



Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC)



Alyson Johnson-Sawyer, Chair
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Lead Agency: Land of Sky Regional Council
339 New Leicester Hwy., St. 140, Asheville

April 21, 2017

Chairman Brownie Newman
Commission Chambers
200 College Street, Suite 326
Asheville, NC 28801

Dear Chairman Newman:

On behalf of the Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC), I thank you for agreeing to place the enclosed resolution before the County Commission for action at its May 2nd meeting. This resolution states the Board's resolve that Buncombe County join the **WHO/AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities**. This resolution requires no commitment of new County financial resources.

The County's action on this matter is requested at this time for two reasons. First, May is "Older Americans Month"; as such, this public gesture of recognition for the valued contribution of our older citizens is timely. Second, the ACC is formally launching its planning process for the 2018-2022 Buncombe County Aging Plan. Joining the Network of Age Friendly Communities facilitates our work by providing us access to many resources, including a highly regarded planning framework, the ability to benchmark our progress, and the opportunity to consult with the 137 other cities and counties active in the Network.

Our community is already highly ranked on lists of "best places to retire." *In contrast, the ACC's responsibility is to offer the Commissioners in the 2018-2022 Buncombe County Aging Plan guidance about how to improve our county as a leading community in which older adults may live and age well.* The significance of this distinction is evident when you consider our population has aged faster than North Carolina and the U.S. (e.g., while our percentage of 65 and over population only grew from 15.4% in 2000 to 16% in 2010, it grew to 18.6% by 2015; by 2020, more than one out of every five County residents will be 65 years of age or older).

Buncombe County faces great opportunities to improve its resilience in its response to the aging of its population. We look forward to recommending a five-year plan to guide that response. We request the Commission help us succeed in this effort by passing this resolution directing Buncombe County to apply to enter the WHO/AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities.

Thank you for your anticipated support of this resolution as it comes before the Commission. I am available to answer any questions you or the Commission may have in this regard.

Sincerely,

Alison H. Climo, Ph.D.
Coordinator, Buncombe County Aging Plan
cc: Alyson Johnson-Sawyer, Chair, Buncombe County ACC
Enclosure