

2026 – 2028

Strategic Plan



Senior
Services



FOR SOUTH SOUND

Who We Are



From the Executive Director

Strategic priorities guide our organization in ways large and small. While much of our daily work goes unchanged, it would be easy to underestimate the impact of these compelling new goals. Founded in 1973, we are a dynamic organization that strives to meet the entire community of aging adults where they are and enhance their quality of life. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we are neither governmental nor corporate, but instead exist to fulfill our beautiful mission that provides public benefit.

Contained in this plan are some bold new directions, including evaluating and offering expanded service hours (beyond our historic 8:30-4 M-F) and the big one, changing our organizational name to better reflect our mission in the community. On that last point, we recognize that our current name is problematic, leading many to think we are something we are not, and not for them!

So this is not a strategic plan of recapitulation and more of the same. Rather, we have important work in store to shape and define our work for decades to come.

Guided by our mission, values and strategic priorities, we hope to continue our outstanding presence in the community for many years to come and invite you to join our efforts as a volunteer, donor and participant.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Brian Windrope". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Brian Windrope,
Executive Director

Who We Are

Mission

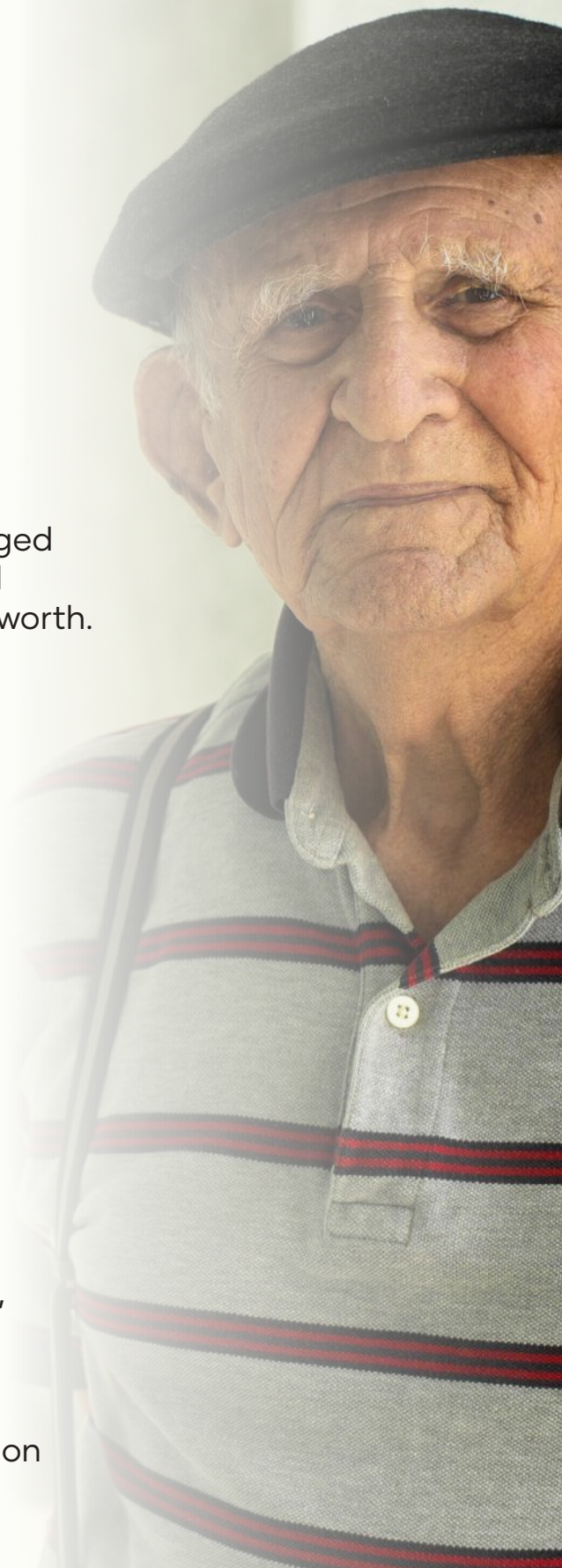
To enhance the quality of life for people as they age.

Vision

People as they age are empowered and engaged in the community, valued for their wisdom and experience, and have a positive sense of self-worth.

Values

- Serve with compassion, kindness and empathy to enhance the quality of life for older adults in our communities.
- Welcome, respect and include people of diverse background believing in equity and dignity for every human being.
- Adapt and creatively respond to changing needs and resources.
- Manage our resources with professionalism, fiscal responsibility and accountability and leverage them to best fulfill our mission.
- Staff uphold the highest standards of mission performance and are supported financially and professionally.



Keystones



Grow Recognition and Partnerships with other community resources

Since our founding, we have been keenly aware that we do not exist within a vacuum. The important work that we do connects us to other nonprofits in our area, businesses that value the population we serve, and legislators who draft laws that impact our constituents. **Building on the valuable ties we have already forged can only strengthen our position in the community and our ability to effectively fulfil our mission.**

We also know that the vast scope of our programs is not always clearly understood, even by our own membership and clients. Growing recognition for all the things that we do in our community is imperative as we move our organization into the future.

