



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Hub for Aging Collaboration

School of Social Work

Organizational Villages: Beyond Aging in Place and Toward Aging in Community

Emily A. Greenfield, PhD

Hub for Aging Collaboration, Rutgers School of Social Work

June 4, 2026 | NJ Age-Friendly Grants Webinar

Presentation Overview



Background



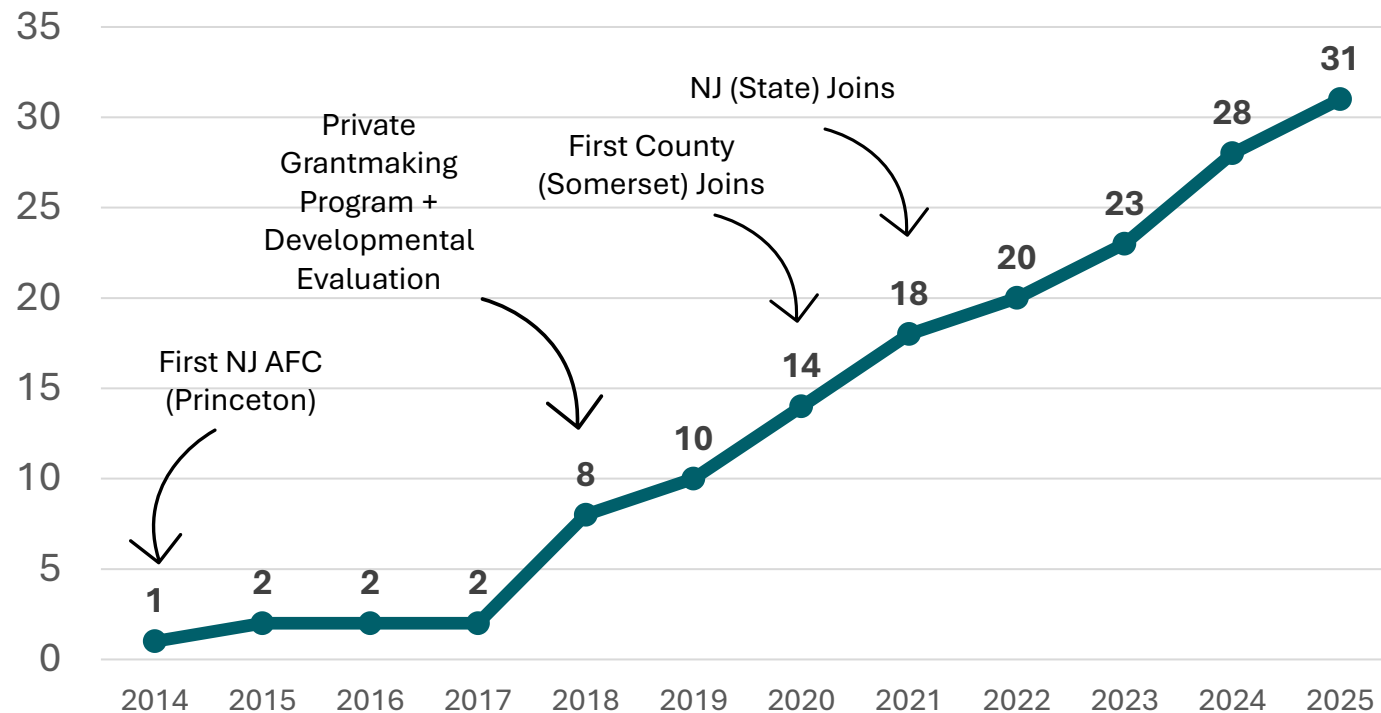
What is an organizational Village?



