walking, biking and living in.

► **WEST VIRGINIA**

**COMMUNITY:** Hamlin

**GRANTEE:** Lincoln County Friends of the Arts

Hamlin has been refurbishing local parks and green spaces, and an AARP grant helped extend that effort. One step was the decorative painting of crosswalks throughout the town, particularly at accessibility ramps and bus stops. Game boards were painted onto existing tables in the local park. Outdoor benches were painted and new benches were added around town. Plans were also made for a future walking trail. All of these measures brought people together and promoted community and growth.

**COMMUNITY: Morgantown**  
**GRANTEE: City of Morgantown**

The six blocks of High Street are the downtown hub and location of almost all citywide events. To help achieve the comfort and sense of place outdoor seating provides, nine benches were installed on High Street thanks to AARP funding. Whenever possible, they were placed under trees. This was an easy improvement that benefits the entire community, especially residents age 50 and over.

► **WISCONSIN**

**COMMUNITY: Ashland**

**GRANTEE: City of Ashland**

One of the biggest obstacles to biking for many people is a lack of either the necessary tools or the knowledge to perform basic maintenance. AARP funds were used to install Bike Fixation stations along an 11.5-mile paved pedestrian trail that goes through and around the city. The stations consist of bike stands equipped with essential tools, a pump and a bike rack. The stations are ADA-compliant and include a barcode that helps users connect to a repair manual useful for people of all ages and experience levels.

**COMMUNITY: La Crosse**

**GRANTEE: La Crosse Area Family YMCA**

In La Crosse County, 3 out of 4 adults do not consume enough fruits and vegetables. When it became apparent there was a desire to learn about healthy eating and increasing access to healthy foods, the YMCA donated unused green space to create a so-called community food forest. AARP funding was then used to purchase six benches, which were assembled by volunteers of all ages and painted with images of vegetables and other flora. The result was a spot conducive to relaxation and community connection.

**COMMUNITY: Sheboygan**

**GRANTEE: City of Sheboygan**

In 2005, Congress created a nonmotorized-transportation pilot program and Sheboygan County was selected to participate. The county developed a network of nonmotorized-transportation facilities and now, with the infrastructure complete, many requests have been made for bicycle repair stations. AARP funding provided for the purchase of five Bike Fixation stations with necessary tools at key locations throughout the city. More than half of the users of the trails are 50 or older, and they and residents of all ages benefit from the improvements.

► **WYOMING**

**COMMUNITY: Laramie**

**GRANTEE: Action Resources International, Feeding Laramie Valley**

Community services are limited in the isolated low-income neighborhood around Kiwanis Park. The neighborhood has helped give Laramie the highest rate of food insecurity of any city in the state. Those are just some of the key reasons behind the fully accessible community garden planted with AARP funding in the park. The garden increases the availability of healthy food. It provides a multigenerational activity and learning opportunity. It has wheelchair-accessible walkways, disability-accessible parking and accessible tools. All participants receive guidance in growing, harvesting, preserving and preparing healthy food.

**COMMUNITY: Rock Springs**

**GRANTEE: Rock Springs Renewal Fund**

Rock Springs has a large population of residents in their 70s, 80s, and 90s whose families moved there from far-flung points a century ago to work in the coal mines. In fact, the town's moniker is "The Home of 56 Nationalities." AARP funding was used to create a mural honoring the history of coal mining and the railroad. The project was suggested by one of the town's eldest residents. The mural will be created downtown, the place where many of the early coal mines were located, ensuring that future generations learn about their hard work and sacrifices.

## Eligibility

### The AARP Community Challenge is open to:

- 501(C)(3), 501(C)(4) and 501(c)(6) nonprofits
- Government entities

### Not Eligible for Funding:

- Partisan, political or election-related activities or organizations
- Studies with no follow-up action
- The publication of books or reports
- The acquisition of land and/or buildings
- Research and development for a for-profit endeavor
- Sponsorships of other organizations' events
- Planning and related support
- The promotion of a for-profit entity and/or its products and services
- Communities or projects outside of the United States and its territories

### Grant Selection Process

Grant recipients are selected by an AARP panel of experts on aging, community development and livable communities. Projects are judged on the degree to which their goals can make an immediate change that leads to longer-term impact in a manner that meets all other selection criteria.

### Submissions must meet the following criteria to be considered:

- All items in the grant application have been addressed or else noted as not applicable.
- The grant is not used for partisan, political or election-related activities or property acquisition.
- The grant is not used to promote a for-profit entity or its products and/or services.
- The grant is for one of the listed qualified uses in the Project Details section of the application.



The **AARP Livable Communities** initiative works nationwide to support the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities and rural areas to be livable for people of all ages.

**w:** [AARP.org/Livable](http://AARP.org/Livable) and [AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](http://AARP.org/CommunityChallenge)

**e:** [CommunityChallenge@AARP.org](mailto:CommunityChallenge@AARP.org)

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**n:** Learn when the application period opens in 2019 by subscribing to the free, award-winning **AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter**: [AARP.org/Livable-Newsletter](http://AARP.org/Livable-Newsletter)