

MODELS OF “LIVABLE COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES” IN THE U.S.

A COMPETITION SPONSORED BY THE ADMINISTRATION ON AGING (AOA) ADMINISTERED BY THE CENTER FOR HOME CARE POLICY AND RESEARCH, VISITING NURSE SERVICE OF NEW YORK

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

I. Purpose of the Competition

The purpose of this competition is to identify and showcase cities and counties that exemplify a **livable community** and to highlight promising practices that can be used by local governments throughout the country in **preparing for the aging of the baby boom population**. Through the development and national dissemination of case studies that highlight leading practices, AoA aims to inspire other communities to also become Livable Communities for All Ages, including older adults.

The vast majority of adults in the U.S. prefer to remain in their own homes and **age in place**, even as they experience difficulties in managing daily activities. Multiple factors influence a person’s ability to age in place, such as access to health and supportive services, the quality of the environment, a variety of transportation options, and easy access to such necessities as grocery stores and pharmacies. Beyond meeting daily needs, older adults also need opportunities for intergenerational connections, meaningful education and employment, and community engagement. Taken together, these factors constitute the characteristics of a livable community.

II. Guidelines

II.1 Definition of “Livable Community”

For purposes of this competition, livable communities are defined as cities and counties that have successfully taken specific actions **in response to changing demographics** to make significant improvements in the areas of:

- Affordable and accessible housing
- Affordable and accessible transportation
- Accessible built environments
- Work, education, and volunteer opportunities
- Access to health and supportive services
- Citizen participation in civic affairs and cultural events

In each of these six topic areas, livable communities strive to:

- Provide choice
- Maximize people’s independence
- Assure their safety and security

- Promote inclusiveness
- Provide readily available, culturally appropriate information

II.2 Benefits

Winners will be featured in a report on community livability and best practices that will be widely disseminated by AoA. AoA will also distribute a national press release for each winner, provide winners with a press release for distribution to their local press, and feature winners on the AoA website. Furthermore, in order to share leading practices with professional planners and public administrators across the country, the American Planning Association and the International City/County Management Association will also promote these case studies to local governments nationally.

II.3 Application Deadline

Applications are due on May 2, 2005. Entry forms must be **RECEIVED** in hard copy **AND** electronically on or before that date. Entry forms and supplementary materials received after May 2 will not be considered. **A postmark from May 2 will not be sufficient.** Faxed entries will not be accepted.

II.4 Eligibility

Activities submitted for the competition must have been in continuous effect for a minimum of three years (not including the planning phase) and must have demonstrated tangible results.

Applicants must be city or county governments in the United States. The competition will recognize small communities and large communities separately. Individuals are **not** eligible for the award.

Your entry must include a cover letter signed by the current Chief Elected Official. Please type the Chief Elected Official's name below the signature and date the entry. For notification purposes, please add a daytime phone number, fax number, and email address.

II.5 Awards and Selection Categories

The awards are divided into two types. **Specific Category** awards will recognize excellence in each one of the six Categories below.[†] In addition, one or more applicants will be selected by the judges to receive an **Overall Excellence** award. Overall Excellence recognizes an outstanding, comprehensive, and integrated approach to improving multiple components of community livability, addressing more than just one of the categories below.

Categories

1. **Provide affordable, appropriate, accessible housing.** Examples include providing incentives to developers to maintain affordable housing stock; giving tax credits for residents to remain in their homes; expanding the use and acceptance of the “universal design” concept.
2. **Ensure accessible, affordable, reliable, safe, and interconnected transportation.** Examples include coordinating transportation funding streams and service delivery; expanding on-demand transportation options; installing computerized and centralized dispatch systems; creating a comprehensive sidewalk system; designing transit stops to ensure easy transition from one mode of transportation to another (e.g., sidewalk to bus stop).
3. **Adjust the built environment for inclusiveness and accessibility.** Examples include increasing public awareness of the importance of accessible environments; providing incentives to make facilities more accessible; developing design guidelines; encouraging a mixture of uses to bring daily services closer to residences.
4. **Provide work, volunteer, and education opportunities.** Examples include using the latest technology to expand telework opportunities and distance learning; making local government a model employer of older people and people with disabilities; developing a central clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities.
5. **Ensure access to key health and supportive services.** Examples include raising awareness about the need for preventive health services; expanding the home and community based care

[†] However, judges are under no obligation to select a winner for any particular category if they find that entries for that category do not meet the selection criteria or are not noteworthy. Furthermore, if reviewers believe that an entry has been miscategorized, the application may be moved into another category.

system to enable people to age in place; integrating supportive services with housing.

6. **Encourage participation in civic, cultural, social, and recreational activities.** Examples include training older people to be advocates/community leaders; promoting active living; providing opportunities for making and sustaining social connections.

III. Selection Criteria

In addition to matching one or more of the six categories above, each project, program, or policy MUST demonstrate how it meets the following criteria:

1. **Encourages citizen participation and fosters collaborative partnerships.** How does the activity encourage citizen participation, promote partnerships among stakeholders, and mobilize wide-ranging resources?
2. **Demonstrates effectiveness.** What problem does the project, program, or policy address? Who benefits and how? What is the evidence of tangible, “on the ground” success? What are the measurable differences between pre- and post-implementation of the project, program, or policy?
3. **Uses innovation.** To what degree does the project, program, or policy make use of innovative concepts, creative funding mechanisms, or new technologies to meet objectives?
4. **Shows promise of transferability/replicability.** To what extent could the project, program, or policy be repeated elsewhere? How could it serve as a learning tool for other communities?
5. **Sustainability.** To what degree is the effort integrated into existing projects, programs, or policies? How has it influenced other state and/or local policies?

IV. Entry Form

IV.1 Instructions for Completing the Entry Form

To enter:

- [Download and save the entry form](#)
- ___ Complete Sections A and B (**Please type**)
- ___ Complete Section C, if desired
- ___ Prepare Supplementary Materials, if desired (see below)
- ___ Provide a cover letter signed by the Chief Elected Official (as of entry date)
- ___ Email the completed entry form to michal.gursen@vnsny.org for receipt on or before May 2, 2005.
- ___ Mail the cover letter, 5 hard copies of the completed form (and 5 hard copies of the optional supplementary materials) for receipt on or before

May 2, 2005 to:

Michal Gursen
Center for Home Care Policy and Research
Visiting Nurse Service of New York
107 East 70th Street
New York, New York 10021

In addition to the required entry form, applicants may submit **supplementary documentation** such as photographs, written materials (e.g., an evaluation of the outcomes of the project, policy, or program; project literature; development plans; press releases or articles; copies of the state, local, or tribal policy, etc.), and any other information that may assist judges in making selections. The supporting documentation binder should note any references to Web sites associated with the project, program, or policy. Judges have discretion in reviewing supplementary materials, so applicants may wish to limit supplementary materials to those that can be reviewed in a reasonable amount of time (e.g., executive summary instead of complete plan, etc.).

Applicants **MUST** submit all supplementary materials in a single binder or folder, and provide **five identical copies** of the binder or folder to be distributed to judges. Only materials submitted as part of the binder or folder will be distributed to reviewers.

All applications become the property of the Center for Home Care Policy and Research and will not be returned. You will be notified about receipt of your entry materials and will be contacted if additional information is needed.

IV.2 Timeline

- Award program announcement: March 1, 2005
- Applications due: May 2, 2005
- Notification of winners: August 2, 2005