AARP LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

ROADMAP TO LIVABILITY

Strategies and solutions that make a community great for people of all ages

Transportation Workbook

Book 4 in the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection*

A Publication of

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AARP *Roadmap to Livability Collection*

Strategies and solutions that make a community great for people of all ages

Book 1 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability***

Book 2 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Community Listening Session Tool Kit***

Book 3 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Housing Workbook***

Book 4 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Transportation Workbook***

Book 5 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Health Services and Community Supports Workbook***

Book 6 ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Economic Development Workbook***

A publication of

AARP Livable Communities

Community, State and National Affairs

AARP.org/Livable

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a membership of more than 37 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families, such as health care, employment security and retirement planning. We advocate for consumers in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services.

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Transportation Workbook

Book 4 in the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection*

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*"Transportation is the vital link that connects older adults to social activity, economic opportunity, and community services that support their independence. Without it, people are less able to remain in their homes and communities as they age. Many older adults need specialized transportation services such as door-to-door paratransit and escorts to physician's offices. Safe, affordable, accessible, dependable, and user-friendly options are needed to overcome the physical limitations associated with aging."— **AARP Policy Book***

"A Livable Community is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence, allow residents to age in place, and foster their engagement in the community's civic, economic and social life."

— AARP *Policy Book*

The ***Transportation Workbook*** is a companion publication in the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection*. The workbook provides tools and worksheets that can help engage a community in the development and implementation of an action plan for becoming a better place for people of all ages to live, work and play.

Every community is different and each has its own goals for transportation. This AARP workbook can be used to guide a wide array of efforts to improve transportation, including efforts that seek to:

- Expand the number of affordable, reliable and convenient transportation options in the community
- Adopt a Complete Streets policy, making roads safe for all users
- Create safer pedestrian crossings
- Implement a program to encourage businesses and property owners to keep sidewalks clear of snow and safe for pedestrians

The people working to improve transportation in the community will decide what types of projects will make the community more livable. Our goal is to provide a framework that can be used to assess, plan, evaluate and implement the transportation efforts that are right for your community.

The takeaway from this workbook will be a clear action plan that's crafted from:

- A list of the community leaders who make or influence decisions about transportation, so the team can target and work with them
- A strategy for developing core allies into a team and partnering with people and organizations across the community
- An assessment to identify existing strengths in transportation and to ask community members about the needs and improvements they identify as priorities
- A description of how to prioritize needed improvements based on resident input, feasibility and community leadership
- A path for implementing the changes identified in the assessment
- An assignment chart for implementing action items with the core team and partners
- A list of metrics for measuring the progress of the action plan
- A communications worksheet that maps how to engage and inform the community about the needed changes, and the progress the team will be making

Book 4's *Collection* Connection

The ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Transportation Workbook*** is the fourth title in the six-part ***AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection.***

The steps detailed in this guide, created as a resource for individuals involved in transportation-related livability efforts, correspond with those in Book 1, which provides a broad overview of strategies and solutions that can make a community a great place for people of all ages.

A Bit of Background

Livable communities offer transportation options that improve health, support vibrant neighborhoods, and connect people to economic, social and civic opportunities throughout their communities. Reliable, safe and affordable public transportation options ensure that people can get to work, school and the other places they need to be. Well-designed signage and traveler information help people find the places where they want to go. Safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure encourages people to walk, bike or roll to destinations.

Convenient and Affordable Transportation Options

Transportation options benefit everyone in the community, especially people who can no longer drive, cannot afford the expense of owning a car, or who choose not to drive. A variety of safe, affordable, dependable and user-friendly travel options enable people of all ages to stay active and engaged in their communities. For some people, regular, fixed-route public transportation services are ideal. For others, more personalized services are needed, such as paratransit, dial-a-ride, reduced-fare taxis or rides in private vehicles through volunteer driver programs.

Complete Streets Are Safer Streets

More than 30,000 Americans are killed on the nation's roadways each year and far more are injured. Older adults are overrepresented in both vehicle and pedestrian crash fatalities.

"Complete Streets" are designed and operated for safe, comfortable and convenient travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. The focus of Complete Streets initiatives has been on changing transportation agency policies and procedures so that multimodal accommodations become routine at the project-development stage.

Well-designed roads help to extend the safe-driving years of many older adults while also making it possible to safely travel in the community by foot, bicycle or public transit. (See page 40 for links to information and resources about Complete Streets policies and the Vision Zero initiative to eliminate vehicle-inflicted pedestrian injuries and deaths.)

AARP Driver Safety

The **AARP Driving Resource Center** can help drivers achieve a smarter, safer and more-sustained life behind the wheel. Learn more by motoring over to *AARP.org/DriverSafety*.

