Overview

In 2021, NADTC convened leaders in the transportation field from the local, state, and national level to provide guidance on the launch of a Coordination Campaign. The Campaign was designed to highlight lessons from the field, create resources and products to assist programs on the ground, and communicate promising practices. One product of the Coordination Campaign is the Coordination Committee Toolkit, which provides guidance on forming coordination committees to further the work of transportation stakeholders.

NADTC thanks the members of the Coordination Advisory Committee, listed below, for sharing their expertise, resources, and time to guide the creation of this toolkit. Special thanks to Shelley Horak for writing content for the toolkit.

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INTRODUCTION

Collaboration with community partners is an essential component in developing and sustaining successful transportation programs. A coordinating committee, or coalition, is defined as a group of individuals and/or organizations from different factions that come together to work towards a common goal. Community transportation challenges are often too complex to be solved by a single agency. Pulling together people from a wide range of disciplines who have a shared interest in solving the problem is an effective strategy in reaching a solution. In addition to solving a single problem or issue, coalitions can also prompt the pooling of resources, eliminate duplication of effort, increase communication, break down stereotypes, and initiate positive social change in a community.

Building a transportation coordinating committee takes time and effort, but when done with thoughtful planning, can result in programs that are more accessible, inclusive, and efficient. This toolkit was created to provide guidance in the important work of developing a transportation coordinating committee. Each section will include an explanation of the various steps to follow, tools to help complete each step, and examples of how the tools have been used.
GETTING READY

One of the first steps in creating a transportation coordination committee is to determine the readiness of your community. Start by defining the community you intend to serve. A community is typically defined as a group of people in a geographic area, but a community can also be identified as a group of people who share a common interest or need. Once the community is defined, the tools below can be used to engage with this community on its readiness, needs, assets, and attitudes around transportation. A community scan, readiness assessment, stakeholder asset mapping, and surveys can provide an overview of the needs and readiness for addressing transportation issues for older adults and people with disabilities.

Needs Assessment, Readiness Assessment, and Environmental Scan

Needs assessments, readiness assessments, and environmental scans help provide guidance for a transportation coordination committee by helping determine the following:

- What are the current transportation coordination efforts in the community and are people in the community aware of these efforts?
- What is the readiness of public officials, businesses, and community leaders to support and engage in transportation coordination?
- What is the community’s attitude towards transportation in their area?

A needs assessment looks to community members to assist with the identification of strengths and resources that are currently available in a community and to discover areas where improvement is needed. This process helps to identify the topics and issues that are relevant to the community and maximizes the results of outreach efforts.

**Tool: Conducting Needs Assessment Surveys** *(Community Tool Box)*

The Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas developed the Community Tool Box to provide resources and tools to assist with organizing for community development. The section on needs assessments explains what a needs assessment is and how to complete one, including a checklist and examples.

**Tool: Community Needs Assessment Field Guidelines and Community Needs Assessment Participant Workbook** *(Centers for Disease Control)*

These tools are part of a curriculum created to train individuals on how to conduct a needs assessment. The step-by-step guidance includes checklists and worksheets which can easily be translated for use in transportation programs.

A readiness assessment is a systematic analysis of an organization or community’s ability to undertake a process or change. Community readiness is the degree to which a community is
ready to act on an issue and can vary depending on the success of programs already in place, or the desire to start from the beginning. The Rural Health Information Hub describes the stages of community readiness, noting that Community Readiness Model is particularly useful when looking to involve different segments of the community.

**Tool: Community Readiness (Community Tool Box)**
This section of the Community Tool Box provides information and tools to measure exactly how ready a community is to address a particular issue and how to use that knowledge to effectively work towards community change.

**Tool: Community Readiness for Community Change (Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research)**
This handbook offers detailed guidance for completing a full community readiness assessment, as well as instructions for conducting a brief assessment for communities that are not able to complete a full assessment. It also shows how to develop an action plan using the information from the assessment.

The Community Readiness Model has been applied to many issues and topics including drug and alcohol use, violence and abuse, cultural competency, HIV/AIDS, and environmental and weather conditions. A national transportation group utilized the model to develop plans for building highways and bridges on tribal lands. As another example, a team used a community readiness assessment to work with transportation engineers and planning staff to help reduce the amount of traffic on streets.

An environmental scan is a process used to gather information to facilitate decision-making. It is an assessment that collects relevant factual data, such as organizational or community history, accomplishments, and/or economic trends. Subjective data, such as customer, staff, or community perceptions, are also gathered throughout the process. The environmental scan identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges and provides insight into the use of resources, sustainability, long-term strategy, and decision-making.

**Tool: Environmental Scanning: What it is and how to do it... (Foresight Futures)**
This guide is designed to provide you with enough information to understand the critical steps to set up an effective environmental scanning program in your organization. The preparation activities can assist project teams to identify forces that may influence the status of an issue within a community. The information gleaned can guide the selection of strategies or interventions.

A variety of tools can be incorporated into an environmental scan. Key informant interviews, focus groups, surveys, SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), and document or policy reviews are a few of the tools that are used to produce well-rounded results depicting the issue and its impact.
Environmental scans have been conducted in transportation, public health, human services, health services, business, and other industries to gather information depicting the ‘big picture’. Some examples of the use of environmental scans are below.

- The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) and ITNAmerica completed an Environmental Scan of Ride Share Services Available for Older Adults in 2019. Their purpose was to understand the impact of ride share services on older adults and to glean information that described those services in more detail, including the barriers and facilitators associated with their use.
- Drop It And Drive is a Canadian education program focused on preventing distracted driving accidents. This blog explains how leaders of the project used an environmental scan to learn details about distracted driving and solutions to address the problem.

