

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AARP Community Challenge Announces 159 Grantees,
Including One Virgin Islands Recipient**

[July 24, 2019] AARP announced the awardees for its 2019 [AARP Community Challenge](#) grant program, including a recipient right here in The Virgin Islands. A total of nearly \$1.6 million will be distributed to fund 159 “quick action” projects across the country, helping communities make immediate improvements and jumpstart long-term progress to support residents of all ages. Nearly 1,700 applications were received from non-profits and government entities for the program, now in its third year. Each of the projects, which must be completed by November 4, is designed to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- **Create vibrant public places** that improve open spaces, parks and access to other amenities.
- **Demonstrate the tangible value of “Smart Cities”** by engaging residents and policymakers in accessing, understanding and using data to increase quality of life for all.
- **Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options** that increase connectivity, walkability, bikeability, wayfinding, access to transportation options and roadway improvements.
- **Support the availability of a range of housing** that increases accessible and affordable housing options.

Here in The Virgin Islands, grantee:

- [VI Trail Alliance and Partners](#). The Virgin Islands Trail Alliance (VITAL) is a non-profit organization in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, tasked with creating multi-use pathways across the island of St. Croix and expanding throughout the territory for the benefit of the people of the Virgin Islands.

“The V.I. Trail Alliance has been doing excellent work toward the development of bike paths, hiking trails, parks, and walkability on St. Croix. We are proud to be their community partner,” said Troy A. de Chabert-Schuster, State Director of AARP in The Virgin Islands. “We hope that the project supported by this grant will serve as a great example of Complete Streets Policy and will be a catalyst of the implementation of this Policy in the Territory. We congratulate the V.I. Trail Alliance for their commitment to the people of St. Croix and the entire Territory.”

“This AARP Community Challenge Award will create the first Bike Path on St. Croix and possibly the Territory. The chosen location is also a segment of a greater concept plan (vitrails.org) that when completed will provide continuous, separate, safe pedestrian transportation options for daily use and recreation for all users. This is progress ... and there is more to come,” said Alma Winkfield, Vice-President V.I. Trail Alliance.

The full list of grantees can be found at www.aarp.org/communitychallenge.

“AARP has teams on the ground in communities across the country who hear from mayors, community leaders and local residents about the value of getting quick wins to create long-term change. We developed the Community Challenge grant program to answer that call and help build momentum for more livable communities nationwide,” said Nancy LeaMond, AARP Executive Vice President, Community, State and National Affairs. “This year, we are proud to fund more projects in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.”

The Community Challenge grant program is part of AARP’s nationwide [Livable Communities](#) initiative which helps communities become great places to live for residents of all ages. As part of this, AARP staff and volunteers are working across the country, engaging and mobilizing residents, delivering technical assistance and expertise to local leaders and organizations, and supporting the work of the 381 communities and four states that have enrolled in the [AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities](#).

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 or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

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