Transportation Actions That Get a Green Light

Transportation initiatives range from large-scale to community-specific activities such as:

- Reconfiguring local streets so they are "complete" — that is, usable by people of all ages and abilities by any means, including driving, riding public transit, biking, rolling and walking
- Adding streetlights to make it easier and safer for older drivers to navigate intersections at night
- Installing reflective signs and pavement markings to make it easier and safer for people to travel by foot, bicycle or motorized wheelchair at night
- Improving access to and the use of paths and trails
- Changing bus routes to ensure that service exists for the most transit-dependent in the community, especially for low-income residents and those with disabilities who are unable to drive

Get Off to a Good Start

Speaking of bus routes, one of the most helpful actions a community can take is for its transit or transportation agency to upload information about its bus, train and other transit routes and schedules to the national **General Transit Feed Specification** (GTFS) data system. By doing so, transit customers can easily plan a trip using public transportation.

AARP Transportation Principles

The following principles set out broad goals for policymakers and community stakeholders to provide a variety of transportation options to meet the needs of their residents:

- Promote safe streets that are walkable, rollable, bikeable and drivable — and ensure convenient public transportation services
- Promote affordable transportation options
- Ensure that the transportation system is accessible
- Promote healthy communities through sustainable transportation infrastructure
- Foster coordinated transportation services and assets

A Note About Money Matters

The focus of the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection* is on creating a strong plan that will guide the implementation of a livability initiative. Funding is, of course, an absolute necessity for implementation, and you can find some ideas for funding on page 20 of Book 1. However, the topic of financing change — through fund-raising efforts, grant proposals, or receiving financing from a municipality — is not covered comprehensively in this series.

Let's Get Started!

➢ Put Together a Team

Identify strong leaders and champions who believe in the work and will commit to it. These people are the "core team."

Worksheet: The Starting Lineup

Leaders: Who is going to make sure this initiative moves forward and follow it through to completion?

Name	*Title/Community Affiliation*	*Contact Information*

Champions: Who has the authority to make decisions about this initiative (elected/appointed officials/ decision-makers)? Who has connections with elected and appointed officials or decision-makers and is well respected (by elected officials and residents) for ability to make change in the community?

Name	*Title/Community Affiliation*	*Contact Information*

Team Members: Who else is invested in this issue and should be part of the core planning team?

Name	*Title/Community Affiliation*	*Contact Information*

To add to the core team, complete the worksheet on page 10.

Selecting Members

If the initiative is multifaceted, it will help to include core team members who have experience or a specific interest in the different aspects of the work. A wide base of support on the team will help in marketing the identified needs and changes, increasing the likelihood of community acceptance.

Under *Title/Community Affiliation*, list the community or regional connections of each core team member. (For instance, if a person serves on the board of directors of the Area Agency on Aging or is an active member of a farmer's guild, this is the place to note it.)

Enter information about each member's interest in the initiative.

Sample Transportation Goals

1. Adjust bus stops to be closer to health services and community supports
2. Create a resource guide of transportation options
3. Develop a "door through door" transportation service staffed by volunteers who will escort a passenger to or from his or her home and a medical appointment
4. Add flashing blinker signs to alert drivers that they're approaching a crosswalk in use by a pedestrian

Continued ➢

Building a team requires reaching out by social media, telephone, text, email and in person.

Worksheet: Expand the Team (Think about who else can join the effort.)

	Team Members	
	Name	**Area of Interest**
Core team, including chairs and co-chairs		
Local government representative(s) — such as elected or appointed officials and staff		
Representatives of local nonprofit, religious and service associations		
Representative(s) of local businesses and/or universities		
Residents who represent the demographics and diversity of the local population		

Community Affiliation	Email	Phone

Invite Stakeholders

A successful livable communities initiative is based on broad collaboration. A crucial step in developing an initiative is to find, inspire and equip a diverse group of stakeholders to become engaged.

Begin by creating a list of people, groups or organizations that might be interested in or concerned with the outcome of the work. The team probably won't recruit someone in each sector. Use this as a guide to think about how to broaden the base of community support.

Use the *Circles of Involvement Exercise* described on pages 16 and 17 in Book 1, the *Roadmap to Livability*, to brainstorm about people who can be involved in the work.

For ideas about national partners and resources, see Appendix 1.

Worksheet: Make a List

Beneficiaries (Who benefits from the work? Who's the customer? On whose behalf is the work being done?)

Volunteer Sector (Examples: faith community, nonprofits, fraternal organizations)

Public Sector (Examples: local or regional government, education, public figures)

Private Sector (Examples: businesses, media, investors, funders)

Informal Sector (Examples: relatives, interest groups and clubs, neighbors)

Policy Partners (Examples: authorizers, management, the board)

Resource Partners (Examples: suppliers, networks)

Service Providers and Practitioners (Examples: local experts, professionals, employees)

Others (Examples: anyone who doesn't fit into the aforementioned categories)

Continued ➤

Proper signal timing, roundabouts, narrower travel lanes, raised medians, and street trees are all ways to reduce travel speed without compromising road capacity.

Addressing road fatalities requires a multi-pronged, evidence-based approach, including design innovations for infrastructure and vehicles, adequate law enforcement, a cultural shift within transportation institutions, and a change in public attitudes toward road safety.

Make Assignments

After the team has compiled a list of who is currently involved with the initiative and a list of others who should be involved, note the related groups or organizations in the left-hand column of the **Expand Participation** worksheet (opposite).