Identifying the assets, strengths, needs, and readiness of the community is an important first step in any coordination work. When assessing the whole community, additional community partners will become apparent, providing a stronger base from which to build a successful program.

Credit: Greater Lynn Senior Services Lynn, MA
Surveys

One way of assessing a community includes eliciting feedback and information through surveys conducted online, by mail, in-person or by phone, or as an insert in a public mailing such as a local water bill. Surveys can be informal or official research analyses. Surveys are important to gauge community knowledge about transportation resources and existing coordination efforts and can be a relatively inexpensive way to collect a large amount of information in short period of time. Surveys can be administered remotely which can be an effective way to reach more people who may be affected by any given proposal or project.

**Tool:** *Age-Friendly Community Survey* *(AARP Livable Communities)*
AARP created this community survey to understand what people aged 50 and older think about where they live. AARP used the 8 Domains of Livability framework to develop survey questions which include questions about transportation.

**Tool:** *Age Friendly Arizona Document Library* *(Age Friendly Arizona)*
Sample tools, templates, and promotional materials helpful in starting an age-friendly initiative are found on this website. Templates for conducting focus groups, surveys, and key informant interviews are located in the templates section and are free to use. A toolkit entitled, *Steps to Create Age-Friendly Communities* and the *Blind Spot Mobility Report*, which examines mobility challenges for older people in rural areas, are also found on this website.

**Tool:** *4 Survey Examples to Inspire your Next Transportation Plan Study* *(Metroquest)*
Four different types of online community surveys are examined in this blog, with examples and case studies of each.

Surveys are widely used by organizations across all sectors as a way to engage with members of the community to assess strengths, needs, and interest in a topic.

- The *Age Friendly Arizona* network was created through the collaboration of dozens of community partners with the goal to connect older adults with people of all ages in their communities. They conducted targeted surveys to elicit feedback from community residents regarding the strengths and needs in each community, enabling them to identify the values and priorities on which to base their efforts. *Samples of the surveys* they completed are available for replication on their website.
Stakeholder and Community Asset Mapping

**Stakeholder asset mapping** creates an inventory of stakeholders and how they are engaged by your agency and/or your allies. This process helps to understand the ways stakeholders, including the people you serve, are already involved in the design or implementation of your programs. Stakeholder asset mapping helps build on existing efforts, reduce duplication, and ensure programs are driven by your stakeholders and system users.

**Tool: Stakeholder Asset Mapping** *(The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems)*
This toolkit provides step by step instructions for creating an asset map, or inventory, of the stakeholders associated with your project, program, or issue. Stakeholder asset maps can reveal details about the groups and individuals associated with your issue or program to assist with engagement, decision-making, and action planning. The toolkit includes sample stakeholder asset maps.

**Tool: How to Perform a Stakeholder Analysis** *(Indeed)*
This article explains how a stakeholder analysis can be used to determine what each target audience or interested party will bring to the table in a project or program. Instructions for completing a stakeholder analysis, a template, and sample are included.

**Tool: Stakeholder Analysis - Winning Support for Your Projects** *(MindTools)*
This article includes an interactive screen app and template to help understand and analyze potential stakeholders.

Stakeholder asset mapping is used by business, government, and health care teams to strengthen coordination and improve project outcomes.

- In 2019, The Texas Hunger Initiative at Baylor University and the Alliance to End Hunger joined together to address hunger and poverty nationwide. Their belief in the power of collaboration to solve complex issues led to the creation of a guide to build coalitions entitled, *A Toolkit for Developing and Strengthening Hunger Free Community Coalitions*. A Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet is found on page 40.

- The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy included stakeholder analysis in their *Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Planning Guide*.

- The US DOT Federal Highway Administration emphasized the importance of collaborating with a variety of community partners when addressing safety in transportation planning. In their e-guidebook, *Building Links to Improve Safety*, stakeholder asset mapping is fully described with suggestions for “safety stakeholders” to include in the planning process.

**Community asset mapping** is a strength-based approach to community development. Identifying a community’s existing strengths and resources empowers the community to utilize these strengths to approach community development. Community asset mapping can be a
crucial component in forging meaningful and useful partnerships between various organizations and businesses and their community.

**Tool: Community Asset Mapping (Community Tool Box)**

The assessment strategies offered here enable groups to identify not only the needs or deficits in a community, but also the strengths and existing resources that can help develop plans for improvement.

**Tool: Participatory Asset Mapping Toolkit (Advancement Project- Healthy City Community Research Lab)**

This Community Research Lab Toolkit was developed for conducting asset mapping based on best practices from Community-Based Organizations. It presents research concepts, methods, and tools to support work that directly engages community members in creating change.

The strength-based approach of Community Asset Mapping is a positive exercise used by transit programs and beyond.

- The Center for Transit-Oriented Development partners with public and private sectors to strategize ways to build high performing communities around transit stations. The process of identifying existing assets was foundational for the guidebook, *Families and Transit-Oriented Development*.
- A community asset lens was used to develop the Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization’s *Tomorrow Plan*. This plan outlines goals and action steps and highlights the partners who can serve as catalysts for progress.
- In the book, *Stakeholder Health: Insights from New Systems of Health*, Chapter 6 is dedicated to Community Asset Mapping. In this chapter, the authors describe *Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnerships* (MAPP) and *Asset Based Community Development* (ABCD) as effective approaches to identify community assets.

