



**A Roadmap for Building Our Movement ©  
Remarks by Charlotte Dickson, Executive Director  
The Age of Leadership  
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Village Movement California. This is our promise:

*At Village Movement California we believe in the power of community to achieve society-wide change in the way we age. Every day, we lead the way with the proven tools, connections and visibility so that villages-and in turn Californians-can thrive.*

*Because when we join forces, we ensure that all Californians have access to vibrant communities that enhance and expand the ways we can age well. Together we can make so much more progress than we can ever achieve*

*Together with our partners, we seek to revolutionize the experience of aging.*

All of you, all of us, are working towards this revolution every day.

What does this mean?

For me, and for the Leadership Team, revolutionizing the experience of aging means that we seek to build the communities that older adults want and need to continue to grow and develop. To age in the places we call home on our own terms, acting out of our agency, in charge.

It means creating opportunities to build and strengthen connections with others – to have fun, to give help, and to ask for help. It is to embrace and celebrate interdependence. Villages embody a truth: there is no independence without interdependence.

To revolutionize aging is to reframe aging, to build age friendly communities, so that older adults are included fully as valued members of their neighborhoods, cities and towns.

Villages do this revolutionary work day in and day out under your leadership. I see you doing it! Last May, when we launched our organization, I shared my goal of visiting every California village by the end of 2018. We are almost half way through 2019, and I have visited 37. I was so inspired by what I experienced, and by the stories and initiatives that you continue to share

with me through your newsletters, phone calls, event invitations. Thank you for your leadership, and for the work you do every day.

Village Movement California's work is organized around 3 goals: Growth, Impact and Sustainability

*GROWTH* Village Movement California aims to scale the village movement in our state. We need bigger villages, and we need more villages. We need villages in the Valley and more in Los Angeles, the areas where the older adult population is going to grow the fastest. We need villages that are led by African American women, Latinos, immigrants, Asians and Asian Americans, LGBT+ older adults. You know, I believe there already may be village type organizations among some of these communities – let's reach out to them to learn from them, and to ask them to join us in our revolution. I'm so happy that Barbara Hughes Sullivan, the ED of Village to Village Network, is here with us today. Village to Village Network is set up to support the development of new villages, and they do that work very well. Their annual conference will be held in Chicago in Sept of this year, and they have scheduled a half day pre-conference session on forming new villages. Kate Hoepke will be giving one of the keynote addresses at the conference, and I'll be leading a workshop on how villages are addressing social isolation and loneliness.

*IMPACT.* Research out of the University of California at Berkeley's Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services found that village members feel more connected, and more confident about getting the information and supports they need to age at home, than they did before they joined.

These findings show that villages impact the epidemics of social isolation and loneliness, and they may delay unwanted moves.

These are significant impacts that are desperately needed by 21<sup>st</sup> century society.

*SUSTAINABILITY.* Village Movement California aims to ensure sustainability of villages and our movement – it's front and center of our work. We know that sustainability requires scale. Our largest village has around 600 members. There are a few villages in the 300 – 500 range, then most around the 100 range, and some smaller than that. On our own, we're small. Together we're big. Our member survey found that together we have 5500 members and another 1300 volunteers. That's nearly 7000 people directly enrolled in our work. Now we're talking!

Our sustainability is tied to strategic partnerships with healthcare, businesses in the longevity economy, government, and players in the senior services network.

Today's sponsors represent these sectors. I am thrilled that they value the great work we are doing together. Their presence bodes well for our shared future – for deepening partnerships that benefit our members and help our sponsors fulfill their own missions.

*Together we can make so much more progress than we can ever achieve alone.*

**Since we got together last year, we've moved towards growth, impact and sustainability in several ways**

Last May, we published the Village Brand Toolkit and held several workshops and webinars to share the visual identity, messages and tools. Many of you have incorporated elements of each into your websites, brochures, presentations. We know that we still need to develop and fund a comprehensive, integrated communications plan so that we – Village Movement California and you, our members – move from being the “best kept secret” to being the best-known movement for California’s older adults. Our Communications Team has laid out a plan that includes a video that you could use in your communities, digital media and public relations. We’ve put a communications plan high on our “to do” list.

I want to spend the next few minutes sharing a road map for moving building our movement. To talk about how, together, we will stimulate growth, deepen impact and ensure sustainability. I’ll describe 3 strategies that I believe will contribute to these larger goals.

We have started to forge relationships with strategic partners – The Milken Institute, Univ of San Francisco School of Nursing, UCSF Institute for Brain Health, Motion Picture Television Fund, SAGE Care, California Senior Legislature, others who I will mention as I move through my remarks. Partnerships will be the key to our growth, sustainability and impact.

We established a Data and Evaluation Team and completed our first member survey. We will update that survey later in the summer through an online platform.

We held 4 webinars and made the content available online – we will continue to produce webinars in the coming year to respond to your priority needs.

MASTER PLAN. Who knows about, or is tracking, the Master Plan for Aging? Great! We are entering a fortuitous, opportunity laden time for older adults and our villages. Gov Newsom used his State of the State address to announce that his administration will create a Master Plan for Aging. The Legislature quickly responded and began to formulate proposed bills to put some meat on the bones of the Master Plan’s process and content. The Governor and the Legislature share a priority of addressing the explosion of the older adult population in our state.