Then identify a contact person in the group or organization, if one is known. If a contact isn't known, reach out through the organization's general information line or website contact page. Think about how each group should, ideally, be involved with the livable community effort.

Assign each group or organization to one or more of the *Circles of Involvement* based on the level of involvement that will advance the work.

For example, the town government could assign a staff person or select a board or council member to attend each core team meeting. A committee focused on outdoor spaces may be working with the recreation department to increase walkability. Those people could be pulled into the livability effort.

Organizations and groups can be engaged with the livable community initiative in more than one way. On the worksheet, mark the *Core Team*, the *Circle of Engagement*, *Circle of Champions* and *Circle of Information and Awareness* — or the *Circle of Possibility* — as appropriate.

TIP: Use a color system to mark cases where the current level of involvement does not match the level of involvement the team thinks would be ideal.

Worksheet: **Expand Participation**			*Circles of Involvement*				
	Name of Organization	**Name of the Contact Person**	**Core Team**	**Circle of Engagement**	**Circle of Champions**	**Circle of Information and Awareness**	**Circle of Possibility**
Currently Involved							
Who Should Be Involved							

Gather Information and Identify Priorities

Great communities provide safe, affordable and convenient transportation. Walkable, bikeable, rollable streets are good for downtown economies and increase social connections between residents. Communities that provide transportation by whatever means a person wants to go from place to place are excellent places to live.

The ***AARP Livability Index*** (found at *AARP.org LivabilityIndex*) evaluates how livable a community is in seven livability categories:

1. Housing
2. Transportation
3. Neighborhood
4. Environment
5. Opportunity
6. Health
7. Engagement

The livability score is based on a diverse set of metrics and considers policies and programs that can enhance community livability over time.

For more information about the *Livability Index* and your community's Transportation score, see Appendix 2.

Find the community's baseline
Transportation Score

_____

Complete Streets are streets designed and operated for everyone, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Thoughtful, coordinated, and inclusive transportation planning creates linked mobility options for residents of all ages and ability levels. It also can connect neighborhoods to the broader region via an efficient road and transit network.

Now complete **The Transportation Asset Inventory** to identify the community's transportation strengths and the areas where transportation options or town policies are needed. This information helps set a baseline, measure the changes that result from the initiative and determine priorities.

Worksheet: **The Transportation Asset Inventory**	**Does It Currently Exist?**		**Is It Adequate?**		**Is It a Priority Issue?**	
STREETS AND SIDEWALKS						
☐ Available in the downtown and shopping areas	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ In good repair (no potholes, good drainage)	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Accessible	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Safe	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Promote active living (walk, bike, etc.)	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Complete Streets policy	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Pedestrian/bike master plan	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION						
☐ Available	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Accessible	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Frequent, reliable, appropriate routing	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Accessible, safe shelters	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Route and schedule information is available using Google Transit	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION						
☐ Available	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Accessible	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Coordination of providers/services	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Door-to-door/door-through-door service	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Mobility manager that consumers can contact for help identifying their best transportation option	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION						
☐ Available	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Accessible	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
TRANSPORTATION COSTS						
☐ Affordable transportation options	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
☐ Vouchers available for low-income residents	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**

Continued ➤

Assess the Community

The following methods can be used when conducting a community assessment. Feel free to combine them with other resources. What matters is that at the end of the assessment, the team has gathered the data it needs to start defining goals and creating a strategic plan to move the initiative toward those goals.

Option 1: Do a Survey

If the livable community team designs a survey, it may want to include one or more of the sample questions listed here.

Different communities need to ask different types of questions. The purpose of each question is to learn what people need and want in order to get the work done and improve transportation in the community.

A survey can be distributed electronically, by postal mail or left in public places for people to pick up, fill out and return. Some livability efforts use a combination of methods.

- Distribution by postal mail is the most expensive option but ensures that every person in the community has an equal chance to see and complete the survey.
- The advantage of distributing a survey electronically is that it keeps the costs down and can simplify analysis.
- If the team chooses to use an electronic survey, it should make a paper version available for people who do not have access to or are not comfortable using a computer.

Sample Survey Questions

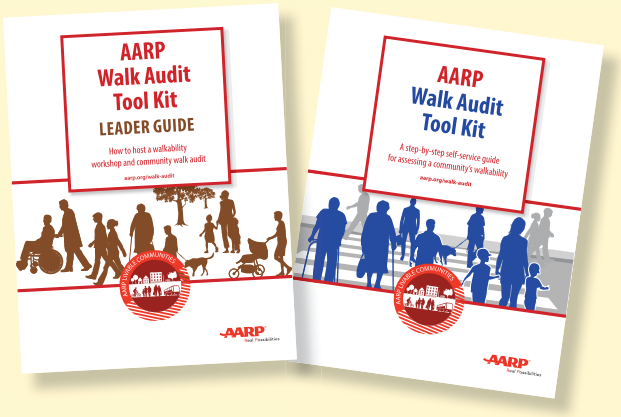
When deciding which questions to include, consider how the resulting information will or can be used on behalf of the community.