Understanding the assets and stakeholders in your community can help enhance coordination efforts and leverage existing resources. It prevents overlapping services and builds a pool of available resources that can be drawn upon in the future. The process of asset mapping also helps build relationships with other organizations and businesses who serve similar customers. The inclusion of community partners, users of the service, family members, and caregivers in the design or improvement of services helps ensure that planned changes reflect the needs of those most impacted.
Growing the Table

Once the community’s readiness level has been assessed, stakeholders will need to be recruited and organized to form or augment the coordination committee. Choosing the right partners and finding the best role for them is an important step. As you contemplate who should join your efforts, use an equity lens to ensure you engage traditionally underrepresented or marginalized communities; people from non-traditional racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds; individuals with disabilities; immigrant or refugee groups; the LGBTQ+ community; and those with Limited English Proficiency. An equity lens introduces a set of questions to help leaders focus on ensuring equity in both the process and outcomes of their activities.

A well-rounded and influential committee includes members from a wide variety of backgrounds and organizations who come together to support a common goal. It may be helpful to contemplate the following questions as you consider which partners to bring to the table.

- Who should be involved in the planning and decision-making process?
- Who will be impacted by these decisions?
- How are you involving older adults and people with disabilities?
- How can you include city managers, administrators, and mayors as well as natural leaders, influencers, and champions, and consumers?
- Who is not at the table that should be included?
- How do we get people to join the committee?
- How do you establish trust?
- Should members be compensated?
- What conversations about equity are needed and what groups should be consulted?
- What’s in it for committee members?

Credit: Neighbor Ride, Columbia, MD
Recruitment

If you completed the Stakeholder Asset Mapping, you already have an idea of who should be at the table. Recruiting a team of collaborators who can offer the greatest impact takes careful planning and consideration. Understanding what stakeholders bring to the table in terms of resources, expertise, money, and human capital will be important as the group dynamics are formed and trust is built. The following tools can be helpful in determining who and how to recruit members to your coalition.

**Tool: Effective Coalition Member Recruitment** *(Power Prism®)*
This tool provides guidance on understanding the different levels of membership and how to leverage what each member brings to the table.

**Tool: Building a Contact List** *(County Health Rankings & Roadmaps)*
This tool can be used to help brainstorm potential partners and target those who have influence, and those who are most affected by the project.

**Tool: Collaboration Multiplier** *(Prevention Institute)*
The Collaboration Multiplier is designed to guide an organization to better understand which partners are needed and how to engage them. It is also designed for organizations that already work together, so they may identify activities to achieve a common goal, identify missing sectors that can contribute to a solution, delineate partner perspectives and contributions, and leverage expertise and resources. Using Collaboration Multiplier can help lay the foundation for shared understanding and finding common ground across all partners.

Recruiting the right people to participate in your coordination committee can increase the effectiveness of your work.

- The [Snoqualmie Valley Mobility Coalition](#), located in the rural, northwest corner of Washington, engaged the help of local officials. The mayor and a county councilmember were attendees and advocates of the coalition and helped bring in partners who ultimately provided financial support to its work. One partner is a social service agency called Hopelink who now funds staff time to convene the coalition.

There are various tools that can help identify and recruit effective partners to join the work of a coordination committee. When members are carefully chosen based on their expertise, resources, and common goals, the work of the committee is more effective and streamlined.
Process Equity

Communities shape the health, resources, and opportunities of the people who live in them, but too often these communities have not been designed to treat every person equitably. One element of inequity is the lack of meaningful participation in the planning process by people who are affected by the decisions being made. Ineffective engagement strategies lack accessibility, fairness and inclusion and result in solutions being defined by people with established power and influence. In order to change the patterns of inequity in community life, the planning process must begin with a focus on inclusivity and equity and maintain that equity lens throughout.

To develop a transit program that is accessible by all members of the community, planning should begin by engaging with people who are impacted by the program. It is important for this engagement to include people from all sectors of the population. This interaction needs to continue throughout the planning process and be maintained after the new program is in place. Placing equity at the core of community program development is key to creating inclusive service delivery.

**Tool: A Planner’s Playbook: A Community-Centered Approach to Improving Health & Equity (ChangeLab Solutions)**

This playbook is designed to help decision makers place equity in the center of each phase of the planning process. The playbook provides background on why communities are inequitable and offers resources, community examples, and practical steps for planners who want to create communities where every person can thrive and prosper.

**Tool: Engaging People who Receive Services (The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems)**

The purpose of this guide is to assist human services to fully and effectively include people who receive services in system planning and improvement efforts. This guide is relevant for any system that supports older adults and people with disabilities, like community transportation.

Transit agencies and other community organizations are focusing on creating systems that extend equal access to all people living in their community. Creating opportunities for people, especially in underrepresented communities, to provide input and feedback on transit systems is essential in moving towards an equitable society.

- **The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)** is committed to addressing transportation equity by implementing creative strategies to meet the needs of underrepresented populations in their services. At the heart of this goal is a commitment to connect with the communities they serve by engaging in more than 300 outreach activities each year to gain an understanding of the needs of the community. One initiative, the **Transit app**, ensures equitable fares by keeping track of how much a customer
has paid in fares per day and per month, capping the amount at $4.50/day or $62/month. Previously, customers who were unable to afford the discounted $62 monthly pass found themselves paying more than the $62/month in total fares due to paying per day or per ride.

Credit: Capacity Builders, Farmington, NM
Communication and Messaging

When working with partners from different sectors, communication must be clear and understandable. Terminology may differ between agencies, so that should be understood, and acronyms should be avoided. Before reaching out to potential partners, it is important to take time to learn about their organization’s priorities and goals and use terms and messaging that will resonate with their work and mission.