Villages should be written into the plan. Being written into the plan would propel the scaling of our movement, and contribute to our sustainability. I’ve been working hard to secure Village Movement California – your organization – a seat at the Master Plan advocacy table. Just last week I learned that we have been accepted into the CA Collab for Long Term Services and Supports. This organization is the powerhouse of advocates working on behalf of older adults aging in community and at the center of the Master Plan. IN other words, they are the “go to” leaders on all things aging in community.

We are working with the C4A, another powerhouse that embraces the village movement and invites us to the table.

The planning process is projected to take a year, maybe a little longer. The process gives us an opportunity and a mandate to get involved with the plan. To meet with our legislators to educate them about what we are doing, how we are impacting older adults in their districts, and how we can do more. We need to contribute to the planning meetings, write letters, attend events and actions. We need to be visible and make our constituents visible.

A Village Movement California advocacy team will form to sort out the opportunities in front of us and to work with our members to establish priorities. Today's evaluation form has a place for you to indicate your interest in the team and the Master Plan.

DEEPEN IMPACT. Earlier today, Maureen Feldman generously shared her knowledge about the epidemics of social isolation and loneliness and called us to action. Villages have been addressing these epidemics for 10 years in California, before the epidemics were named! Building social connections is in our organizational DNA. When Mission Minded and the LT was working on the Village Movement California brand, they kept hearing that the connections people make when they are part of a village are the most valued benefit of membership.

Our brand states that our leading value proposition is connection which is the natural antidote to isolation and loneliness. Together we need to ramp up our work to demonstrate our impact and one way to do that is to collect and report data showing what villages are doing to prevent and stem isolation and loneliness. The good news is that we already have some of that data. We have databases that collect information about our members' and volunteers' participation in our events, classes, outings – the service requests that were filled – the hours they may have volunteered to help a member, or to take on a leadership or governance role. Most of you have data that shows the social connections your village is facilitating. Social connection is the asset that protects against isolation and loneliness.

I asked around and learned that the databases you are using – Helpful Village, Club Express, Salesforce, those you created – can create reports of member engagement – how much a member is engaged and how many connections that is. Each of these databases are able to create reports showing member engagement.

We will need to go a step farther and use our member intake forms and customer satisfaction surveys to ask questions about the status of social connections and questions about health. For example, whether people went to the emergency room. ER usage is an indicator of isolation.

Who cares about this? Healthcare. Medicare Advantage.

You may know that Medicare Advantage plans have just started to cover non-medical related services that support and promote health and wellness. I have been talking to people in the healthcare and social services field, as well as one of our Cal researchers, and they are pointing us to Medicare Advantage. I'd like us to file an application with a CA MA plan no later than 2021. To get there, we will need data. We have a Data and Evaluation Team exploring these options, and we are actively talking with UCB, USF, and other researchers to learn what we will need to collect. We will be talking with you about the support you will need to fulfill our data needs.

GROWTH. We must grow. Our penetration rate is very low. Our 7000 members and volunteers should grow to 700,000 over the coming years.

As I stated earlier, I believe we must grow into a diverse, equitable and inclusive movement. Those of you who participated in the Breakout session with Carlene, Carol and Tripp learned just how diverse our older adult population is and will be by 2030. A majority of older adults will be people of color, with the largest racial and ethnic groups comprised of Latinx, Asian and Asian American, and African American adults.

Our relevancy as a statewide movement – to strategic partners like healthcare, social services, government, longevity economy players – depends on our movement growing more diverse and inclusive. Why do I use these 2 words together?

Diversity and inclusion go together to create organizational culture that is welcoming and familiar.

Our village cultures must be attractive and comfortable for the older adults we seek to serve. We'll be sharing the slides and some of the notes from that session with you, and we will continue to the learning and conversations moving forward. Carlene Davis and I are working together under the umbrella of her Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Fellowship to explore whether a village might serve African American women in Los Angeles. Part of this work is building Village Movement California's capacity to work with African American women, and a developing a set of processes we might follow to engage in exploration and conversations with other communities -

Many of you aspire to become as diverse as your surrounding communities. Some of you are located in places with less ethnic diversity and more diversity of geography – rural and urban, working class and low income, LGBT+, single never married, widower. Take some time to think about the diverse identities in your village and how you might be even more welcoming.

We will become more diverse and inclusive through partnerships. The successful strategy isn't "come and join us". That will likely fail. The successful strategy includes an invitation to engage as mutually respected partners "we are curious about your community of older adults. We'd like to learn more about your strengths and your needs. How can we work together to support

older adults aging with health, dignity and agency in the places they call home? Let's find out together. We have a model, a statewide organization and a national organization to share. Let's work together."

Together might be the beginning of a neighborhood circle or interest group, a spoke in a hub and spoke model with the leaders of that spoke taking positions on the hub board, a joint venture, a new village in your city.

I urge you to find your partners! They are essential for your growth, sustainability and impact.

I'll close my remarks by sharing that Village Movement California will incorporate as a 501©3 and seat a board of directors by the end of this year. Some of our LT members will move onto the board, others will step back from that type of leadership and stay on to contribute to one of our teams.

We will rely on you to be involved in every aspect of the organization. We are co-creating our movement. The evaluation form, that you will complete at the end of the program, has a list of opportunities for engagement. If you don't see one you like, or that fits into your schedule, then tell us what you are interested in!