How to get started

New Jersey's Age-Friendly Journey

AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Communities: New Jersey*

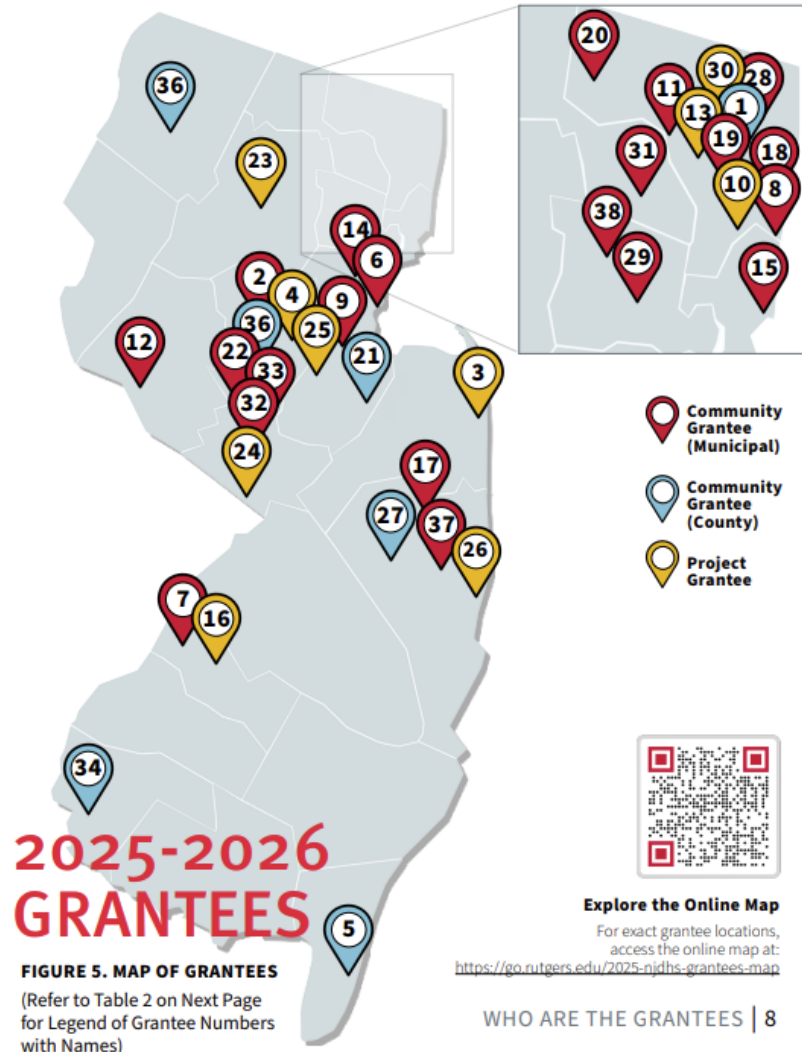


*Includes municipalities, counties, and state (excludes AARP challenge grantees)



Data and image source:
<https://livablemap.aarp.org/#/view=map/f8=NJ>

NJ Communities' Age-Friendly Journeys



2025-2026 GRANTEES

TABLE 2. ALPHABETICAL LIST OF GRANTEES^{1,2}

Numbers correspond to map on prior page

1 Bergen County	19 Lodi Borough
2 Bernards Township (Greater Somerset County YMCA)	20 Mahwah Township
3 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Coastal & Northern NJ	21 Middlesex County
4 Bound Brook Borough	22 Montgomery Township
5 Cape May County (Rutgers Cooperative Extension)	23 Morris County Organization for Hispanic Affairs
6 Carteret Borough	24 New Jersey Advocates for Aging Well
7 Cherry Hill Township	25 NJTIP @ Rutgers
8 Cliffside Park Borough	26 North Ocean Habitat for Humanity
9 Edison Township	27 Ocean County
10 EZ Ride (Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corp.)	28 Oradell Borough
11 Fair Lawn Borough	29 Orange City
12 Frenchtown Borough	30 Paramus Borough
13 Healthy People Worldwide	31 Paterson City (CUMAC ECHO)
14 Hillside Township	32 Princeton Borough (Center for Modern Aging Princeton)
15 Jersey City	33 Rocky Hill Borough
16 Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey	34 Salem County
17 Lakewood Township	35 Somerset County
18 Leonia Borough	36 Sussex County
	37 Toms River Township
	38 Verona Township

1. Source of municipal names for grantees: <https://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/infobank/localsearch.pl>

