

The History of Villages

The idea of building a member-driven community dedicated to sharing resources to help members age in their homes began in Boston in 2002. It spread to hundreds of communities throughout the US. Villages range in size from 25 to 900 people. Most are incorporated as non-profit organizations. Most have some staff; some are operated entirely by volunteers. Virtually all offer “Volunteers First” over supplying paid providers.

Many people have family members willing to help, but families cannot be there for everything all the time. Village members would like to enjoy their children and grandchildren rather than relying on them. These members and those who don't have families gain strong support through what the Village offers them.

The creation of a village allows members to build community, join each other for social and cultural events, support each other, reduce social isolation, help each other out when someone has a medical issue or physical limitation, and develop connections to needed resources.

Wider Horizons is a proud member of the [Village to Village Network](#), which helps communities establish and manage their own aging in place initiatives called Villages.

When we launched Wider Horizons, we knew that Central Seattle would embrace this innovation in aging services. This village was the product of four years of research, planning, conferences, strategy sessions and site visits. Initiated by Horizon House, a continuing care retirement community, the village grew into being through the wisdom and skills of some of the region's top experts in aging.

Sixty-five residents joined the village before it launched. The time was right. It still is. Our 85+ members as of June 2020 are actively involved in the Village, forging connections, engaging in activities, using services, and volunteering in our community. We have a strong network of mutual support that includes volunteers, providers, interest groups, parties and camaraderie galore.