Goals

1

Enhance mission recognition through expanded communications, potential rebranding and community events.

Letting our community know about all that we do, beyond simply running two senior centers, remains a challenge to be overcome. We will clearly communicate the depth of our programs, explore the possibilities of an organizational name change that better reflects our mission, and maintain a strong presence at appropriate events in our local area.

2

Create and maintain strong working relationships with government partners.

The needs of our older population must be represented at all levels of government. We will advocate for our organization and the demographic we serve, and work with government at the state and local level to make sure that lawmakers are hearing the voices of their senior population.

3

Create and maintain strong working relationships with local businesses, nonprofits and community organizations.

We already have strong ties in our community to businesses and organizations, and we will endeavor to build on these. Connecting with more institutions in both the private and public sector will allow us to do more and increase our brand recognition within our community.



Enhance and Expand services throughout Thurston and Mason counties

While we are headquartered in Thurston County, and have our two senior centers there, **we continue to make an impact in Mason County**, largely through our Senior Nutrition Program, Senior Transportation Program, PALS Fund and SHIBA Program.

As we look ahead to enhancing and expanding our offerings in these two counties, there is much to consider. Does our name accurately reflect our mission and how we pursue it? Are there areas and people in our community that are not being served? Is our financial model robust enough to allow us to think about expansion?

Goals

1

Research and develop recommendations for organizational renaming.

For most of our 50+ year history, we have been Senior Services for South Sound. But there are issues with this name. It's long, doesn't correctly reflect what we do, and many people do not identify with the word "senior." Exploring a name change is one step toward looking ahead to our next 50 years.

2

Pursue geographic expansion opportunities within our service counties.

The most recent U.S. census estimates that there are almost 80,000 folks aged 60 or more in Thurston and Mason counties combined. We know there are many, many people who could benefit from our programs. Our goal will be to expand our operations within these counties to better serve our local area.

3

Maintain net margins, grow our endowments, and seek new funding sources.

Over the past five years, we have increased our net revenue each year, and have demonstrated that we are a fiscally responsible organization. We will continue to manage our finances well, grow our donor base, and explore new revenue streams.



Address Isolation and Loneliness

We have been a leader on sounding the alarm about the damaging effects of isolation and loneliness for older populations. Every program that we offer can be viewed within the context of connecting seniors with each other, with vital resources and with our organization as a whole.

As we look ahead to the next three years and beyond, we remain determined to keep raising awareness of this important issue. By reevaluating our current programs, looking into new offerings and strengthening relationships with other organizations, **we will continue to lead the way in combating this public health crisis.**

Goals

1

Maximize current programs to address isolation and loneliness.

Every single one of our programs, from Meals on Wheels to exercise classes, provides essential social connection for the population we serve. We will continually reevaluate our current offerings through the lens of isolation and loneliness to ensure that they are meeting this need.

2

Pursue new programs that effectively address older adult isolation and loneliness.

We know that there are new and untried ways to combat the damaging forces of senior isolation. By staying current on new trends and technology and being open to bold ideas, we will continue to innovate our offerings.

3

Lead and partner with other organizations to raise awareness and inspire actions that address isolation and loneliness.

In 2024 we successfully partnered with other local nonprofits to convince Thurston County to declare isolation and loneliness a public emergency. We will continue to be a tireless advocate and collaborative partner in service of this cause.

Keystones



Respond to changing community needs within our defined mission

When we were founded in 1973, our senior population included people born in the 19th Century. It is obvious, and yet still worth noting, that **older folks today have a completely different set of experiences and perspectives than their forebears**. As each successive generation ages, we must adapt to their needs and expectations. This requires us to stay up-to-date on new technologies and ensure that our offerings remain relevant to our current community.

We also must take note of changing minority demographics in our community, including but not limited to issues of ethnic heritage and personal identity. Our aim will always be to meet people where they are, treating all of our constituents with dignity and respect.

Goals

1

Consider generational and demographic changes in organizational planning and program delivery.

Our clients of tomorrow will have vastly different life experiences than prior generations. With technology advancing and younger generations beginning to retire, we must be vigilant about keeping our programs current and meaningful.

2

Evaluate the opportunities of changing service hours to reduce barriers and improve access

Not all the people we serve are retired, whether by choice or necessity. We must consider service hours that fall outside of the 9 to 5 working day to cater to the needs of this demographic.

3

Create, modify and/or cease programs to best align our offerings with community priorities.

The needs of our community should always be reflected and considered in the programs we provide. We will be clear-eyed in our assessments of existing programs to be sure they meet the current need, and we will be deliberate and thoughtful about creating new programs.



Empowering People, Enriching Lives

For more than 50 years, Senior Services for South Sound has been dedicated to helping older adults stay independent, healthy and connected. Through our programs, senior centers and community partnerships, we provide essential resources, social opportunities and support for aging with dignity.

Where Community Thrives

Our Olympia and Lacey Senior Centers are vibrant gathering places for older adults. Whether you're looking to learn something new, make friends or stay active, we offer a variety of classes, activities and social events to fit your interests.



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