

2018-19 OICF GRANT APPLICATION
ORCAS SENIOR CENTER
HOME MAINTENANCE INITIATIVE: ORCAS HELPING HANDS

PROJECT/PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Orcas Senior Center (OSC) Home Maintenance Initiative is to evaluate and help establish home repair independence and accessibility to ensure sustainable, safe living on Orcas Island, "Orcas Helping Hands." This initiative will be a component of the Hearts and Hands program at the OSC. A committee of community partners and home care providers will be created to support the study and in-house offerings.

The 2018 initiative will include;

1. OSC Workshops to support islanders to overcome barriers and address home care needs. The following workshops topics were identified during the recent Nov 2018 OSC focus group:
 - a. Creating Home Maintenance Plans (building individual manuals specific to one's home and online tools)
 - b. Home Maintenance Language (e.g. estimates vs. quotes, contractor terminology & tips)
 - c. How to Deal with Insurance Companies
2. Conduct a feasibility study for viability and structure for development of a Senior Home Maintenance and Repair program. The initial pilot program will be launched with Hearts and Hands recipients, then extended to support the islands senior community.

This grant cycle will take place January - December 2019.

NEED/PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many seniors on Orcas live at the poverty level or below. Their home maintenance has been deferred for years, and their homes are no longer safe. One of the most highly rated concerns from the 2017 "Aging in Place" study conducted by the Orcas Senior Center (OSC) Nonprofit with a grant from OICF was "reduced ability to maintain home and property", notably a higher concern than access to medical care and resources. That ability is critical for seniors to stay safely in their homes vs. leaving for expensive housing and care facilities off-island. Grant funds will allow OSC collaborating with community partners to develop a new service that allows seniors and people with disabilities to access contractor services needed to repair and maintain their homes.

The current generation of seniors has lived a life of building, fixing, and re-purposing before the green movement took shape. They imagined what was needed, created it and kept it running. Asking for help to repair an item or spruce up part of the house is something they didn't do and often still don't do, especially if it means paying someone for a task they feel they should be doing.¹

This initiative is further supported by data collected during the November 2018 Home Maintenance focus group, including community members, home service providers, and representatives from like-minded organizations such as Opal and Lahari. This focus group discussed solutions and barriers to accessing home care and repair needs as well as identified certain workshops to support common barriers and increase independence handling home needs and issues. OSC will provide workshop participants with take home kits and establishing a Hearts and Hands volunteer group to support vulnerable residents to attend and collect information needed to address individual home needs.

With the population of older adults expected to grow significantly over the next few decades (Administration on Aging, 2010), research is needed to understand the challenges faced as people age in place. If older adults are experiencing difficulties in maintaining their homes, their goal of aging in place is threatened. Research examining home maintenance

¹ Source: *Surviving Home Maintenance with Senior Loved Ones Aging in Place*

² Source: *Challenges to Aging in Place: Understanding Home Maintenance Difficulties*

challenges will inform a range of domains such as support providers from local service organizations or robot designers on what tasks older adults need assistance performing.²

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Build a current list of licensed and contracted service providers and identify those with senior discounts for low income services. Make this available to access via paper and online.
- Assess demographic potential and service need for access of and to receive services for all island residents regardless of financial status, both for those that are income dependent and financially independent.
- Conduct a series of in-house workshops to provide seniors tools and knowledge in regards to home repair and maintenance. Collect feedback to further evaluate need, utilization, and monetary needs/barriers.

COST/BUDGET (TOTAL REQUEST \$10,000)

Workshops & Study

\$2,000

Home Maintenance Plan Kits

Feedback Materials

Participant Raffle Items

Feasibility Surveys

Materials and Advertising

\$2,000

Print Materials, Posters, Ads

Paid Press and Online Marketing

Home Repair Brochure Mailings

OSC Staff

\$6,000

- Coordinate, recruit participants, and host workshops
- Committee coordination, record keeping of committee meetings
- Generate reports for committee and grant requirements
- Community communications (via press releases, email blasts, website/Facebook posts, OSC Blog, Community Meetings and other venues)
- Collect and record feedback, interface and collaborate with mission congruent community partners, program marketing and communications, and build 2020 project plan for assessment and 2020 development

NOTE: The Orcas Senior Center Nonprofit Board ("Operations Committee") will establish a workgroup of community partners to support this initiative, additionally in effort to reduce staff time allocated.

Describe your plans to maintain the project after the funding period.

Programing and Results from initial funding will be integrated into ongoing programing and offerings through the Senior Center as well as results will be communicated to like-minded mission community organizations for collaboration.

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
360-376-6100, cell 612-210-1973.

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² Source: *Challenges to Aging in Place: Understanding Home Maintenance Difficulties*