1. How do you get around to shop, visit the doctor, run errands or go other places?

		Yes	No
a.	Drive yourself	❒	❒
b.	Have others drive you	❒	❒
c.	Walk	❒	❒
d.	Ride a bike	❒	❒
e.	Use public transportation	❒	❒
f.	Take a taxi/cab or private on-demand service such as Lyft or Uber	❒	❒
g.	Use a special transportation service, such as one for seniors or persons with disabilities	❒	❒
h.	Other, please specify:	❒	❒

Taking It to the Streets

Another way to assess a community is to look at its walkability. The *AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit (AARP.org/WalkAudit)* helps individuals, groups and local leaders evaluate and document the walkability of a community's streets, intersections and sidewalks.



2. Do you have the following in your community?

		Yes	No	Not Important	Not Sure
a.	Accessible and convenient public transportation	❒	❒	❒	❒
b.	Affordable public transportation	❒	❒	❒	❒
c.	Well-maintained public transportation vehicles	❒	❒	❒	❒
d.	Reliable public transportation	❒	❒	❒	❒
e.	Safe public transportation stops or waiting areas	❒	❒	❒	❒
f.	Real-time bus arrival information	❒	❒	❒	❒
g.	Special transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities	❒	❒	❒	❒
h.	Well-maintained streets	❒	❒	❒	❒
i.	Well-maintained sidewalks	❒	❒	❒	❒
j.	Easy-to-read traffic and directional signage	❒	❒	❒	❒
k.	Enforced speed limits	❒	❒	❒	❒
l.	Public parking	❒	❒	❒	❒
m.	Affordable public parking	❒	❒	❒	❒
n.	Safe and well-lighted streets, sidewalks and intersections for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers)	❒	❒	❒	❒
o.	Audio/visual pedestrian crossings	❒	❒	❒	❒
p.	Sidewalks free of snow and ice	❒	❒	❒	❒
q.	Driver education/refresher courses	❒	❒	❒	❒

NOTES:

Continued ➤

Option 2: Hold a Listening Session

Surveys do a great job of revealing how many people share a concern about transportation options in the community and about transportation assets and barriers.

However, surveys do not do a good job of explaining why people answered the survey questions the way they did. Surveys don't provide space for people to talk about an aspect of transportation the survey might not have addressed.

For example, we know about a survey that didn't ask questions about pedestrian safety in the city's downtown area, but during focus groups a livability team learned that walkability was a primary concern.

Community-based organizations and municipalities developed community listening sessions as a tool to inform people about important issues, to build support for a cause, and to discuss potential solutions to problems facing their communities.

Ideally, a listening session will not include more than 25 people, but accommodations can be made for larger groups.

Option 3: Host a Focus Group

Focus groups bring together a small group of people (typically 8 to 12) to discuss a specific livability issue — such as access to affordable public transit or a policy that promotes high-density development or protects green space.

Focus groups are a good tool for providing clarity to information or ambiguous survey data that has already been gathered from the community.

Another important use of focus groups is to obtain specific community perspectives on themes that emerged from a larger forum, such as a community listening session.

Sample Questions

One way to find out how older adults in the community are getting around and what needs are not being met is to ask them. Possible focus group or listening session questions include:

- *"How do you get to medical appointments, do your shopping or errands, attend social or recreational activities or worship services?"*
- *"Tell me about the transportation options where you live."*
- *"Think about a person 10 to 15 years older than you are who no longer drives. What's his or her life like? Is he or she able to get to work, to medical appointments, to shopping, to visit friends? What kind of transportation does he or she use?"*
- *"What kind of transportation options do you think your community needs?"*
  [The interviewer can prompt with suggestions: a fixed route system, a volunteer program, accessible transportation options ...]
- *"What would you be willing to pay to ride/use* [identify a transportation system here or solution] *if it became available in your community?"*

NOTES:

Check Out Book 2

The ***Roadmap to Livability: Community Listening Session Tool Kit*** explains how to conduct a community listening session and focus group.

Continued ➤

Worksheet: Establish Priorities

Now that the team has completed the assessment, it's time to bring the asset inventory together with the findings from the survey and listening sessions or focus groups to identify the direction for the work.

- **What services, policies and initiatives does the community have in place that are working well?**