- What are areas of common interest and priority?
- Why should they care? What’s in it for them?
- How will this collaboration support their issues and mission?
- What will they gain from the partnership?
- How does transportation tie into the work of their agency?
- Which available resources could be useful for them?

Because transportation is entwined with many aspects of community life, transportation goals are frequently parallel with the objectives of other community organizations and should be highlighted in your messaging. Some common transportation goals that may resonate with potential community partners include messaging about safety; mobility and access to jobs; health care; recreational opportunities; quality of life; economic opportunity; and emergency response and evacuation.

It is also important to understand that partners may collaborate at different levels. Some partners will invest substantial time and attend every meeting, others may serve in an advisory capacity, while other organizations might simply work to extend visibility of your campaign. Consider what role may be most attractive to the organization when developing messaging to engage with them.

Effective communication is fundamental to successful collaboration. Learning about the goals, needs, and strengths of potential partners and connecting with them in a way that respects their uniqueness will lead to establishing healthy, strong relationships. Delivering the right message increases the likelihood of forming successful partnerships and diminishes chances of misunderstanding. Together, these efforts result in the creation of a collaborative coalition relationship.

**Tool: Communicate Shortcut (County Health Rankings & Roadmaps)**

This document defines five steps to develop strategic messages and deliver those messages effectively. The Communicate Shortcut is a summary of steps in the Action Center’s Communicate guide.

**Tool: Developing your Persuasive Message (Power Prism®)**

This single page worksheet walks you through questions to help develop a message for a specific audience. Watch the accompanying webinar, How to Craft a Quick and Persuasive Message for additional guidance on persuasive messaging.
**Tool: Connecting Transportation & Health: A Guide to Communication & Collaboration**  
(National Cooperative Highway Research Program Project 25-25, Task 105)

This guidebook helps transportation providers understand the process of collaborating on health issues. It illustrates how health issues relate to transportation, identifies potential health stakeholders, and provides instruction on successful communication methods and collaboration practices. Resources and tools to support effective communication and collaboration between transportation and health professionals are listed and described in detail. Appendix A provides a list of key terms with definitions which may have different meanings in transportation than in the field of health.

The intersection of transportation and community health is a partnership opportunity that highlights the importance of communication and messaging.

- **Health Outreach Partners (HOP)** launched a transportation initiative to understand the impact of transportation barriers on healthcare costs as a response to studies that cited transportation as a common barrier to accessing health services. One project, *Not Just a Ride*, strengthened existing transportation efforts at health centers and found solutions to the issue of missed medical appointments due to transportation barriers. HOP created a toolkit, *Transportation and Health Access: A Quality Improvement Toolkit*, to assist health centers and transportation providers in addressing the problem and finding solutions. Each section of the toolkit contains an overview of concepts and sample tools that can be customized to align with the specific needs of each organization.

- Caltrans, the Department of Transportation in California, is one of 22 state agencies that participates in the *Health in All Policies* (HiAP) Task Force. The HiAP approach incorporates health considerations into decision-making across all sectors and policy areas. The statewide transportation plan reflects the influence of HiAP in its goals, especially in promoting more and safer walking and bicycling trips. The up-front collaboration between health and transportation providers has positively influenced transportation planning.
Framing

Framing is what is emphasized, how and what is explained, and the way this influences the way people think, feel and act. This affects how people hear us, understand us, and how they act as a result.

It is important to frame an issue, particularly for the provision of transportation services to older adults and people with disabilities, in a manner that does not lead to negative stereotypes. The FrameWorks Institute uses scientific methods to study how people understand social issues. Their report, Gaining Momentum: A FrameWorks Communications Toolkit addresses how the field can help build a more age-integrated society which includes access to transportation services.

Data does not always speak for itself. If there is room for interpretation, people will view the data according to their own experiences and not necessarily according to what the data shows. Numbers and percentages are susceptible to misinterpretation if not explained. Ensure data is used to illustrate either the solution or to prevent an issue or potential negative impact. Unless data is framed with this information, those reading it will use it to make sense of what they already believe.

How framing is being used to change stereotypes:

- AARP Launched the Disrupt Aging Collection, a library of over 1,400 images of older adults, in an effort to change the way people think about aging. Reframing what aging looks like by using photographs of older adults doing a wide variety of positive activities is one way to remove negative stereotypes of aging, redefining what it means to get older.

- Conversations around driving and aging often center on “taking away the keys” and focus on limitations and restrictions. This results in a sense of loss of control and supports the negative stereotype of aging. Reframing the issue as “driving retirement” in the same way a person plans for retiring from their job, puts the decision to stop driving back into the hands of the older adult and removes the negative stereotype.

- Transit agencies across the globe are working on reframing their messages to create a positive image of using public transportation. Typical messages focus on safety and rules while riding the bus or train. Messages are being reframed to highlight the advantages of using transit services such as avoiding traffic and making a positive impact on the environment. Toronto’s Transit Commission partnered with the National Ballet of Canada to produce videos of dancers performing on the train and in the station, changing the image of a public transit environment.
The following ways to frame an issue are useful in transportation programs as older adult riders and people with disabilities are often “otherized,” which is to view or treat a person or group of people as different from oneself.

- Use “us” and “we” instead of “them”. We are all aging, and many of us have or will acquire some type of disability at some point in our lives. What assists older adults or people with disabilities in using transportation can benefit all of us.
- Create a sense of a shared interest, public purpose, potential for improvement, and a sense of ingenuity. Focus on the commonalities, not the differences.
- Highlight the importance and contributions of those who ride or use your services. For example, those who cannot drive may be an untapped resource in the workforce.
- Public transportation can be an affordable, public health tool to assist in keeping people safe and healthy by providing access to jobs, health care, food, recreational opportunities, and community services.

