



## The Case for LOWLINC at Lake of the Woods

They are our friends and neighbors and, for some, our parents. They love living in our beautiful community, but as time goes on, living independently becomes more difficult.

They don't drive anymore, so they can't easily get to doctor appointments or to the grocery store. Maintaining their homes has become more difficult – even standing on a stepstool to change a light bulb poses a dangerous challenge. They try to keep up with the yard work, but leaf raking and snow removal become daunting tasks. For many, growing older and dealing with health and mobility challenges result in isolation, and they find it difficult to ask others for assistance. Yet these LOW residents, like the vast majority of older Americans<sup>1</sup>, want to remain independent in their homes and the community they love.

### Our Mission

At LOWLINC, we are dedicated to enabling these friends and neighbors to continue living fully, safely and independently at LOW for as long as possible. Our goal is to provide services to seniors through referrals to existing community organizations, LOWLINC volunteers and vetted service providers. While there are many wonderful organizations at LOW and outside our community that support seniors and those with special challenges (e.g., Woods Cares, Lions, Lioness, LOW Church), we know there are some gaps in services and needs that are not being met.

### The Need

How do we know there are unfilled needs and gaps? In fall 2014, we conducted a community-wide needs assessment survey of the 3,800 property owners at LOW. The survey showed an anticipated and current need for such services as pre-screened vendors, handyman and yard work assistance, transportation, and computer/technical assistance. In addition, respondents indicated a strong interest in the village model of neighbors helping neighbors, which was pioneered by Beacon Hill Village and has led to the formation of at least 200 nonprofit aging-in-community villages nationwide, including more than 20 in the Washington Metro area. Consistent with what we know about LOW as a generous community, more than 250 survey respondents said they would volunteer to help seniors and others with transportation, friendly visits and call, pet care, computer support, home maintenance and yard work.

### LOWLINC Background

In early 2015, we formed LOWLINC – Lake of the Woods - Living Independently in Our Community – and received designation as a nonprofit corporation in Virginia as well as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization. We provide the following services:

- Transportation (e.g., grocery shopping, errands, medical appointments)
- Computer and technical support
- Light home maintenance (e.g., moving furniture, changing smoke alarm batteries and light bulbs)

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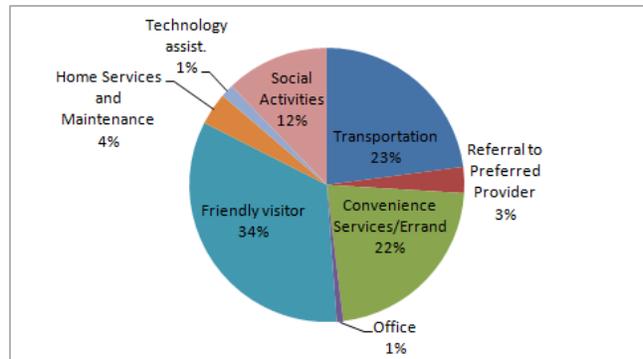
<sup>1</sup> <http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/home-community-services-10.pdf>

- Friendly visits and check-in calls
- Pet walking and care
- Referrals to preferred service providers who have been vetted (e.g., plumbers, painters, lawn care)
- Social and educational activities

We launched the LOWLINC website in July 2015 ([www.lowlinc.org](http://www.lowlinc.org)) and invited LOW residents to become members and volunteers in fall 2015. We began to deliver services to our founding members in January 2016. As with other aging-in-community villages, membership is fee-based. The annual fee for household membership is \$500 (\$42/mo.) and individual membership is \$400 (\$33/mo.). Depending on community financial support, we hope to be able to offer some scholarships.

## Member Services 2016

Volunteers typically provide more than 150 services each month, and during 2016, they contributed 833 hours, and drove 5,583 miles. These data do not include hours spent on board and committee meetings.



## Why Your Support is Needed

We gratefully welcome donations to help support our mission and enable us to develop our programs and services. **We invite you to make a tax-deductible contribution to LOWLINC.** As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization, your donation will help support our mission and enable us to fully develop our programs.<sup>2</sup>

Your support is needed to help cover costs in the following areas:

- Staffing: part-time LOWLINC coordinator (Note: While LOWLINC depends on volunteers to provide services to its members, our paid coordinator ensures reliable service delivery and professional management)
- Overhead: website fees and maintenance, equipment and office expenses, printing, mailbox
- Insurance
- Volunteer background checks
- Membership in Village to Village Network ([vtvnetwork.org](http://vtvnetwork.org)) – an association of villages with helpful resources

**Please help us make LOW a sustainable community for all ages, in which LOW seniors live safely and independently at home in our community for as long as possible.**