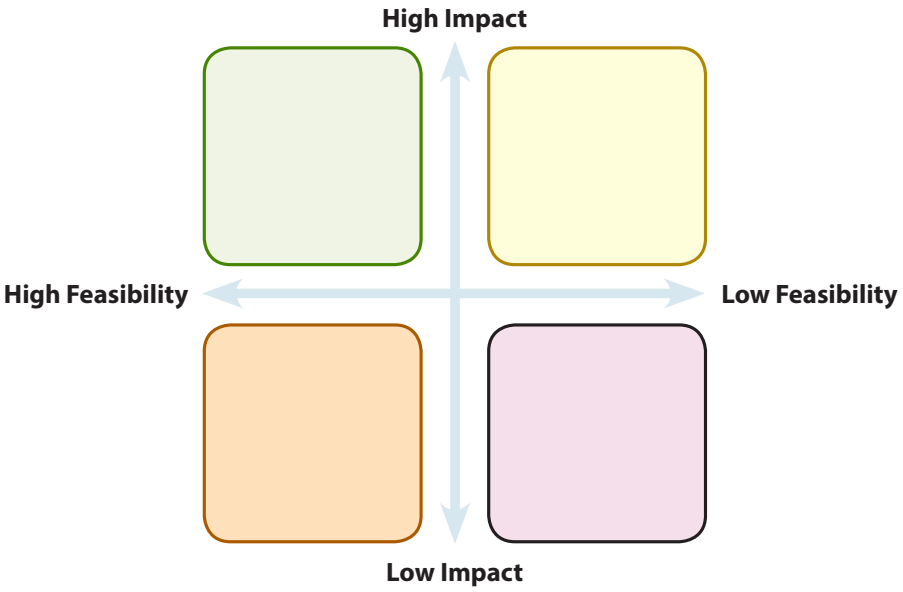
- **What services, policies and initiatives are lacking or not working well?**

- **What might affect the ability and/or success of addressing potential priorities?**

The **Impact/Feasibility Grid** on page 24 is a useful exercise because no team has enough time to address all of the needs identified by an assessment or to complete all of the activities that could contribute to a specific goal. Use of the matrix will help the team map the priority issues and concentrate its time on the types of high-value activities that will keep the initiative moving forward.

- **High Feasibility/High Impact** activities are "quick wins" that don't require outside resources and can be accomplished relatively easily. An example is the creation of a guide to help community residents identify their transportation options.
- **High Impact/Low Feasibility** activities have the ability to make a significant impact but require funding or cooperation with outside agencies. These can be thought of as "major projects," such as starting a volunteer transportation program.

- Activities that fit into the **Low Impact/High Feasibility** category are things it would be nice to do but that receive a lower priority than the higher impact, more feasible projects or — the higher impact, low feasibility projects. These can be thought of as "fill-ins" while the team is working on larger projects. An example might be working with the transportation program to offer an on-demand "shoppers" bus to take people to a local shopping area.
- Low priority activities fit into the **Low Feasibility/Low Impact** category. An example might be petitioning the local transit authority to convert from diesel buses to solar-powered buses. While the impact on the environment will be significant, there won't be significant impact on the availability of transportation.



For a larger, usable diagram, see page 24.

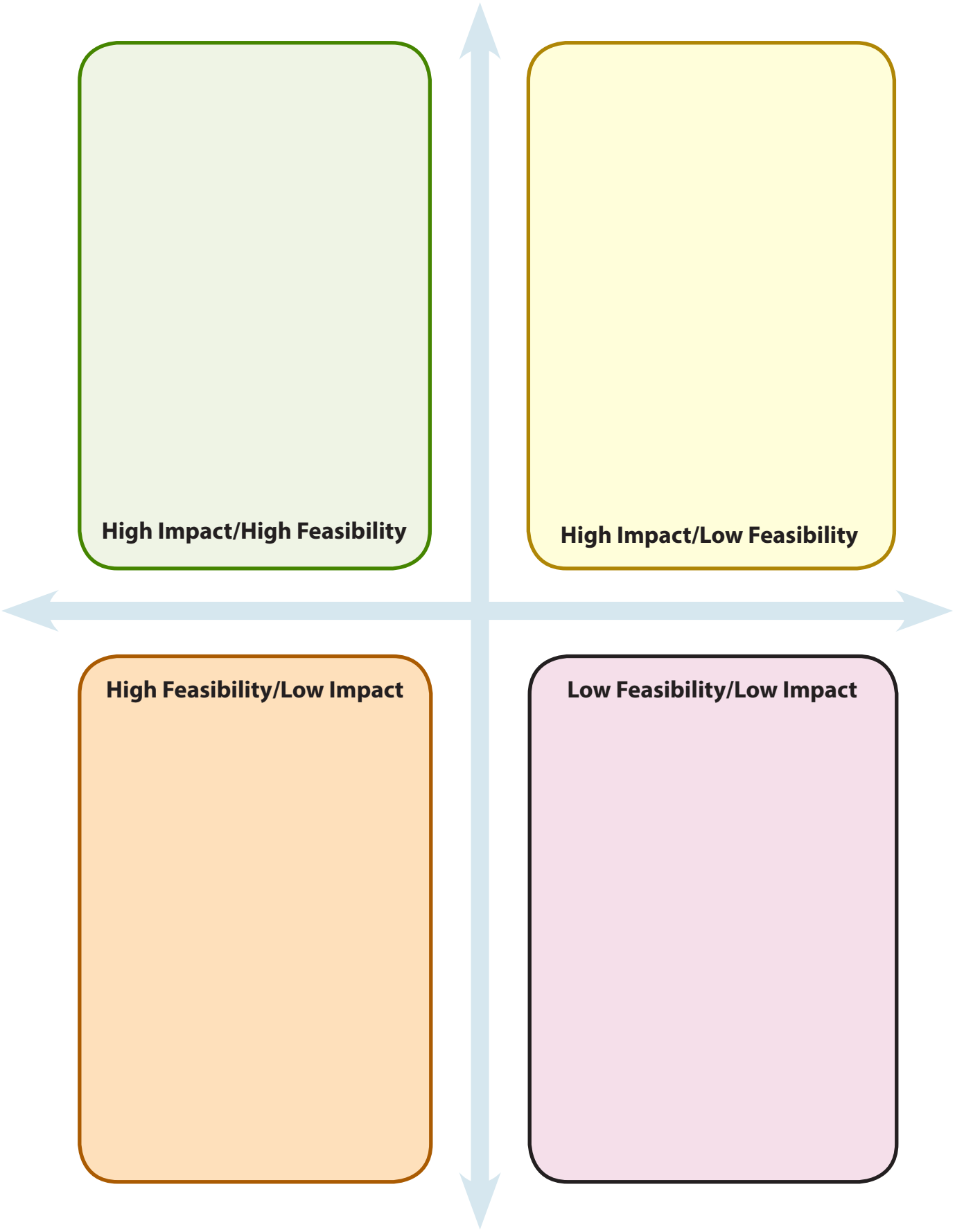
As the team moves through this process, be sure to engage community members in the discussions. This could be an opportunity to conduct listening sessions to share the results of the assessment. Feel free to copy and enlarge the diagram on page 24 and give participants sticky notes so everyone in the room can have input. And don't feel restricted by the small amount of space for writing responses on the worksheets, especially when conducting a community listening session. Just bring extra paper!