2. Non-profit grantee lead organization listed in parentheses as relevant

Part of My Own Journey

2010

Work with
NORC-SSPs
in New Jersey



2026

Work with
Organizational
Villages locally
and nationally



The 2025 National Census of Villages

A Nationwide Effort to Survey All
Operational Villages in 2025

The 2025 National Census of Villages aimed to expand our understanding of the rapidly evolving Village Movement. Our goal was to survey as many operational Villages as possible to learn about the set-up and operations of Villages. Data collection took place from August 2025 to January 2026. Findings from this project provide critical data points to help communicate about and advocate for Villages. Results will also guide future collaborative research on Village development, best practices, outcomes, and impact. Check out Project Reports to learn more about the findings, and read below for more information.

<https://www.grnnvillage.org>; <https://www.villagesresearch.org/villages-survey>

How do organizational villages fit in with the landscape of aging services?

Local, Community-Based Organizations on Aging



Three Primary Activities

Community-Building Events

Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors Volunteer Programs

Provide Information About Local Resources

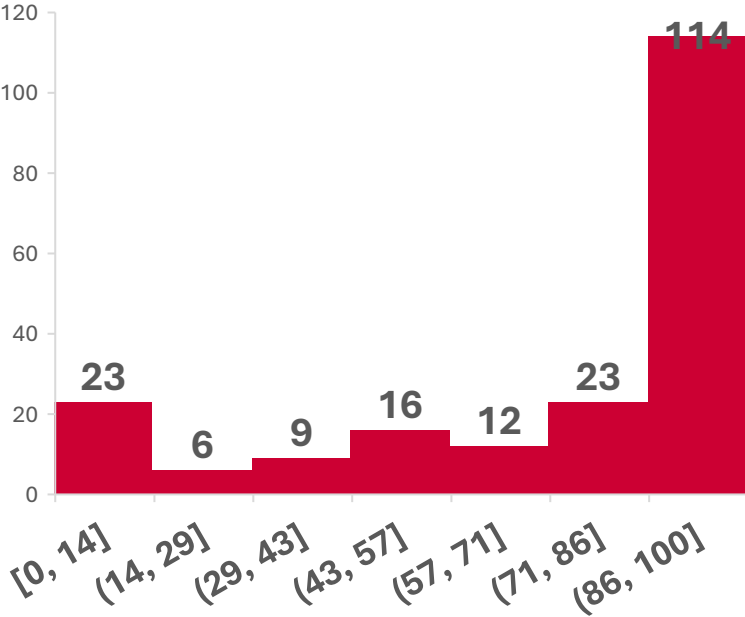
What makes Villages distinct? Their grassroots nature

Oftentimes developed and led by (older) residents

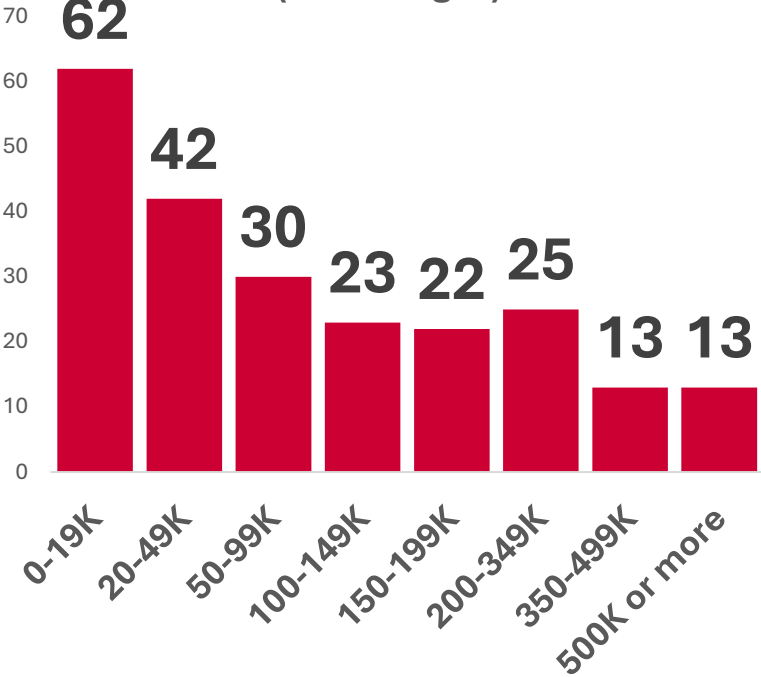
Membership Organizations

Small budgets (although most are grant active)

