



GREATER ERIE COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE

Helping People. Changing Lives.

August 9, 2024

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support to help move efforts forward to make Erie City and County **Age-Friendly** and **Dementia Friendly** communities. As the Director of the designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Erie County at GECAC, we work with people living with dementia and their families every day. GECAC AAA sees how difficult simple activities such as shopping, going to appointments, and daily living can be for someone with dementia, and how much of a toll this can take on the caregiver and family. Additionally, the toll of an ever increasing population of older adults living longer at home and in the community demands , community adaptations to accommodate the needs of our 'most experienced' population.

As outlined in the ***Aging Our Way*** statewide plan for Pennsylvania and the local ***Erie County AAA Plan for Aging 2024-2028*** adaptations to housing, transportation, infrastructure and other community changes and collaborations are required to address the needs of the more than 70,000 people in Erie County who are age 60 or better.

If Erie City and County worked collaboratively with the dedicated professionals and entities providing services to older adults and worked towards becoming a more age- and dementia-friendly community, people with dementia and their caregivers would be able to live higher quality lives without feeling isolated.

We envision an Erie community being a place where older adults and people with dementia can thrive if our many strengths and community partners band together for these common goals.

In conclusion, I fully support the Dementia Friendly Erie initiative and look forward to seeing the impact that this initiative will have on not only on our community, but on all of us who are aging and need this as a focused priority.

Sincerely,

Matthew Trott, Director
GECAC Area Agency on Aging in Erie County