

*The Synagogue Village Network is creating a new paradigm for engaging active older adults by promoting the Village model and supporting faith-based communities to explore and establish Villages to meet the needs of active older adults as they remain in their homes.*

## **Synagogue Village Network**

Thank you for your interest in exploring synagogue village. The Synagogue Village Network (SVN) is here to support you, provide resources and work with you throughout the process. We have developed a toolkit which will take you through the stages of development and we are available for consultation as well.

### **What is a Village?**

The Village Movement started with Beacon Hill Village in Boston over 15 years ago. In 2000, a group of twelve adults aged 60 and over came together to start the nonprofit Beacon Hill Village, a grassroots, self-governing, self-supporting community. This unique Village arose out of community members' desire to reside in their own homes while being able to access services that addressed their changing lifestyles as they aged. Since the launch of the Beacon Hill Village, more and more communities have begun to open their own Villages.

Although every Village is different, all Villages are based on a common principle that it will link older adults together to help one another stay in their homes and continue to lead active, joyous and meaningful lives. Villages are founded by members of the community (whether that be a neighborhood or a faith-based community), and each Village develops an organizational structure and offerings based on the needs of that community. For some Villages, this means providing a full suite of events and services through staff or volunteers, while others may specialize in providing referrals to other community resources. Every Village recognizes the power of personal connection in helping members remain active and engaged.

The Synagogue Village Network is creating a new paradigm for engaging active older adults by promoting the Village model and providing support for synagogues to explore and establish Villages to meet the unique needs of their community

### **What is a Synagogue Village?**

The synagogue is a natural agent for Village organizing, being the central Jewish communal institution and the repository of a set of values for living in community, honed over centuries.

ChaiVillageLA, the first synagogue Village, grew out of simultaneous initiatives at Temple Emanuel of Beverly Hills and Temple Isaiah in West Los Angeles. These initiatives aimed to explore congregants' experiences of what many social scientists were describing as a new stage of life – the period between raising families/building careers and frail old age. Together, these two innovative synagogues have established a unique communal and multi-generational system of mutual support, where Village members provide each other with the programs, services and resources which enable them to live healthier and more engaged lives.

In 2019, the Synagogue Village Network was launched in response to ChaiVillageLA's success. The Synagogue Village Network assists synagogues in creating Villages that harness the interests and passions of active older adults and meet their needs.

**Synagogue Village Network**

[www.synagoguevillagenetwork.org](http://www.synagoguevillagenetwork.org)

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## Stages of Village Development

### VISIONING STAGE: STAGE ONE

*Focus on: Ideas*

- Developing relationship with synagogue and synagogue leadership
- Commitment to explore
- Assessing readiness
- Learn demographics - how many people are of the target age; where do they live; financial status, etc.
- Initial leadership
- Listening sessions
- Creation of vision and mission
- Identifying leadership to create the Village



### CREATION STAGE: STAGE TWO

*Focus on: Leadership and Structure*

- Developing Village leadership
- Creation of Village structure
- What will you do? How will you do it? Who will do what?
- What resources do you need to accomplish what you want to do/be?
- Create membership model
- Possible program or two
- Implement leadership structure
- Engage staff, if needed
- Establish business plan, including budget, relationship with host synagogue/other partners
- Develop communications plan, website and materials

### LAUNCH STAGE: STAGE THREE

*Focus on: Membership*

- Recruit membership
- Recruit, vet and support volunteers
- Implement cornerstone and milestone programming
- Develop calendar of programs and services
- On-going public relations
- Provide for evaluation and feedback loop
- Develop and implement member orientation program



### INSTITUTIONAL STAGE: STAGE FOUR

*Focus on: Governance*

- Leadership succession
- Evaluate progress to date, including obtaining feedback from members
- Develop and implement sustainable funding and programming models
- Consider embarking on a strategic plan

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## **Synagogue Village Network**

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*Complete Toolkit is available to SVN affiliates and partners*

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