Based on what has been learned and discussed, it's time to prioritize the areas of focus and come to a decision. Identify an issue that has high impact and high feasibility and place it in the green box. By identifying an issue that is relatively easy to address and will have a significant impact on the community, the team will be able to identify a success that community members and other stakeholders will notice. Quick successes increase community engagement.

For the next two priority issues, think about the effect on people's health and well-being and the local economy. Think about the difficulty of implementation. Don't include an issue in the red box unless it's critical for the health and well-being of the community. Try to stick with issues the community agrees belong in the yellow or orange boxes.

Continued ➤

Worksheet: Impact/Feasibility Grid



Worksheet: Top 3 Priority Areas

1.

2.

3.

➢ Write the Action Plan's Mission, Vision and Goals

An action plan includes the mission, vision and goals that the core team establishes to make the community more livable. Guided by team values, the plan also identifies activities or actions the team will take to meet the goals, and it establishes key indicators to use in evaluating the measure of success.

There are many ways and methods to organize this work besides the one listed below, so use whatever method fits best within the initiative's framework.

Worksheet: Develop the Mission, Vision and Values

Mission Statement

(a sentence that explains the work's goals and describes why this group of stakeholders is being convened)

Vision Statement

(an aspirational statement that describes the long-term effects resulting from the work)

Team's Values

Ask each member of the core team to share what he or she thinks are the most important values for the work being done in the community. Combine the values that all members are comfortable adopting in order to identify three or four that will guide the community's livability work. See the *Roadmap to Livability*, pages 28 and 29, for more information about creating statements and identifying values.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet: Create SMART Goals and Outcomes

Now set goals that are: Specific ... Measurable ... Attainable ... Relevant ... Timely

(In other words, set SMART goals as described on pages 30 and 31 in Book 1, the *Roadmap to Livability*.)

- A **Long-Term Goal** will take one to five years (or more) to accomplish. It might require funding or developing multiple partnerships to complete.

_____

_____

_____

- A **Medium-Term Goal** can reasonably be accomplished in three months to one year. It might require partnering with another group in order to implement change.

_____

_____

_____

- A **Short-Term Goal** can reasonably be accomplished in three months.

_____

_____

_____

An Outcome Statement can be phrased as follows: "If we accomplish _____ *then we can expect* _____ *and* _____ *to occur."*

Examples of Quick-Action Transportation Safety Projects

1. Bicycle Lanes
2. Chicanes (landscaped curb extensions that slow vehicles)
3. Crossing Islands
4. Curb Extensions
5. Clear Directional Signs
6. Head-Out Diagonal Parking
7. Lane Narrowing
8. Street Trees
9. Parklets and Pocket Parks
10. Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting
11. Rain Gardens
12. Safety Buffers
13. Sharrows (roadway lanes that are shared by cars and bicycles)

(To learn more, search for these terms on *AARP.org/Livable*.)

➢ Develop the Action Plan's Strategies and Tactics

A strategy is a comprehensive action plan that's implemented to achieve the goals of the initiative. Strategies explain what the team is trying to accomplish. Strategies are a guide to a set of tactics for accomplishing a goal. Think of a strategy as the *What* and the tactics as the *How* and *By Whom*. The following chart compares strategies and tactics.