Paying attention to the framing used in your messaging can impact the way the community views transportation services and your efforts to improve and coordinate transportation in your community.

Credit: Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Organization and Planning

Transportation coordinating committees with representatives from a wide range of organizations can be very impactful; however, these committees can be a challenge to build and sustain. Having tools to effectively organize the committee can take away some of the guesswork and help ensure the group functions well and provides the guidance and assistance needed for transportation planning and operations.

Investing time and energy to meaningfully plan for and organize your coordination committee will pay off in the long term. Providing clear direction for committee members by defining expectations and working together as a group to determine the group’s mission will keep members focused and enable them to choose activities that will benefit the group, as well as the individual organizations represented. This section of the toolkit will offer guidance on how best to organize a coordinating committee for more effective and meaningful outcomes.

Vision and Mission Statements

One of the first steps is to define a vision and mission for the coordinating committee. A vision statement is a global concept of what success looks like and a mission statement is a declaration of what the committee intends to do to accomplish the vision. The vision and mission give members of the committee, and the community, a clear understanding of what the committee is all about. The statements should be written by the committee as a group as it unifies the work of the committee and keeps the group on track.

Tool: Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements (Community Tool Box)
This website provides an explanation of what vision and mission statements are and why they are important. There are instructions, a checklist, and a worksheet to help create vision and mission statements and examples of each.

Tool: Planting the Seed (National Alliance for Caregiving)
This resource is a guide for creating and sustaining caregiving coalitions but can easily be translated to be used with other types of coalition or committee. The chapter on vision and mission statements (starting on page 19) provides a clear explanation of each, with examples and group exercises that can be used to help a committee develop their own.

“A vision without a task is a dream. A task without a dream is drudgery. But a vision with a task can change the world.” - Oglala Sioux
Mission Statement Examples:

- **Denver Regional Mobility & Access Council (DRMAC)**  
  **Vision Statement**: Mobility and Access for All
  
  **Mission Statement**: DRMAC’s mission is to promote mobility and access for all by addressing transit needs through public outreach and by coordinating the efforts of government agencies and transit providers.

- **Oklahoma Transit Association (OTA)**  
  **Vision Statement**: The organization’s vision is to be distinguished as a leader in the public transit industry by facilitating the enhancement of mobility and access for all Oklahomans.
  
  **Mission Statement**: OTA’s mission is to support public transit through advocacy, education, communication, and partnerships.

- **Hopelink**  
  **Vision Statement**: A community free of poverty
  
  **Mission Statement**: Hopelink’s mission is to promote self-sufficiency for all members of our community; we help people make lasting change.

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**Goals, Objectives, and Action Plans**

Once the vision and mission are established, the group can identify goals, objectives, and an action plan to guide the work of the committee. While the vision and mission are broad statements, goals and objectives define and prioritize the steps needed to achieve the vision and mission. **Goals** are general statements of intent and **objectives** define measurable actions to achieve the goals. **Action Plans** define the steps needed to meet the goals and objectives, always striving towards the mission and vision of the committee.
Goals, objectives, and an action plan should be developed as a group activity to ensure everyone agrees. Having members on board with the action plan helps with the success of the project and is important to the integrity and sustainability of the committee. A well-developed action plan describes the strategies the committee will take to meet its goals and objectives and solidifies the vision.

**Tool: Planting the Seed** *(National Alliance for Caregiving)*
Pages 20-21 in this coalition development guide offer direction for developing goals and objectives in a coalition or committee. There are examples of each as well as an exercise to develop goals and objectives.

**Tool: Developing an Action Plan** *(Community Toolbox)*
A downloadable Action Plan Form and tips for action planning can be found on this webpage to assist committees with developing an action plan.

*Credit: City of Boston’s Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, Boston, MA*
Performance Measures

An essential step to writing an action plan is establishing performance measures and outcomes. Performance measures help determine if the action items are yielding the intended results. A timeline that includes a method to track progress, report on milestones, and describe intended outcomes helps measure the success of the project. Logic models are one way to measure the performance of a project by showing the relationship between the work being completed and the intended effects. Logic models define the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of your work and are helpful for keeping track of program activities. The image below is a sample logic model from the Centers for Disease Control.

![Logic Model Diagram](Image)

Adapted from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

Building performance measures into the action plan offers a way to monitor the effects of the project and observe trends over time. This information is crucial to program operations, sustained funding, and support.

**Tool:** Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures (Environmental Protection Agency)

This document describes 12 performance measures that can be applied in transportation decision-making at regional or metropolitan level as well as the state or local level. Examples of best practices can be replicated or used to spur innovation.

**Tool:** United We Ride Logic Model and Measures (Federal Transit Administration)

This tool provides information on how to coordinate transportation systems and blend efforts across service delivery systems at the national, State, and community levels.

**Tool:** Sample Documents from the Field (Public Health Reaching Across Sectors)

This webpage contains descriptions and samples of Strategic Plans, Logic Models, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Governance Structures that can help you
visualize and create similar structures for your coordinating committee. In addition, there are templates for Logic Models and MOUs that can be used to develop your own.

**Logic Model Example**

- The Minnesota Department of Transportation initiated a project working with their Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs) to develop a performance process in their work plans using logic models. Since the RTCCs do not operate transportation services, the performance measures are qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, outcomes. The project manager identified seven focus areas for their work plans, each with a goal and problem statement. The RTCCs build their logic models around the focus areas and report monthly progress. Although the project is relatively new, the RTCCs have begun to understand the value of including performance measures in their work plans and are embracing the new process.