Distribution of % of Board Members that are also Village Members/Participants



Village Budget Size Distribution (# of Villages)



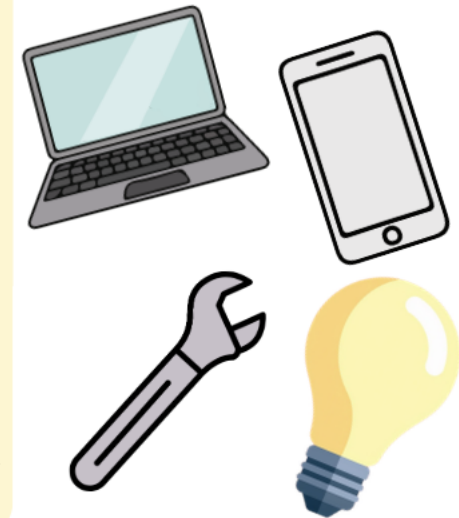
Source: Greenfield, E. A., Pope, N. E., & Amir-Koren, U. A. (2026). 'First-look' findings from the 2025 National Census of Villages. <https://go.rutgers.edu/village-census-first-look-ppt>.

Villages do typically provide services

Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors

GRNN provides services through vetted volunteers, including:

- **Transportation:** Rides to local destinations, including errands, medical and other appointments
- **Errands:** Picking up prescriptions, shopping for groceries, and more.
- **Minor Household Tasks:** Light bulb changing, minor repairs, replacing smoke alarm batteries, lifting heavy boxes, etc.
- **Light Technology Assistance:** Troubleshooting or setting up computers, smartphones or other devices.
- **Friendly Visits:** One-on-one get-together to enjoy each other's company (e.g., cup of tea, going for coffee, etc.)



Number of Service Requests
Fulfilled

148

Number of Hours of Service

170

8

Source: GRNN 2025-2026 Annual Report ([click here](#))



Members



**Organizational
Partners**



Volunteers



**Donors &
Sponsors**



**VILLAGES ARE
ABOUT COMMUNITY
BUILDING!**

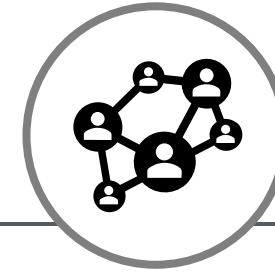


AGING-IN-PLACE

“The ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.”

(CDC, 2009)

CDC. (2009). *Healthy places terminology*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm>



AGING-IN-COMMUNITY

“People working together (to) create mutually supportive neighborhoods to enhance well-being and quality of life for older people at home and as integral members of the community.”

(Thomas & Blanchard, 2009, p. 14)

