



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AARP Selects Borough of Closter for a 2022 Community Challenge Grant**

*The grant will be used to convert an alley into a public green space for rest, socialization and exercise*

June 29, 2022 – Today, AARP New Jersey announced that the Borough of Closter has been selected to receive a 2022 AARP Community Challenge grant, one of eight grantees chosen statewide.

The grant will be used to repurpose a barren alley into an inviting, restful park setting that links the nearby commuter and shopper parking lot to the historic commercial area of downtown Closter. The conversion will encourage senior residents to utilize the downtown area more frequently and spend more time enjoying the outdoors. The project will also improve the surrounding public space and provide seniors with easier access between the north parking lot, restaurants, and shops. As a resting point for socializing, the pocket park will provide a sitting area with benches and ample evening lighting where seniors can safely rest between shopping, refreshing, and mingling with neighbors.

“Closter is pleased to be a recipient of the AARP Community Challenge grant, which will enable us to create a convenient gathering place for our residents, particularly our senior population as they walk from the parking area to the downtown shopping district,” said Closter Mayor John C. Glidden, Jr.

This project is part of the largest group of grantees to date with \$3.4 million awarded among 260 organizations nationwide. Grantees will implement quick-action projects that help communities become more livable in the long-term by improving public places; transportation; housing; diversity, equity and inclusion; digital access; and civic engagement, with an emphasis on the needs of adults age 50 and over.

With this grantee class, AARP is bolstering its investment of affordable and adaptable housing solutions in response to the national housing crisis. With additional funding support from Toyota Motor North America, the program is also increasing its support of projects that improve mobility innovation and transportation options.

All projects are expected to be completed by November 30, 2022, and are designed to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- **Create vibrant public places** by improving open spaces and parks and activating main streets.
- **Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options** by increasing connectivity, walkability, bikeability, wayfinding, and access a wider range of transportation choices.
- **Encourage the availability of a range of housing** by increasing accessible and affordable housing solutions.
- **Ensure a focus on diversity and inclusion** while improving the built and social environment of a community.
- **Support communities’ efforts to build engagement and leverage funding** available under new federal programs through laws including the American Rescue Plan Act, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and more
- **Increase Civic Engagement** with innovative and tangible projects that bring residents and local leaders together to address challenges and facilitate a greater sense of inclusion.
- **Other community improvements**, including Health Services, Community Development, and Coronavirus Pandemic Recovery.

“We are incredibly excited to support the Borough of Closter as they work to make immediate improvements, encourage promising ideas and jumpstart long-term change,” shared AARP New Jersey State Director, Stephanie Hunsinger. “Our goal at AARP New Jersey is to support the efforts of our communities to be great places for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.”

The full list of grantees can be found at [www.aarp.org/communitychallenge](http://www.aarp.org/communitychallenge).

The Community Challenge grant program is part of AARP’s nationwide Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods and rural areas to become great places to live for people of all ages. Since 2017, AARP New Jersey has awarded eight grants through the program to nonprofit organizations and government entities across the state. View the full list of grantees and their project descriptions at [www.aarp.org/communitychallenge](http://www.aarp.org/communitychallenge) and learn more about AARP’s livable communities work at [www.aarp.org/livable](http://www.aarp.org/livable).

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### **About AARP**

*AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation’s largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org), [www.aarp.org/espanol](http://www.aarp.org/espanol) or follow @AARP, @AARPenEspanol and @AARPadvocates, @AliadosAdelante on social media.*