



# Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

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**Administration**  
Michele L. Lieberman  
*County Manager*

April 11, 2019

Jeff Johnson  
AARP Florida Director  
200 W College Ave #304  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Mr. Johnson:

On behalf of the County of Alachua, I am pleased to offer this letter of our ongoing commitment to creating an age-friendly environment and respectfully request membership to the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Alachua County recognizes the importance of encouraging and promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address changing demographics and to enhance independent living; and is committed to a process of continual improvement to support active and healthy aging and sustain economic and social vitality.

Since August 2001 Alachua County has worked with partners on the Communities for a Lifetime initiative. After some preliminary work and planning by an interim board, the new "Community Coalition for Older Adults" (CCOA) was formed, and held its first meeting on August 23rd, 2004. CCOA is still very active in the community and they will be the designated leader in the Age-Friendly initiative. Alachua County also was a key partner in making the Gainesville Senior Recreation Center a reality. In Nov 2008 the voters of Alachua County approved the "Wild Spaces Public Places" one-half percent sales surtax for two years and the County and City allocated \$1.5 million each, for a total of \$3 million, for construction of the Senior Recreation Center and park improvements. These are just a few examples of how we are making Alachua County a healthier place to live, work and play for older adults.

In 2011 a Community Health Element was included in our Comprehensive Plan, with the GOAL:

PRESERVE THE HEALTH OF ALACHUA COUNTY RESIDENTS BY FACILITATING HEALTH CARE DELIVERY, IMPROVING THE LIVABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY, AND PROVIDING ALL ALACHUA COUNTY RESIDENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE LIVING.

Other Policies from this Element are provided as an attachment.

We have developed a strong framework to build upon in addressing the World Health Organization's eight domains that help influence the health and quality of life of older adults. As a participant in the national network of communities, it is the intent of Alachua County to:

- Conduct a community-wide age-friendly assessment
- Develop an action plan based on the findings of the assessment
- Identify indicators so progress in the action plan can be monitored

We look forward to joining this global network of communities committed to giving their older residents the opportunity to live rewarding, productive and safe lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles S. Chestnut, IV".

Charles S. Chestnut, IV, Chair  
Alachua County Commission  
Chr19.059

CSC/KGO/kwp

CC: Board of County Commissioners  
Michele L. Lieberman, County Manager  
Sylvia Torres, County Attorney  
Claudia Tuck, Community Support Services

## ATTACHMENT

### Policies targeting Older Adults for AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Excerpts from Adopted Alachua County Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2030 COMMUNITY HEALTH ELEMENT

#### GOAL

PRESERVE THE HEALTH OF ALACHUA COUNTY RESIDENTS BY FACILITATING HEALTH CARE DELIVERY, IMPROVING THE LIVABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY, AND PROVIDING ALL ALACHUA COUNTY RESIDENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE LIVING.

**Policy 1.1.6** The Future Land Use Element shall include provisions in land use categories for mixed uses to allow co-location for nursing homes, assisted living facilities and group homes for special needs population in proximity to health services.

**Policy 1.1.7** Alachua County and community based health care providers shall pursue grant funding to ensure evidence-based health promotion, and chronic disease self-management programs are carried out at the community level through schools, senior centers, nutrition programs, senior housing projects, faith-based groups, and other community based health care providers.

**Policy 1.2.3** Develop and encourage volunteer opportunities in community projects that promote community health. Examples of such programs include creek and lake clean-ups, walk-to-school groups, and helpers for the elderly or disabled.

**Policy 1.2.5** Promote a healthy community by providing for Aging in Place in residential development designs by allowing a mix of housing types and housing units that take into account visitability criteria and encourage Universal Design.