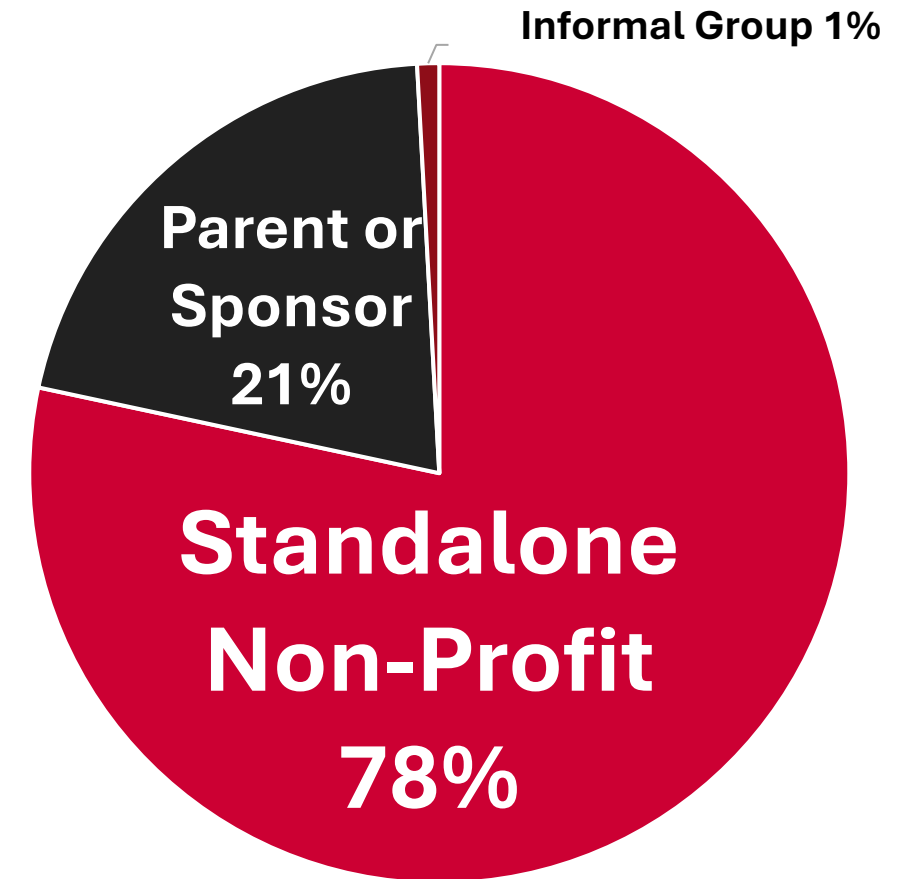
Thomas, W. H., & Blanchard, J. M. (2009). Moving beyond place: Aging in community. *Generations*, 33(2), 12–17.

Villages are not...

Organizational Villages



The Villages®
(The Villages, FL)

