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AARP welcomes Milwaukee as WI's first 'Age-Friendly' county

MILWAUKEE, WI – AARP Wisconsin today is thrilled to announce that Milwaukee County has been officially accepted as a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. More than a dozen Wisconsin cities are already part of the network, but Milwaukee is the first county in the Badger state to earn the designation.

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities helps participating communities become better for citizens of all ages by adopting such features as safe, walkable streets, better housing and transportation options, access to key services, and opportunities for residents to participate in civic and community activities.

The Network is an affiliate of the [World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program](#), an international effort launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for rapid population aging and the parallel trend of urbanization. The program has participating communities in more than 20 nations.

Amber Miller, Associate State Director of Community Outreach for AARP Wisconsin, said, "We're incredibly pleased to welcome Milwaukee County as a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. We know from our research at AARP that 80 percent of older adults want to stay where they are as they age, and Milwaukee County is at the forefront of making sure communities are not only great places to grow up and work but are also thriving areas for older adults."

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley said the county is working to become the healthiest community in Wisconsin, "and that means ensuring

residents of all ages and abilities have access to the resources they need to thrive,” he said.

“As the first county in Wisconsin to receive this designation from AARP, we are proud of our partnerships with community organizations and investments in aging services that are making a real difference. This includes revitalizing our senior centers, expanding access to services, maintaining public transit operations, and so much more. By continuing to collaborate with AARP, my administration will keep advancing innovative solutions that enhance the quality of life for our aging community,” Crowley said.

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D., Chair, Milwaukee County Commission on Aging, agreed, saying, “I’m so glad that Milwaukee County received the designation as an Age-Friendly Community, and appreciate the hard work and planning that was put into this effort so far. We know that our working together over the next five years will make Milwaukee County an even better place to age and thrive. This is a great opportunity for our community.”

Thirteen Wisconsin municipalities have previously earned the Age-Friendly designation, including: Appleton, Greendale, La Crosse, Madison, Oshkosh, Reedsburg, Sheboygan, Shorewood, Stevens Point, Wausau, Wauwatosa, West Allis, and West Bend. Across the country, more than 650 communities have joined the Network, as they actively work to make their towns, cities or villages great places to live for people of all ages.

Milwaukee County has completed all the steps necessary to earn the Age-Friendly designation, which demonstrates its commitment to actively engage in an inclusive cycle of continuous improvement in the “8 Domains of Livability” that the World Health Organization has identified as influencing the health and quality of life of older adults.

Milwaukee County is working to better support its growing population of older adults and individuals with disabilities to ensure residents and families have access to the services and resources they need. Here are some examples:

- During his first term, Crowley led the full integration of the Milwaukee County Department on Aging, Department of Veterans Services, and Department on Health and Human Services (DHHS) to enhance the county’s service delivery model so services and processes are centered around the convenience and needs of the individual. As a result, county residents are experiencing quicker turnaround in connection to services.
- [In June 2024](#), Crowley approved legislation adding 27 new positions to the Milwaukee County DHHS Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to focus on key areas, including options counseling to help people enroll in long-term care, mental health needs to address the increase in isolation

since the pandemic, and benefits specialists to assist people in getting connected to healthcare.

- [Last week](#), County Executive Crowley worked to secure nearly \$4 million in grant funding from the State of Wisconsin to assist with the renovation of the Clinton & Bernice Rose Senior Center. This project will benefit more than 700 individuals, including minority populations, elderly individuals, and those experiencing poverty and health challenges.
- Participants at the Clinton Rose Senior Center also now have a blood pressure screen-and-refer hub at their fingertips, thanks to a joint venture between Milwaukee County Department on Aging, Serving Older Adults of Southeast Wisconsin, Inc., and the American Heart Association.

AARP Wisconsin will present Milwaukee County with its official Age-Friendly designation during a celebration at a later date. For information about the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities or to help your community become an Age Friendly Designated Community, visit: www.aarp.org/livable.

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About AARP

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.