STRATEGY	TACTICS
The overall action plan for addressing a specific goal	**The *How* and *By Whom* statements that explain how the strategy will be implemented**
Example: Address the need for more information about transportation resources *(The Goal)* by partnering with the municipal government to increase the community's awareness of transportation services *(What)*.	***Examples:*** 1. Dan *(Who)* will attend the regional transportation providers meeting *(How)* to introduce the plan and get feedback. 2. Robert *(Who)* will develop a community listening session to find out what residents want and need from a resource guide and to get ideas for promoting the completed guide. 3. Maria *(Who)* will meet with Healthy Hospitals, the Area Agency on Aging, and the municipal transportation department *(Who)* to identify accessible transportation options *(How)*. 4. Fatima *(Who)* will meet with the website coordinator *(Who)* to learn if it is possible to put a transportation resource list on the town website *(How)*.
Example: Address the need for pedestrian safety *(The Goal)* by adding signage for cars to slow down when approaching a crosswalk that links a local park and the public library *(What)*.	***Examples:*** 1. William *(Who)* will arrange a community listening session to get feedback from area residents about the need for signage and the types of signage that would be most helpful *(How)*. 2. Lina *(Who)* will meet with the local transit authority and other municipal stakeholders to find out if the need for additional signage fits into the current transit plan *(How)*. 3. Jasper *(Who)* will contact the state AARP office to request help with a walk audit and to find out if there is information about best practices for pedestrian crosswalk safety *(How)*. 4. Olivia *(Who)* will research grant opportunities to pay for additional signage *(How)*.

Worksheet: Adapt (as Needed) for Action

There is usually more than one path to a desired outcome. One way to gather information about the different routes to a goal is by researching how other communities have implemented a plan to meet a similar goal. The following worksheet can help determine whether a program or service that was implemented elsewhere can work in the team's community. Questions the core team should ask about an initiative before implementing it:

1. **Is a program similar to this one already at work in the team's community?**
   (if yes, consider partnering with that program to enhance the work it is doing)

   ❑ No ❑ Yes, _____

2. **Was there a previous program similar to the one the core team is planning?**
   (if yes, why did it stop?)

   ❑ No ❑ Yes, _____

3. **What side effects (good and bad) might accompany the implementation of the initiative?**

4. **Have other municipalities implemented a similar approach?**

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

(If yes, list the name of the municipality and the contact information of someone the team can speak with about the implementation experience)

Municipality: _____ Contact: _____

5. **After speaking to a representative from a community that has implemented the idea, list and consider how that community is similar and different (in size, resources, geographical area, etc.) from the one the team represents.** _____

6. **How will the differences of the team's community affect the implementation of the initiative?**

   _____

7. **What "lessons learned" did the other community share when talking about its experience?**

   _____

8. **To avoid some of the pitfalls experienced by the other community, how will the core team plan for those challenges (and successes, too)?**

   _____

Continued ➢

Worksheet: Put It All Together

The initiative …	Priority			*Questions/Comments*
	High	*Medium*	*Low*	
Addresses the needs identified in the livable community assessment				
Lines up with the livable community project mission				
Is practical for the community				
Is likely to be effective				
Will be cost-effective				
Will be easy to put into practice				
Requires hiring an outside consultant				
Requires change to a law or policy				
Needs money to implement				
Will be accepted by those the core team hopes will use it				
Will be embraced by the community				

Housekeeping Tips

- No matter how well the core team has planned, nearly every program that is implemented needs further adjustments to meet the needs of a particular community. One way to determine when changes are needed is to include a regular evaluation of the work.
- As the core team moves into the implementation phase, complete two worksheets: **The Action Plan** (page 36) and **The Communications and Marketing Plan** (page 38).
- A livable community initiative is dependent on good will from community members, the municipal government and other community and regional partners. It's important that the target population knows *how* the work is making the community more livable. If people don't know what's being offered, they won't be able to enjoy the new services, programs or improvements.
- The initiative's goals, as well as its successes when goals are met, should be shared with the community partners, the municipal government, the community at large and funders. When involved with community development work, it's good to brag!
- It's also important to celebrate the success of any partnerships. The core team couldn't have achieved what it did without its partners, so be sure to express gratitude to them privately and publicly when appropriate.
- Community partners will enjoy receiving media accolades for their involvement, and coverage increases awareness about the overall livable community work. Media coverage can help attract new volunteers and new partners — and ensure that the existing partners sign on again.

Determine the Evaluation Process

In the final column of The Action Plan worksheet that starts on page 36 of this guide, there's space to identify metrics for evaluation.

If you need help establishing effective metrics, refer to page 36 of Book 1, the *Roadmap to Livability*.

If your initiative wants to measure the walkability of your municipality or how safe streets are for walkers, bikers and cars, AARP has tools designed for that purpose.

- To find out how your community is doing compared to other places, go to the *AARP Livability Index* (see Appendix 2)
- For ideas about how to make streets safer for bicyclists, walkers and motorists, visit the "Getting Around" section of *AARP.org/Livable*
- For safer streets for everyone, visit the Complete Streets section in the A-Z Archives on *AARP.org/Livable*

If the initiative is interested in increasing driver safety, it may want to encourage participation in the AARP Smart Driver Course and monitor its local enrollment numbers — or it could host a "CarFit" event to help drivers make proper comfort and safety adjustments to their vehicles.

