



CITY OF BUFFALO
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

BYRON W. BROWN
MAYOR

November 8, 2018

Ms. Jo Ann Jenkins
Executive Director
AARP
601 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

Dear Ms. Jenkins,

I am writing to express my support for Buffalo's Age Friendly Community designation application. The City of Buffalo's population of residents over 62 years of age comprises 27% of the total and represents over 70,000 people. My Administration has worked collaboratively with our partners in the non-profit sector, advocacy groups, and State and County counterparts to ensure that the needs of Buffalo's experienced class are met and they enjoy an excellent quality of life.

Our efforts have focused on three areas: 1) improved quality of life, 2) excellent delivery of City services, and 3) sound fiscal management. In the course of our efforts to enhance the quality of life, the City has executed a robust affordable housing plan to help older residents in every neighborhood. From the construction of new housing to working with long-term owners to stay in their current homes, my Administration recognizes the importance of older residents who live in stable homes as a vital component for overall neighborhood stabilization and growth.

The City provides older residents with excellent services through the community centers it either manages or partners with. Over two dozen centers provide lunches, bus-trips, social hours, tax-filing assistance, free flu shots and other vital services. These social and recreational activities help keep our older residents engaged in the community and studies have shown the importance of socialization in preventing certain physical and mental illnesses. In addition to the direct services the City provides, there are other educational and outreach activities conducted to act as clearinghouses for information that will help older residents identify fraudulent schemes before they become victims, learn ways to improve their health, and help enhance their financial literacy. These activities include the City's Senior Picnic, City District Days at Community Centers, Fire Department Open Houses, the City's Older Residents Symposium, Health Fairs, Neighborhood Clean-Sweeps and Landlord-Tenant Workshops.

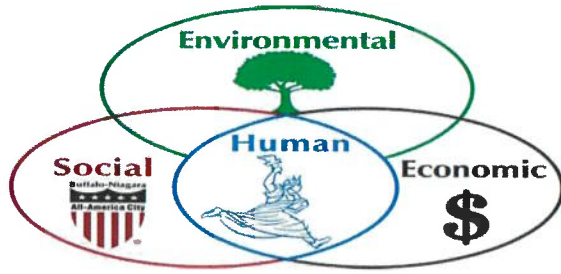
My Administration's sound fiscal management helps older residents by reigning in the costs of living in the City of Buffalo. My Administration held the line of fees for 13 years and consistently cut taxes over the same period. The 2018-19 City Budget raised residential property taxes for the first time since I took office in 2006. These fiscal policies ensured that older residents were not overly burdened financially and residents on a fixed income are able to remain in their own homes if they choose.

Through the Age-Friendly Community designation we aim to connect to a larger network of communities that also prioritize the needs of their experienced class residents. Through that network we can share best practices, learn new methods of service delivery and tap into the experiences of other leaders. The designation will also help the City develop a better framework for older residents to engage policymakers and express their input and concerns. As part of these efforts, my Administration will convene a blue-ribbon commission to evaluate the efficacy of our current efforts and submit recommendations that will enhance our engagement and offer new programs which meet the evolving needs of older adults. I look forward to working with you and others at the AARP and please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron W. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B".

Byron W. Brown
Mayor



**WELLNESS INSTITUTE
OF GREATER BUFFALO**

CreatingHealthyCommunities.org

Date: November 14, 2018

RE: Letter of Support

Dear Age-Friendly Buffalo, NY Applicant Reviewers,

On behalf of our team at the Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo and in support of the thousands of Buffalo's older adults we have served for the past 30 years, we are writing to support the City of Buffalo, New York's application to be **designated an age-friendly city**. The City's administration, through the leadership of Mayor Brown, the passion of the Division of Senior Services Director Doug Ruffin, and **our many non-profit partners** have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for Buffalo's "seasoned citizens".

We believe that these commitments will show strongly in the City's age-friendly application and more importantly, inspire greater collaborative and data driven efforts to improve and sustain the City of Buffalo's initiatives that address **the health and quality of life for Buffalo's older adults**.

Philip L. Haberstro

Sincerely,
Philip L. Haberstro
Executive Director
The Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo
(716) 851-4052