Benjamin Franklin’s quote, “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail,” gives credence to the importance of developing goals, objectives, and action plans. Not only will planning keep the committee focused, but it also saves time and resources. With solid performance measures in place, it lends credibility to your work.

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**Structure of the Coordinating Committee**

Structure is the framework around which the committee is organized and establishes guidance for how the group operates. Developing a strong framework helps create a more cohesive group and provides a foundation for sustainability. Member roles and responsibilities and meeting format are important elements that should be addressed when determining the structure of the committee.

**Member Roles and Responsibilities**

An important aspect of committee structure is to ensure all members have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The following are some things to consider.

- Identify and define the roles and responsibilities of committee members. Determine how members will be chosen for each role, including leadership roles, and how the committee will be led. Create job descriptions and establish a leadership model so expectations are clear for all members from the start.

- Determine whether to use workgroups or subcommittees to organize and divide the action plan responsibilities among members. Workgroups are an efficient way to complete specific tasks and allow members to focus on an area of personal interest or expertise. Workgroups can be created immediately or as determined necessary by the committee.
• Establish the parameters for membership including the size of the group, when to add new members, and how long members can serve on the committee. Establishing term limits can be helpful with recruitment, keeps the committee fresh, and naturally rotates out members who may no longer be effective.

**Tool:** *Sample Coalition Leadership Role Descriptions* and *Roles and Responsibilities of a Prevention Coalition Member* (Prevention Training Technical Assistance Service Center)
These two documents offer titles and descriptions of typical leadership and member roles assigned in coalitions and can be used as a starting point to customize roles and responsibilities in any coalition or committee.

**Tool:** *Creating a Transportation Committee that Reflects All Community Voices* (National Aging & Disability Resource Center)
Sample Transportation Committee job descriptions can be found in Appendix F.

Unity is strength...when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved. ~ Mattie Stepanek

**Meeting Format**
Carefully consider how to structure committee meetings in a way that meets the group and individual member needs. If things aren’t working as initially planned, make adjustments along the way. The suggestions below can help develop your meeting structure.

- **Meeting Location, Duration, and Frequency** – Decide whether the meetings will be held in-person, virtually, or a hybrid offering in-person and virtually. Take in consideration the challenges some members may have in accessing the internet or finding transportation to a physical location. Determine how often to meet and the length of the meeting. Respect peoples’ time by not meeting just to meet, but recognize that when meetings are held too infrequently, or cancelled too often, it can send a message that the committee is unimportant.

- **Agendas and Minutes** – Agendas keep meetings focused and provide momentum, resulting in more efficient meetings. Meeting minutes are a good way to summarize what happened at the meeting and to identify next steps. Minutes should be sent to the group right after the meeting to detail what was discussed, identify action items, and clarify who will complete them.

- **Decision Making Process** – Determine if decisions will be made by consensus, majority rule, or another process. Decisions made by consensus can be time consuming but can unify the group. Majority rule is quick and efficient but can create division and frustration. Defining a group decision-making process leads to greater commitment and support from group members and strengthens the cohesion of the committee.
Many committees create bylaws to formalize the committee’s structure. Bylaws are the written rules that govern the way the group functions and serve as the legal guidelines of the group. Bylaws define things like the group’s official name, purpose, membership information and meeting format as described above. Bylaws can also include policies and financial arrangements and clarify the relationship with local government or agency administering the committee. Bylaws are required as a condition of nonprofit status.

**Tool: Organizational Structure: An Overview** *(Community Tool Box)*

This chapter of the Community Tool Box gives a framework for building the structure of your committee. In addition to background information about organizational structure, there are examples and a checklist to aid in creating your own structure.

**Tool: Writing Bylaws** *(Community Tool Box)*

This webpage explains the purpose of bylaws and how and when to write them. It includes links to examples, a checklist, and a “fill-in-the-blank” set of bylaws that can be used.

**Tool: Decision Making** *(Prevention Institute)*

This fact sheet offers several ideas for putting a structure in place for making decisions in a coalition or committee group setting.

Clarifying the structure of a coordination committee gives members, and potential members, a picture of how the group operates and what is expected of the members. A clear description of the committee and the specific expectations of membership can be helpful in recruiting new members and in sustaining the committee over the long haul. Developing a solid group structure is also fundamental in validating the importance of the group to decision-makers, funders, and the community at large.

*Credit: The Rapid, Grand Rapids, MI*
Outreach and Public Engagement

One important task of the coordinating committee is conducting community engagement. A communication strategy should be developed to engage with as many community members as possible to understand the needs of the community. Consider the purpose of the outreach to determine which audience can best inform your project, and if the outreach should be general or targeted to specific groups. To reach a vast and diverse audience, each committee member can connect with their own networks, including people who currently use public transportation as well as those who have not yet discovered how transportation could be a benefit to them, whether they use it or not.

To get an accurate picture of the needs of the public, the people you are engaging with should be representative of the community being served. There are many tools and strategies that can be used to reach different audiences including mailings, social media, public presentations, surveys, and interviews. Consider how each segment of the population will best be reached when developing your communication strategy. Your strategy should include not only the message and the format, but also the person who delivers the message. Finding a trusted member of the community to engage with people will help community members feel comfortable in participating and result in more honest feedback.

**Tool: Public Engagement Planning Handbook** *(Minnesota Department of Transportation)*

This handbook helps guide the process of public engagement planning. Six steps are identified with explanations and worksheets to assist in completing each step and the handbook includes a Public Engagement Plan Template.

