

PROJECT/PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Orcas Island Senior Center will conduct a feasibility study to determine both the current reality and the future needs of island residents over age 60. The study will reassess interest and viability of pursuing the establishment of a “village” model to provide expanded senior support and care in the community by:

- 1) conducting a needs survey (island wide access through mail and/or online participation)
- 2) sending teams of two (Operations Committee and Staff) to sites in western Washington that offer comprehensive home assisted services (ie. additional transportation beyond meals and doctor appointments and light home maintenance.
- 3) Facilitating 3 island wide focus groups to explore issues and involve seniors
- 4) creating a final summary report which would determine further efforts.

This study will take place from June 2017 – February 2018.

NEED/PROBLEM STATEMENT

Aging is an Orcas community concern. Over 50% of island population will be 60+ by the year 2020.¹ Older adults benefit from remaining in their communities yet only 3% of older adults live in nursing homes, a decline in the past 20 years, even as numbers have grown.

The focus will be identifying Stakeholders (seniors, families), Providers (community programs, professionals, volunteers), and current needs or “holes” in support services. The Senior Center, Lahari and Opal have all, in previous years, worked on pieces of the puzzle in separate areas of Meals, Volunteers, Care, Housing and Transportation.

Conclusions from all:

Limited access to services already exists for seniors choosing to age at home.

Lack of access is a barrier for seniors to stay safe and healthy in their own homes.

Village to Village Network website was used to research programs in regions showing demographic/ geographic similarities to Orcas Island. The “silver tsunami” is fast approaching. It’s time to pull together a more comprehensive and collaborative system. A wider conversation will begin which, instead of a purely social services approach, promotes the independence and empowerment of older people and a caring community.

¹ Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division

PROJECT OUTCOMES

The immediate outcome of advertising and promoting this feasibility study will be the **increase of community awareness** to the needs and issues of the island's aging population. A high level of community input will result from having the ability to respond by several methods – a mailed survey, as well as an online version for digital response, and continuing community input via three Focus Groups in three different locations.

A **credible picture** of major needs, **identification of the numbers** of possible recipients, **identification of potential providers**, and a potential **growth in the volunteer pool** will be assured by the objective and professional perspective of a professional consultant. The results of the survey, once compiled, will aid in **future fundraising efforts** and in **creating collaboration** with community partners, providers and volunteers.

COST/BUDGET

The Orcas Senior Center will dedicate 350 hours for implementation of the feasibility study. 100 hours will be contributed by a graduate student intern and 50 hours by volunteers. Approximately \$5,000 will be used to pay for staff time for the remaining 200 hours of work.

Staff Time (including intern):

\$5,000

Publicize and administrate the survey

Facilitate focus groups involved with the study and to

Create, print, distribute and collect materials and mailings for the study.

Minimum of 3 on-site fieldtrips

Staff Time (including volunteers and intern):

Collate all data streams and prepare a final report.

Consultant: review materials, advise on procedures

\$2,000

Materials and Advertising

\$3,000

Advertisement of Survey and Focus Groups

Purchase and distribution (mailing) of survey and focus group materials

Refreshments for focus group participants.

Rental fees for Focus group meetings

Describe what other funding is being sought or has been received for this project.

No other funding has been sought or received to support this project.

Is your request for operating expenses? Yes/No

PROJECT APPROVAL

Has this organization's governing board approved this project? Check one: **Yes/No**

Operations Committee (Board) Chair: Bonnie Burg, LICSW