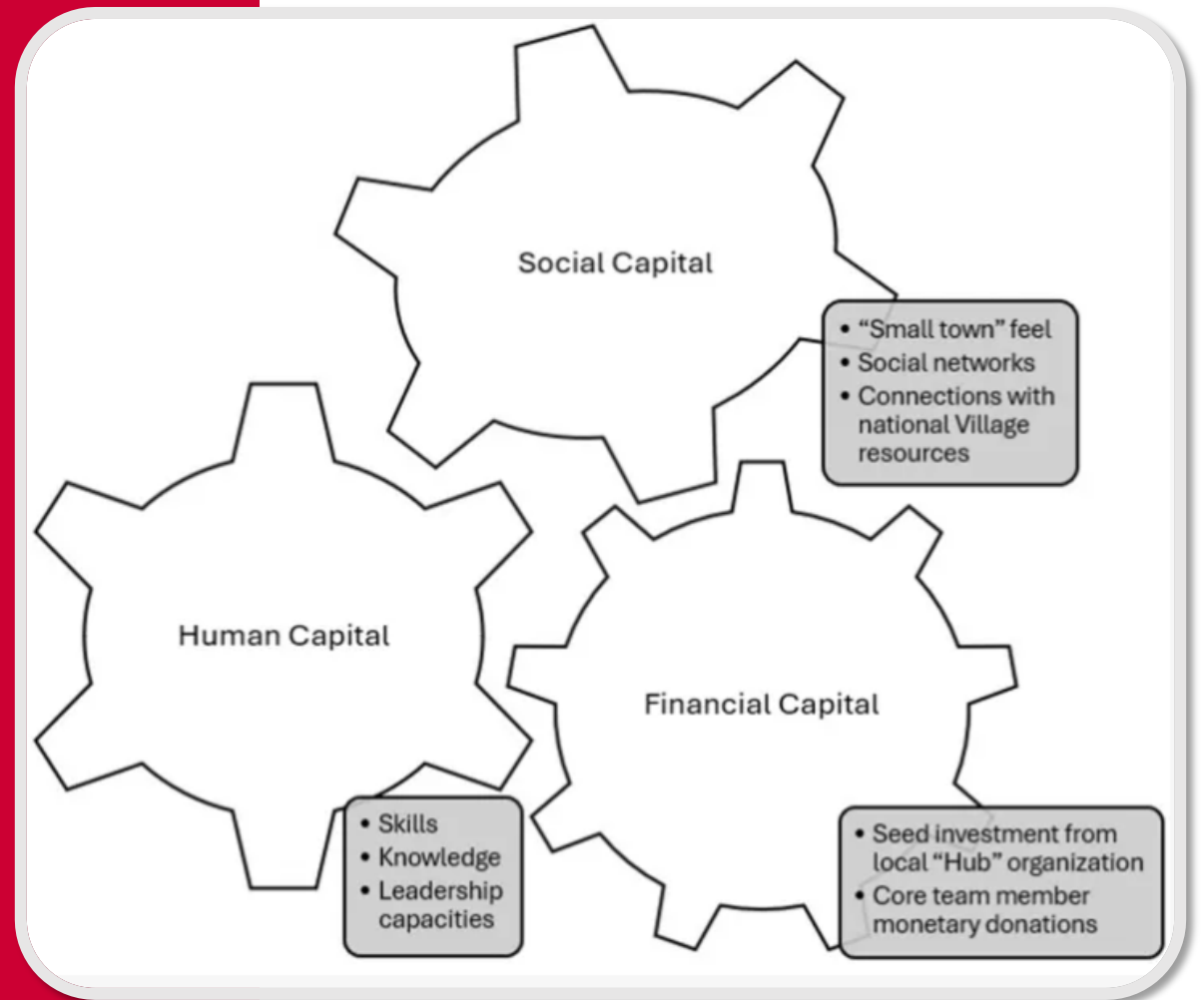


Source: Greenfield, E. A., Pope, N. E., & Amir-Koren, U. A. (2026). 'First-look' findings from the 2025 National Census of Villages. <https://go.rutgers.edu/village-census-first-look-ppt>.

Villages oftentimes do not start as organizations



Starting Up the Glen Rock Neighborhood Network



Reprinted from Greenfield, E. A. (2025). Launching a Village to promote aging in community: Human, social and financial capital. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1688002>

GRNN's Developmental Phases

Phase	Overview	Highlights
1: January 2022 – June 2023	Establishing the core team and administrative foundations	- Formation of the work group and monthly meetings - Develop MOU between North Jersey Villages as “Hub” organization in support of GRNN - Establish key operating systems - Initiate community-wide outreach about GRNN
2: June 2023 – August 2024	Building out the infrastructure	- Develop public-facing website and build out other digital platforms - Activate GRNN operational committees - Expand community outreach - Pursue funding for part-time coordinator
3: August 2024 – March 2025	Preparing for launch	- Finalize outputs (e.g., membership manual) - Recruit and onboard part-time coordinator - Offer pre-launch registrant program - Initial volunteer pool
4: March 2025 – April 2026	Year 1 of operations	- Prepare to become an independent 501(c)3 organization...

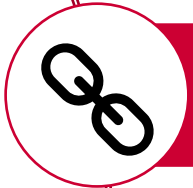
Adapted from Greenfield, E. A. (2025). Launching a Village to promote aging in community: Human, social and financial capital. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1688002>



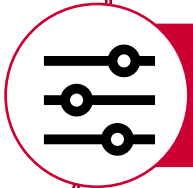
Age-Friendly Planning: Steps That Count Toward a Village!



Inputs: Identification of civic leaders



Inputs: Asset mapping across the public and private sectors



Outcomes: Villages can be a good fit for multiple domains of action



Activity: Opportunity for “Village exploration” as part of the action plan

City of Sacramento, CA: Incorporating Village Exploration within an Age-Friendly Action Plan



AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL
ON MARCH 26, 2024

ACTIONS

CHS-A1

Assess the feasibility of creating one or more “villages” in Sacramento neighborhoods with high concentrations of seniors who wish to continue living independently. Collaborating with established community groups and community-based organizations, identify and prioritize up to 5 areas within the city for the creation of “villages” made up of members who deliver services to one another, such as medical, home repair, grocery shopping, pet walking, and garbage bin collection. (*General Plan EJ-4.3; Parks Plan 2040 3.33**).

