# Age-Friendly Mecklenburg

## AFM Overview

#### Purpose and Process of Age-Friendly Mecklenburg

Age-Friendly Mecklenburg is an initiative that facilitates the collective planning of not-for-profit, private, and governmental organizations as well as their collaboration on activities to improve the quality of life for older adults. These Age-Friendly Mecklenburg Partners serve the senior community by providing information, resolving issues, and delivering programs and services.

##### Designation Goal and Benefits

The near-term goal for Age-Friendly Mecklenburg is to submit a community-wide Action Plan to the national office of AARP as well as the World Health Organization that notes a comprehensive approach to improve the livability of Mecklenburg County for seniors. By presenting this Plan to AARP/WHO, Mecklenburg County hopes to become designated as an Age-Friendly Community.

##### Benefits of Becoming an Age-Friendly Community

* **For the Community**
  + Organizations and individuals are more coordinated in efforts for seniors, and they’re more sensitive and responsive to aging adults.
  + Seniors are kept more engaged, vibrant, active, informed. This leads to earned recognition as an Age-Friendly Community.
  + Seniors from other locations would see Mecklenburg County as a great place to retire.
  + “Sandwich Generation” sees this as a great place to stay with their parents as they age or to bring parents.
* **For the Individual (What a Senior May Say about Mecklenburg County)**
  + *“The community has great resources that address my health and housing needs, and there are also interesting activities that I can participate in from home or at locations I can get to safely.”*
  + *“I know what’s going on in my community, I feel part of my community, and I feel respected by my community.”*

##### Key Milestones Prior to 2020

* Submitted letter from County leadership in September 2016, noting commitment to “improvement in the eight domains the World Health Organization identified as influencing the health and quality of life of older adults”
* Conducted research on the needs of seniors in the community
* Created Age-Friendly Gap Analysis in 2019 reflecting the current state of the community; Gap Analysis conducted within the framework of the Eight Domains of Livability for an Age-Friendly Community.

##### Action Planning Approach

As the convenor for Age-Friendly Mecklenburg, Mecklenburg County Government has created the structure and process being used to develop Action Plans and enlist additional Partner organizations to address the 2019 Gap Analysis produced by Age-Friendly Mecklenburg Partners.

##### Summary

Age-Friendly Mecklenburg is an initiative that involves partner organizations from throughout Mecklenburg County in a coordinated effort to improve the livability of the community for senior residents, in particular. Participants in this initiative typically have a large - if not primary - constituency of older adults, and they have a desire to partner with complementary organizations and individuals in order to efficiently and more completely address the needs and goals of the senior community.