**Tool: Matrix of Tools** *(Minnesota Department of Transportation)*

The Matrix of Tools is a comprehensive list of tools that will help overcome participation barriers when engaging with the public. Each tool has a description, audience focus, potential benefits and challenges, and tips for success. In addition, the organization or agency which has tested each tool is listed. The Matrix of Tools can be helpful in selecting various methods to effectively engage with the public.

**Public Engagement Example**

- An example of strategic community outreach can be seen through the work of the Oklahoma Transit Association (OTA). Their public outreach campaign, [Oklahoma Faces of Transit](http://www.oktransit.org/facesoftransit), uses photos, videos, and stories of a wide range of public transit users to show the importance of transit and the many reasons why Oklahoman’s use public transportation. Putting real people on the message creates a powerful presentation on the human need for transportation. To further their message, OTA highlighted the monetary side of public transportation through a short video and graphic depicting the [economic impact of public transportation](http://www.oktransit.org/). Both outreach approaches are useful and can resonate with different audiences.
Holding and Facilitating Effective Meetings

An important aspect of supporting committees is to ensure meetings are facilitated effectively. If members feel their time is wasted at a poorly run meeting, they are likely not to return, or fully engage in the discussion and work of the committee. Ways to increase the effectiveness of committee meetings are to establish ground rules, ensure basic terminology is understood by all, create an atmosphere of participation, follow an action-oriented agenda, and conclude the meeting with action steps, identifying who is responsible for what. Finding the right person to facilitate the meetings and making sure meetings are fully accessible are also important considerations. The following tools can assist in making your committee meetings meaningful and engaging.

Terminology

For a meeting to be effective, it is important to ensure everyone has a common understanding of transportation programs and is familiar with the language used in these programs. Terms such as transit, paratransit, non-driver, accessible, affordable, as well as appropriate Federal
and state funding grant programs should be clearly understood by all members. In addition, guidance on the use of person-first and plain language and how to address and refer to groups of people such as older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people from marginalized communities will be critical when engaging with and communicating the committee’s activities to stakeholders, riders, and the community.

**Tool: Every Place Counts Leadership Academy (US Department of Transportation)**
This transportation toolkit provides basic information and tools for emerging professionals and other stakeholders who have limited experience in transportation. It is written in plain language and directed to those who want to get involved in making decisions about transportation plans and projects in their community. There is a large glossary of words and terms frequently used to talk about the process of making transportation decisions.

**Facilitation**

Facilitating an effective committee meeting takes preparation and skill. The facilitator must keep the meeting flowing smoothly and on time, ensure all participants feel comfortable contributing, handle disruptions or disputes, and keep the group focused on the agenda and moving forward. The following tools offer guidance for effective facilitation.

**Tool: Developing Facilitation Skills (Community Tool Box)**
This section of the toolkit provides a detailed explanation of how to facilitate an effective meeting, along with skills and tips to be employed before, during and after the meeting.

**Tool: The Tension of Turf: Making it Work for the Coalition (Prevention Institute)**
This document explains how to respond to “turf struggles” in a way that acknowledges and uses the passion that creates a struggle in a way that strengthens the committee.

**Effective Meeting Tips**

Successful meetings do not happen by chance, they take planning and preparation. The following tools offer suggestions for how to carefully plan and hold an effective meeting.

**Tool: Organizer’s Checklist for Effective Coalition Meetings (PowerPrism)**
PowerPrism has a checklist of tasks to complete prior to a committee meeting that will aid in the effectiveness of that meeting.

**Tool: Transportation Coordinating Committees: Connecting People, Communities (Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources)**
This manual provides guidance and best practices on many aspects of transportation coordinating committees, including a list of important points to remember for holding effective meetings which is found on page 23. A sample agenda is located on page 24.
Accessible Meetings

To be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, all meetings need to be accessible to people with disabilities, whether the meeting is in-person or virtual. This is particularly important considering members of your committee will likely include older adults and individuals with disabilities. When planning meetings, keep in mind that attendees may have mobility, hearing, or vision challenges as well as cognitive, sensory, and other mental or physical needs. Include people with disabilities in your meeting planning and get their input and ideas to ensure accessibility.

**Tool: Creating a Transportation Committee that Reflects All Community Voices**
*(National Aging & Disability Resource Center)*

This guidebook provides insight and guidance on creating a new, or improving an existing transportation committee, covering topics such as structure, orientation, meeting facilitation and community involvement.

**Tool: How to Make Your Virtual Meetings and Events Accessible to the Disability Community**
*(Rooted in Rights)*

This article offers advice for planning and hosting virtual events that are accessible to people with disabilities. There are many tips for how to prepare for an event in advance as well as what to do during and after the event. Suggestions for creating an accessible environment for people with specific disabilities is also included.

Virtual Meetings

Virtual platforms such as Zoom, GoToMeeting, and WebEx, have become a very popular way to hold committee meetings. There are many advantages to virtual meetings, such as not needing to physically go somewhere, but they also come with challenges. Not only do you need to ensure broadband is available to your committee members, but all members need to have the equipment and training to utilize the chosen platform. Facilitating a virtual meeting also takes different skills and resources to be effective. A best practice is to have at least two staff to help monitor the chat, take notes, record the meeting, and address tech issues that will inevitably come up. The following tools offer some guidance.

**Tool: Effective Online Meetings Program**
*(Michigan State University Extension)*

This website offers a plethora of tools and resources to assist with planning and leading online meetings and teambuilding activities. Resources include the *Facilitative Leadership Online Tool Talks* which are short videos that demonstrate several facilitation techniques that are effective for virtual meetings such as mind mapping, rank order, sticky dot voting, and quadrant diagram facilitation.

