

### Workshop Discussion Guide

The beginning of the meeting should focus on helping the attendees get to know one another and become comfortable talking together. Choose ice-breaker questions that will be easy for people to answer and might draw out similarities in the group. Consider sharing an article, highlight a best practice or other current event that could help stimulate conversation. Then move the group to the topic of the day, improving community transportation.

Engage the group in a discussion about what is and isn't working when it comes to transportation programs in your community. Use the discussion questions below to facilitate the conversation. You do not need to use every question; pick some that fit your group best. Keep in mind that the discussion will culminate in creating an action plan to help move your community towards improved transportation options.

#### Discussion Questions

- What is our community doing well regarding transportation options?
- Are there transportation programs that are better utilized than others? Why?
- Are there transportation programs that are working well that could be expanded on or replicated?
- What are issues or problems people in our community encounter when accessing transportation? (Choose one problem to focus on.)
- What does your community look like? Think about the various neighborhoods. Is everyone able to access transportation?
- What are some solutions to address identified problems?
  - Describe what this community would look like in a perfect world.
  - What partners do we need to include in this work?
  - What resources and data do we need in order to move forward?
  - What are some barriers we may encounter? How will we address these barriers?
- How do we make sure this work on providing quality transportation options to the whole community continues to be a priority?

#### Tips for Facilitating Discussion

The facilitator's role is to create an environment that enables the group to share thoughts and ideas freely and make plans for next steps. Consider the following tips to aid in the discussion.

- Keep the discussion focused on the topic. Bring things back around if it gets off track, "Those are interesting points but let's stay focused on \_\_\_\_\_."

- Don't let the discussion about the issues or problems last too long. Acknowledge and record all challenges, then choose one or two specific issues to home in on. Lead the group into problem-solving to avoid a complaint session.
- Move the conversation along by summarizing what has been said, using facts and avoiding criticism or blame.
- Deal with conflict by talking about facts. Look for common ground and move the conversation forward.
- Pay attention to time. Ask someone to be a time keeper. Follow the agenda.
- Refer to the ground rules as needed. They are developed by the group for a reason.
- Consider having flip charts to record the main points in a way visible to the group. This helps keep things focused.
- Reiterate the importance of hearing from everyone and encourage all to share.
  - Provide structure for sharing by doing a round robin, breaking into small groups, or using sticky notes or other way for people to write their ideas which often feels safer than saying them aloud.
  - Gently call on people who have not shared and ask if they would like to add something.
  - If someone is dominating, kindly interrupt and say something like, "Thank you for those thoughts, let's hear from some others."
- Ask for feedback to find out if the group feels the discussion is going well.
- Make sure the group feels that the ideas and decisions are theirs, not just the facilitator's.
- As the facilitator, focus on asking questions, rather than providing answers, to create a space where genuine dialogue can emerge. Phrases like, "Talk more about that idea," "How would that look?" or "What do others think about that?"
- Thank people for sharing their time and ideas. Inspirational sayings about collaboration can be effective in helping people feel they are valued.