Responsible Departments:
Department of Youth, Parks, and
Community Enrichment, Older Adults
Services Division (lead); Community
Development Department

Target Completion: Year 3



Want to learn more?



The screenshot shows the Village to Village Network website. The header includes the logo, social media icons, and links for Donate and Login. The navigation bar lists Home, About, Media, Calendar, Conference, and Join. The page title is "Member Benefits". The main content states: "Membership in the Village to Village Network includes many benefits." followed by a bulleted list of benefits: Networking, E-Blasts, Document Library, Access to Private side, Forums, Webinars, Network Providers, Toolkits, Mentor Program, Membership Directory, and National Village Conference. Below this is a section for "Village to Village Network Membership Tiers" with a sub-section for "Opportunity Member - Trial Membership \$225 per year".

Member Benefits

Membership in the Village to Village Network includes many benefits.

- **Networking** with peers who are developing and running Villages
- **E-Blasts** - updates on VtVN, information on upcoming webinars, new Village BetterBuys, and much more.
- **Document Library** - latest research on Village movement and pertinent topics. Upload documents to share.
- **Access to Private** side of the VtVN website - control your Member Village profile, add secondary/tertiary members and view your membership status.
- **Forums** - join conversations, look at previous topics, start a thread with thoughts and questions.
- **Webinars** - watch archived webinars and download Power Point presentations.
- **Network Providers** - discounted providers that Villages can use to run their Village and offer to their members (operations management software, home care, background checks, insurance, website technology for older adults, etc.)
- **Toolkits** - Village 101Toolkit (how to start a Village from the ground up with an extensive checklist) and Fundraising Toolkit.
- **Mentor Program** - VtVN matches you up with a peer mentor to help you with any questions about Village formation, best practices, programming, and much more.
- **Membership Directory** - provides a listing of all members who have opted to include their information in the directory. You can add your information on
- **National Village Conference** - annual conference at discounted member rate. Members get priority to present during workshops.

Village to Village Network Membership Tiers

Opportunity Member - Trial Membership \$225 per year

This membership is for groups of individuals in the exploration stage of starting a Village. If you are an individual or a group of people interested but are not yet a formal, incorporated organization, then this membership is for you. You will have full access to all of the member resources, mentor services and more. This membership will give access to one individual who is the primary member that controls the account and 5 other members access all member resources. This is a trial membership that lasts for one year and can be renewed for an additional year or until you achieve full membership.

