

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BUNCOMBE COUNTY TO APPLY TO JOIN THE WHO/AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- WHEREAS:** In the United States, the percentage of people aged 65 and over grew from 13% in 2010 to 15% in 2015; it is projected to grow to 17% by 2020 and 21% by 2030; and
- WHEREAS:** In Buncombe County, the population of people aged 65 and over grew from 16% in 2010 to 18.6% in 2015; it is projected to grow to over 20.6% by 2020 and 23.7% by 2030; and
- WHEREAS:** Research shows that older Americans overwhelmingly wish to remain in their homes and communities as they age; and
- WHEREAS:** There are numerous social and economic benefits to building a community that is inclusive and meets the changing needs of all age levels of our residents; and
- WHEREAS:** Aging is a life-long process, such that an age-friendly community is not just “elder-friendly” but also facilitates the well being of all ages; and
- WHEREAS:** An age-friendly community has policies, services, and structures that facilitate older adults staying healthy, participating in economic growth, remaining socially active, and living in security. Communities in which older adults can “successfully age” are more likely to both mitigate the challenges and enjoy the opportunities related to their older citizens.
- WHEREAS:** Buncombe County is widely recognized as leading North Carolina in identifying the needs of its older adult citizens and launching age-friendly initiatives through its strategic, 5-year Aging Plans; and
- WHEREAS:** The Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium is currently developing the next 5-year Aging Plan (2018-2022), which is expected to be presented to the Commission in November of 2017; and
- WHEREAS:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has noted that “[m]aking cities and communities age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to the demographic aging;” and
- WHEREAS:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and has partnered with AARP to encourage its use. One hundred and thirty seven U.S. communities participate in this network,

employing a common planning model, utilizing comparative benchmarks of progress, and freely sharing consultation for successful application of the planning model.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the month of May 2017 be proclaimed OLDER AMERICANS MONTH in Buncombe County. This Board calls upon all our citizen, business leaders, elected and staff government officials, philanthropists, educators, civic groups, advocacy and service organizations, (a) to recognize that older adults constitute a valuable human resource, and (b) to engage older adults in all aspects of community and civic life.
2. That Buncombe County will initiate action to join the WHO/AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.
3. That this Board directs the Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium to:
 - a. Convene a steering team to lead the Age-Friendly Community Initiative. The steering team should actively seek input from diverse stakeholders, with significant participation from older Buncombe County residents; and
 - b. Incorporate the WHO/AARP Age-Friendly Community framework into the 2018-2022 Buncombe County Aging Plan.