**Tool: Accessible Virtual Meeting & Presentation**
*(PEAT)*

This short article provides guidance for ensuing virtual meetings and presentations are accessible by offering a checklist to use before during and after the meeting. There are links to other articles describing how to create accessible online events.
Unique Meeting Ideas

Another way to keep committee members excited about and engaged in the committee meetings is to occasionally try new meeting formats. Following the same agenda and approaching problem-solving the same way can become tedious and ineffective. Experiment with different meeting activities to keep things fresh and engaging. Ask your committee members what types of meetings have been most meaningful for them and what ideas they have for improving the effectiveness of the meetings; or offer an opportunity for someone else to facilitate an upcoming meeting.

**Tool: Hosting Tool Kit** *(The World Café)*

The World Café is a structured process for engaging people in conversation to tackle problems. This method gathers information from the participants’ diverse individual perspectives through dialogue and discussion, ultimately integrating the information into a new collective perspective. This toolkit provides all the materials necessary to host a World Café.

**Tool: Graphic Recording** is another idea for fostering engagement and adding interest to a committee meeting. Graphic recording translates the conversations and presentations into a visual representation of the key insights of the meeting. Seeing the information from the meeting presented graphically can bring new perspectives, promote creative thinking, and enable more complex discussions. Graphic recording results in a visual map of the important issues and strategies of the committee. Graphic recording is also a tool that can be used for a community engagement event. Visit the [Ink Factory](https://www.inkfactory.com) website to learn more about graphic recording, hire a graphic recorder for a meeting or event, or even learn how to do graphic recording.

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**Credit:** Avril Orloff, Outside the Lines
Sustaining the Committee

Building a transportation committee brings people from various backgrounds together to work towards a common purpose. Problems can be solved as a group that each organization could not have accomplished on their own. This sense of joint progress motivates people to join and participate in the work of a committee. However, after the completion of a project, committees sometimes struggle to survive. With planning, mindful leadership, and maintenance strategies, a committee can be kept alive and well.

In addition to holding meetings that are well-organized and carefully planned, here are some additional considerations for sustaining the committee over the long-haul.

- Committee members need to feel the committee is tasked with important and actionable items. They need to be challenged and given an opportunity to use their skills or learn new ones. For example, if a member is trained in marketing, utilize their skills in developing outreach materials.

- The importance of the work of the committee should be elevated and celebrated. A transportation committee is instrumental in ensuring limited transportation resources are used efficiently and as coordinated as possible. Publicize and celebrate achievements through the media and by reporting to other boards, decision makers, and legislators. This helps educate local leaders and the community about the work of the committee and can help recruit additional people to get involved.

- Members need to feel ownership in a project and know their contribution is valued. By having members participate in planning and tracking performance measures, they can see how their participation plays a part in the success of the committee and impacts the lives of the people served by the program.

- Meaningful projects will keep professionals, older adults and people with disabilities engaged and involved over time. Without a project on the horizon, membership will likely wane. If too many meetings are canceled, this may devalue the worth of the committee.

- The vision and mission of the committee should be displayed on agendas and other communications to keep members focused. Review the vision and mission regularly to ensure your work still aligns.

- Take the time to do regular maintenance. Just like a machine, a committee needs to be regularly cared for, with check-ups and preventive maintenance. Taking the time to check in with committee members and talk about what is working, and not working within the committee can head off real troubles. This can be done at meetings, checking in with individual phone calls, or by surveying members. A concerted effort to assess not only the work of the committee but the committee itself, promotes sustainability.
**Tool: How to Sustain a Community Coalition** *(Community Health Innovation)*
In this document, you will find fifteen strategies to help you sustain a coalition or committee over time.

**Tool: Maintaining a Coalition** *(Community Tool Box)*
This chapter provides in-depth information about the importance of, and ways to sustain a coalition over time. There is a checklist and a tool entitled, “Diagnosing the Health of Your Coalition” to assist in maintaining your own coalition or committee.

**Sustainability Example**

- An example of a long-standing committee is the leadership team for [Age Friendly Arizona](#). The leadership team, consisting of experts in aging, education, philanthropy, planning, and transportation, shapes the work and direction of Age Friendly Arizona. Four years after the team was formed, team members participated in an assessment exercise by completing two tools to evaluate the team; a collaboration tool developed from the 2003 article [Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration](#) by Thomson, Perry, and Miller, and a networking analysis, which is a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the network. A partner of the group led the assessment and analyzed the results. The analysis identified the strengths of the team, uncovered who were emerging as leaders, and offered insights for how to more fully leverage these strengths to mitigate challenges. Over time, the team has continued to meet at least quarterly to provide direction on the activities of the network. The team is also activated to respond to time sensitive requests, opportunities, and needs of the Age Friendly Arizona network. The strong relationships among the team members makes their response nimble and robust.
Creating and maintaining a transportation coordination committee is an important element in providing transportation services that are effective, accessible, inclusive, and sustainable. The breadth of knowledge and resources that partners bring to the table provides a strong base from which innovative solutions are generated to solve complex problems. A well-built coordination committee has access to expertise and resources that will build transportation programs that meet the needs of more diverse users and will expand the reach of these programs farther than a single organization. Following the guidance of this toolkit will aid in the development of a strong transportation coordination committee that positively impact the lives of many people in your community. As Helen Keller famously said, “Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.”
The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) is a program funded by the Federal Transit Administration and administered by Easterseals and the USAging, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

NADTC’s mission is to increase accessible transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers nationwide.

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February 2022