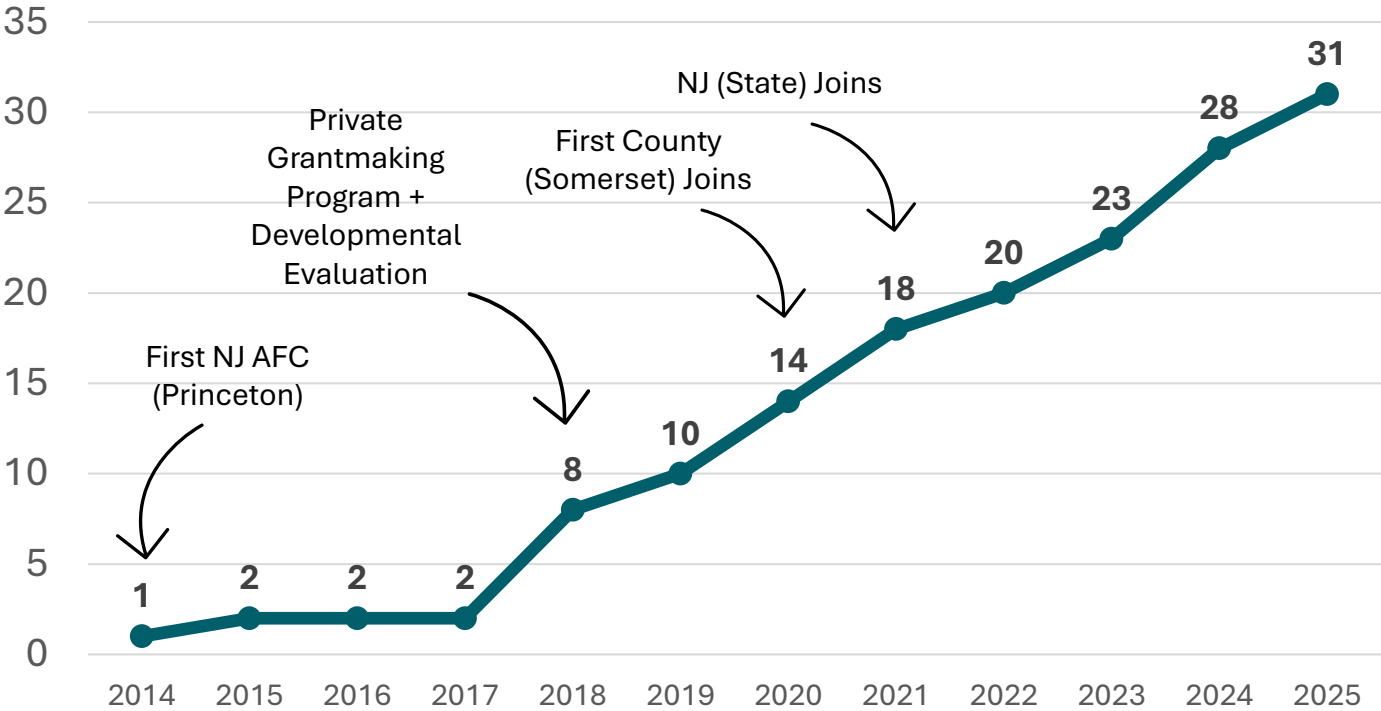
https://www.vtvnetwork.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=691012&module_id=238639

Also: North
Jersey
Villages

<https://northjerseyvillages.org/about-us/>

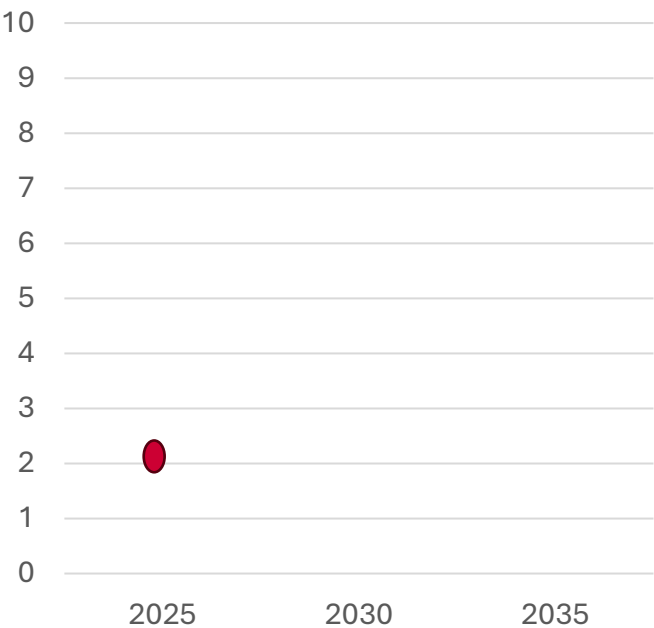
New Jersey's Age-Friendly Journey

AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Communities: New Jersey*



*Includes municipalities, counties, and state (excludes AARP challenge grantees)

Number of Villages in NJ





RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Hub for Aging Collaboration

School of Social Work

Thank you!

agingcollab@ssw.rutgers.edu



Website:

<http://socialwork.rutgers.edu/aging>



LinkedIn:

<https://go.rutgers.edu/HubLinkedIn>



Join Email List:

<https://go.rutgers.edu/JoinHubEmail>