



Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard

Strategic Plan FY2026-FY2028

Helping Older Adults on Martha's Vineyard THRIVE

A Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director

In 2025, Healthy Aging initiated an update by the Martha's Vineyard Commission of their 2019 survey of the landscape of agencies providing services to support older adults. This survey aimed to provide a point-in-time evaluation of older adult services available on the island, and identify potential gaps, challenges and opportunities moving forward. It was timed to coincide with the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey by the Martha's Vineyard Hospital and Island Health Care. These two surveys, one focused on the service provider perspective and one focused on the service recipient perspective, provide a catalyst for this update to Healthy Aging's Strategic Plan.

These recent surveys document the fact that older adults on Martha's Vineyard face a distinctive mix of opportunities and challenges shaped by island geography, seasonal population shifts, housing costs, transportation constraints, and a strong culture of community care. Today 1 in 3 of our full-time population is 60+. The Island's older adult population is growing and aging, with the most recent forecasts anticipating an increase of over 1,000 older adults aging into the 80+ category from 2025- 2030.

This Strategic Plan (FY2026–FY2028) sets a clear direction for Healthy Aging as an advocate for services and infrastructure to allow older adults to age safely, independently, and with dignity on the Island.

The Plan prioritizes an island-wide perspective, data driven solutions, and a cross-agency collaborative approach to addressing the challenges and risks of aging on Martha's Vineyard.

We welcome your feedback and your support as we work alongside many others to ensure that Martha's Vineyard is an aging-friendly community.

Bob Laskowski, MD MBA
Board Chair

Cindy Trish
Executive Director

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1. Organizational Overview

Healthy Aging Martha’s Vineyard was formed in 2013 as a grass roots collaboration of individuals determined to shine a light on the needs of older adults who wanted to age safely and independently in this community.

We gained traction in bringing stakeholders together to identify potential solutions to these challenges and began to secure funding from the six island towns, grants and private donors to launch coalitions of stakeholders and service providers and pilot various service programs to help older adults live safely on the island.

With a track record of success in research and planning, advocacy and community building to meet the needs of older adults, Healthy Aging incorporated as a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, and began operating as an independent 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization on July 1, 2024. Our funding comes from the six island towns, federal and state grants, and private grantmakers and donors. Our staff consists of a full-time Executive Director, a part-time Associate Director, and five grant-funded part-time employees focused on specific programs.

2. Mission, Vision, Purpose and Methods

<p>Our Mission</p>	<p>To ensure the island has the infrastructure and services that meet the needs of our growing older adult population</p>
<p>Our Vision</p>	<p>A Martha’s Vineyard where everyone can age with dignity, safety and purpose</p>
<p>Our Purposes and Methods:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We Collaborate for Strength and Effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building bridges with a broad and diverse array of island stakeholders ○ Promoting, wherever possible, an integrated, island-wide perspective to optimize our collective priorities, energy and financial investments ○ Advocating for improved policies, systems and services, at every level of government, with and on behalf of the Island’s older adults ● We Educate, Build Awareness and Serve our community directly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducting research, publicizing results, sharing analysis and recommendations with older adults, service organizations and local governments to stimulate conversations, to support decision making and to create a long term, shared vision on priorities ○ Responding to persistent challenges faced by older adults on Martha’s Vineyard, such as transportation and home modification for safety ○ Identifying evidence-based programs/services to address service gaps, secure seed funding, and implement programs ○ Sponsoring educational/awareness seminars

3. Community Needs & Context

Martha's Vineyard presents unique aging-related needs:

- **Geographic isolation:** Limited off-Island access to specialized care and services
- **Transportation barriers:** Reduced mobility, limited public transit, and seasonal variability
- **Housing affordability:** Fixed incomes amid high housing costs, and limited accessible housing or downsizing options
- **Health and caregiving gaps:** Care coordination challenges, caregiver burnout, and limited workforce availability
- **Digital divide:** Barriers to accessing online information and tele-services

At the same time, the Island benefits from strong town governments, Councils on Aging, healthcare providers, faith-based organizations, higher than average volunteerism, and an engaged philanthropic community.

4. Our Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives

With respect to our Initiatives listed below, we will continue to explore opportunities and best in class programs that align with our Strategic Priorities and Goals to ensure we are optimizing our short- and longer-term impact.

Priority 1: Expand Access to Essential Services for Older Adults on the island

Goal: Ensure older adults can easily find and access the services they need

Initiatives:

- A. **Information Directory:** Develop and maintain a centralized, up-to-date resource directory (print and online) to help older adults and their families and caregivers easily learn about what support is available when they need it
- B. **Older Adult Home Based Services Coalition** (launch TBD FY2027): Identify service gaps and potential ways to improve the availability and range of home based services

Priority 2: Foster Collaboration and Development of Island-wide Solutions to meet older adult service needs

Goal: Build awareness and engagement among town officials, service providers, older adults, caregivers and other stakeholders to improve decision-making and resource allocation

Initiatives:

- A. Community Building:** Facilitate community information and planning discussions among decisionmakers and stakeholders to address the challenges and opportunities identified in the 2025 Martha's Vineyard Commission Older Adult Service Analysis and other current data sources
- B. Coalition Management:** Launch and lead cross-agency collaborations in the form of issue-focused coalitions that apply a rigorous approach to identifying, testing and promoting solutions to close gaps in those critical services needed to age well here
 - **Older Adult Transportation Coalition** (15+ agency partners)
 - Mission: to ensure that there are adequate options for both on island enrichment and essential (medical) transportation needs for older adults as well as off-island medical transport
 - **Falls Prevention Coalition** (10+ agency partners and community activists)
 - Mission: to collectively raise island-wide awareness of the risk of falling as one ages, to educate older adults on fall prevention strategies, and to empower older adults to take action to reduce their fall risk and, when they do fall, to recover more quickly
 - **Digital Equity Coalition** (10+ agency partners and community activists)
 - Mission: to provide ongoing technology training assistance to increase the confidence and competence of older adults in accessing essential services online (telemedicine and other support services) and enrichment opportunities (education, social interaction, etc.)
 - **Older Adult Home Based Services Coalition** (to be formed FY27)
 - Mission: to scope the extent of the need for home-based services to support the growing and aging population of older adults on the island, to build collaboration among stakeholders and service providers to provide a shared framework and common vocabulary for

this category, identify service gaps and potential ways to improve the availability and range of home base services

C. Collaboration: We share our expertise and research data in collaboration with other agencies working to address a variety of community needs to ensure the perspective of older adults is represented as they develop their plans and programs, e.g. Dukes County Health Council, Martha’s Vineyard Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council, and the Martha’s Vineyard Community Services Substance Use Disorder Coalition.

Priority 3: Promote Safety and Independence for Older Adults to Age at Home

Goal: Support aging in place and overall quality of life for older adults.

Initiatives:

A. Safety Programs

- Home Safety Modification Program: This program was initiated by the Falls Prevention Coalition and is administered by Healthy Aging, working with the Martha’s Vineyard Builders Association and local contractors. The services are provided to older adults who are referred by Councils on Aging, MV Hospital or Visiting Nurses and include an assessment for lower-cost, high impact home safety renovations (e.g., grab bars, stair railings, improved lighting, wheelchair ramps etc.)
- Matter of Balance Program: Healthy Aging is the licensee of this evidence-based training program designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels of older adults. The training program is delivered through the Councils on Aging.

B. Transportation Programs

- The Older Adult Transportation Coalition members have developed a range of transportation offerings to help older adults get to their medical or other appointments. Healthy Aging employs a grant-funded Mobility Manager as an island-wide resource to educate older adults on transportation options and support island agencies. In addition, Healthy Aging directly manages an on-demand ride service (GoGoGrandparent), a volunteer driver program for scheduled rides (MV Connect) and co-manages a scheduled transportation program for Chappaquiddick residents (Chappy Connect).

C. Digital Access Support Programs

- In 2024, Healthy Aging launched the Call the Tech Pro program to bridge the generational digital divide for older adults. The program offers drop-in IT help

sessions at three Councils on Aging as well as specialized in-home visits for complex issues requiring home-based solutions or for home-bound individuals who cannot access drop-in services.

Priority 4: Advance Equity & Inclusion for Older Adults

Goal: Ensure services reach all older adults, regardless of income, race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, citizenship or immigration status, or town of residence.

Initiatives:

- A. **Advocacy:** Strengthen connections with town officials, regional and State legislators to raise awareness of older adult needs, to obtain funding, and to demonstrate support for key legislative initiatives benefiting older adults, particularly in view of federal funding cuts that will impact those agencies providing critical services to island older adults
- B. **Expertise:** Provide subject-matter expertise on older adult data to community working groups and committees to support long term planning
- C. **Communications:** Seek opportunities to counter the effects of ageism and promote the value of the contributions made to the island community through the significant level of volunteering by older adults

Priority 5: Build Organizational Sustainability

Goal: Strengthen Healthy Aging’s capacity, governance, and financial health.

Initiatives:

- A. **Diversify our revenue sources:** Strengthen Healthy Aging’s private fundraising capacity through investment in data systems supporting donor relationship development and a robust networking campaign.
- B. **Deepen our volunteer Board impact:** Expand our Board with members of the community who care about older adults and can support our mission with their wisdom, talents and resources

5. Our Targeted Outcomes and Impact

Short-Term Outcomes: - Improved awareness of available services - - Increased service access for vulnerable older adults – Increased utilization of services by older adults – Improved impact on older adult perceptions of quality of life measures

Intermediate Outcomes: - Improved cross-island agency coordination and utilization of community assets to create impact for older adults - Reduced social isolation - Increased ability to age in place - Improved impact measurement and tracking for HAMV initiatives and programs supporting older adults

Long-Term Impact: - Older adults on Martha’s Vineyard live healthier, more connected lives with dignity and independence

6. Conclusion

This Strategic Plan positions Healthy Aging as a trusted connector, innovator, and advocate for older adults on Martha’s Vineyard. By focusing on access, collaboration, equity, and sustainability, we will strengthen the Island’s capacity to support older adults today and into the future.

Prepared for board, staff, partners, and funders to guide organizational priorities and decision-making for FY2026–FY2028.