



Case Statement

Why Do We Need a Village?

The Nation: Demographic and Economic Trends Fuel The Village Movement

- “The explosive growth of the USA’s older population is fueling a grass-roots “village” movement in neighborhoods across the country to help people age in their own homes.”¹ Over 50 Villages are now in operation, 120 under development and 600 more expressing interest, according to AARP.
- 79 million baby boomers are aging, with the first to reach age 65 next year.²
- The percentage of people 65 and older will rise from 13% today to 19% by 2050, according to the U.S. Census Bureau projections.³
- This population surge will exert unprecedented pressure on medical services, retirement facilities and government programs which assist the elderly.⁴
- The recent economic downturn intensified economists’ concerns that the baby boomer generation has not saved sufficient financial assets to deal with the demands of retirement.⁵
- The financial burden for the care for the baby boomers may fall on families, institutions, government and society at large.
- 90% of people over 50 want to grow old in their own homes and communities.⁶
- Villages “can help delay or even prevent the need for institutional care.”⁷

Baltimore: Village At Home Will Strengthen Neighborhoods

- Baltimore’s stability depends on maintaining our neighborhoods as viable places to live.
- Village At Home strengthens existing neighborhood social networks among all ages, providing a more seamless safety net for people with increased needs.⁸
- While Village At Home’s initial programming will focus on older adults, people of all ages are encouraged to join and to utilize the services available. Building a Village for all ages reduces the stigma of aging.
- Programming for young families will be included when Village At Home has developed its initial programming and developed capacity to expand.
- When Village At Home has honed its model, developed its capacity and demonstrated its sustainability, it envisions both subsidizing those within its current service area otherwise unable to afford membership and expanding its model to meet the needs of other diverse neighborhoods.
- Village At Home’s emphasis on volunteerism reinforces connections among neighbors.
- Older adults living in their own homes continue to contribute to their communities.
- VAH market research confirms that people within our service area are interested in remaining at home as they age, although they will need assistance to do so.⁹

Individuals and Families: Village At Home Will Improve Quality of Life

- With its door-to-door transportation services, the Village provides increased access to health care.
- By vetting vendors with expertise to modify homes for safety and teaching its members fall avoidance, the Village promotes safety in the home.
- Through providing a wide variety of social and cultural events, the Village encourages community engagement and reduces isolation.
- By facilitating intergenerational connections, Village At Home promotes emotional wellbeing for all ages.
- With one-call access to volunteer services and vetted discounted service providers, the Village makes aging in community more manageable and affordable, helping to preserve its members’ financial assets.
- Village At Home’s wide range of services allows members to delay or even avoid facility-based care.
- Village At Home alleviates stress for younger family members in caring for their parents.
- Village At Home’s extensive use of volunteers brings health benefits to the volunteers. Research shows that those who volunteer have lower rates of mortality and depression and greater functional ability later in life.¹⁰

¹ “Villages Let Elderly Grow Old at Home,” El Nasser, Haya, USA Today, July 26, 2010

² http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/aging_population/cb10-72.html

³ Ibid

⁴ “Meeting the Long-Term Care Needs of Baby Boomers” Johnson, Richard, Toohey, Desmond, and Wiener, Joshua, The Retirement Project, www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311451_Meeting_Care.pdf

⁵ “Another Threat to Economy: Boomers Cutting Back” Whitehouse, Mark, Wall Street Journal, August 16, 2010

⁶ No Place Like Home, AARP, http://www.aarp.org/about-aarp/press-center/info-2005/livable_communities.6.html, 2005

⁷ “The Village: A Growing Option for Aging in Place” AARP Fact Sheet, AARP Public Policy Institute, March 2010
<http://www.nestseattle.org/fs177-village.pdf>

⁸ Village At Home’s aims are consistent with the recommendations of the Roland Park Master Plan, which states “Greater Roland Park should focus on creating a community where older adults can remain at home with the activities and services they need to maintain a good quality of life in the neighborhood for as long as possible.”, Livability, p. 9;
http://issuu.com/rpmp/docs/6_livability_05152010_final?mode=embed&layout=http%3A//skin.issuu.com/v/darkicons/layout.xml&showFlipBtn=true.

⁹ From a series of 10 preliminary small group gatherings -- where community hosts invited friends and neighbors into their homes both to learn about the Village and to give feedback as to which services they would use – we obtained responses to a survey which asked people if they were interested in joining the Village. From the survey data, we projected over 50 memberships (individuals and households). This number of memberships represents more than one-half of the 100 memberships necessary for launching services.

¹⁰ “The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research,” Corporation for National & Community Service, 2007, http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/performance_research.asp#HBR