



NEWS RELEASE

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WHEELING HERITAGE AND VOLUNTEER WHEELING RECIPIENTS OF 2023 AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT AWARD

– Ohio County project one of five Mountain State projects to receive AARP WV grant funding –

WHEELING – AARP West Virginia has awarded a 2023 AARP Community Challenge Grant to the Wheeling Heritage and Volunteer Wheeling to support completion of a downtown public green space and park at Wheeling's Market Plaza.

The Downtown Wheeling project is among the largest group of grantees to date, with \$3.6 million awarded among 310 organizations nationwide. Grant funds will be used to continue enhancements of the new pocket park at Wheeling's Market Plaza, with the installation of public art, mosaic tile, lighting, planters, seating, and tables.

"The pocket park was an idea to spice up a vacant overgrown lot in the middle of downtown," said **Cassie Minder, communications and development manager for Wheeling Heritage**. "Volunteer Wheeling wanted to create a green space for people to gather and make downtown Wheeling a more livable community. We are honored that AARP and AARP West Virginia saw the value in this project."

"AARP West Virginia is proud to collaborate with Wheeling Heritage and all of this year's grantees, as they make immediate improvements in their communities to jump long-term change, especially for 50-plus West Virginians and their families," shared **AARP West Virginia State Director Gaylene Miller**.

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 West Virginia has awarded 21 grants totaling nearly \$200,000 through the program to nonprofit organizations and government entities across the state.

Projects partially or fully funded through the AARP Community Challenge grant are set to be completed by November 30, 2023. View the full list of grantees and their project descriptions at www.aarp.org/communitychallenge and learn more about AARP's livable communities work at 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. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation's largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

About Wheeling Heritage: [Wheeling Heritage](http://WheelingHeritage.org) is a catalyst for the revitalization of Wheeling. Through historic preservation, community development, and the arts, we help to tell Wheeling's story and shape its future. We seek to improve the quality of life in Wheeling by preserving and investing in our city, collaborating with others, and engaging the citizens of Wheeling in our work.

About Volunteer Wheeling: [Volunteer Wheeling](http://VolunteerWheeling.org) is powered by the people who have the desire to implement improvement and revitalization through Wheeling. Organized through Wheeling Heritage and the City of Wheeling, we also collaborate with other local organizations and nonprofits, working towards the goal of making Wheeling a better, more beautiful place to live.