Evaluation Methods

There are different ways to measure the overall success of each goal and the impact the initiative has had on the community.

Common evaluation tools include:

- Satisfaction surveys
- Reports
- Focus groups
- Interviews with participants and community members
- Community indicators (such as what percentage of the town has sidewalks)
- Program and public data (such as the number of people who participated in a program)

Evaluation Essentials

- **INPUTS are the resources that had to be present for the livability initiative to be implemented.**

  For example, if a program wants to raise awareness about the different transportation options, the inputs are:

1. Organizations willing to share information about their transportation programs and a person or organization willing to compile it
2. The money and equipment needed to make both printed and digital versions of the transportation resource guide
3. Places where the printed guide can be distributed and organizations that are willing to post the guide or a link to it on their websites and through social media

- **OUTPUTS tell what was created — what the team is doing and whom the work reaches. Outputs are the direct result of the input, the activity, program or service that was implemented.**

  An example of an output for a new on-demand transportation program might be the number of riders who use the service in a six-month period and the types of activities (errands, medical appointments, social visits, recreational outings) riders were able to access.

- **OUTCOMES report the changes that have occurred because of the livability initiative.**

  For example, outcomes of a pedestrian safety campaign could be:

1. *Knowledge by pedestrians about the things they can do to reduce the risk of being hit by a car*
2. *The decision to increase walking for recreation and for errands and to attend activities or events*
3. *An increase in the social connections of residents who are walking and an increase in downtown business from the increased number of pedestrians.*

NOTES:

Ready, Set, *Go!*

The planning is over. It's really time to get started! **The Action Plan** (see page 36) will lead the way. Remember:

- Stay flexible and adaptable to changes that will happen while working on the goals.
- Keep the mission and vision firmly at the forefront to keep the team focused and motivated.
- Don't forget to praise one another and make sure every team member feels appreciated.

NOTES:

Spread the Word

Now that the livability team has moved to the implementation stage, it's important to get the word out. Effective communication begins by raising awareness about the action plan. One of the first steps in a marketing campaign is to share the action plan with *everyone,* whether someone has already been part of the work or not, including but not limited to:

- The community's leaders and decision-makers
- Local social service and health care providers
- Local business owners and employers
- Family and friends of livability team members
- Community members who will benefit from participating in the livability initiative
- The community at large

The Communications and Marketing Plan on page 38 can help the team in its outreach efforts.

No municipality or citizen group alone has all of the financial and human resources that are needed to address the action plan.

In addition to helping ensure that community residents know why the team is focused on a particular issue and what it hopes to accomplish, community support can inspire residents to get involved by contributing their time, ideas and, sometimes, money.

Continued ➢

NOTES:

Worksheet: The Action Plan

Community Name: _____

The Initiative's Vision: _____

The Initiative's Goal(s): _____

Partner Organization(s): _____

Other Involved Group(s): _____

Activities	By Whom	By When
What needs to be done?	***Who will be responsible for the task completion?***	***By what date will the action be done?***

Person/People Responsible for Maintaining and Updating Information: _____

_____

Frequency and Schedule of Meetings: _____

_____

Resources and Support		Potential Barriers or Resistance	Partnerships	Metrics
Resources Available	***Resources Needed***	***Which individuals and organizations might resist? How?***	***Which individuals and organizations should be informed about or involved with these tasks?***	***Which indicators will measure progress?***

Worksheet: The Communications and Marketing Plan

Livable Community Initiative: _____

Primary Spokesperson for the Marketing Campaign: _____

Message	Audience	Tactic

Resources Needed	Community Contact	Team Member Responsible	**Notes** *(barriers, successes, schedule . . .)*

National Organizations

Search the Internet for the websites of the following organizations, each of which has helpful transportation-related information and resources.

- American Public Transportation Association
- Easter Seals Project Action
- ITN*America*
- National Aging and Disability Transportation Center
- National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- National Complete Streets Coalition
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Rural Transit Assistance Program
- Smart Growth America
- State Human Service Transportation Coordinating Councils

AARP Resources

Visit *AARP.org/Livable*, the website of the AARP Livable Communities initiative, and search for the following transportation-related articles, fact sheets and guides. (Policy materials can be found via *AARP.org/LivablePolicy*.)

- AARP Livable Communities Complete Streets and Vision Zero archives
- AARP Public Policy Institute/Transportation
- Fact Sheet, Bicycling
- Fact Sheet, Parking
- Fact Sheet, Road Diets
- Fact Sheet, Traffic Calming
- Meeting Older Adults' Mobility Needs: Transportation Planning and Coordination in Rural Communities

AARP Livability Index: Transportation Score

What is the *AARP Livability Index*?
The AARP Public Policy Institute developed the *Livability Index* as a Web-based tool to measure community livability. Users can search the *Index* by address, ZIP code or community to find an overall livability score, as well as a score for each of seven major livability categories: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement and opportunity. Users also can customize the *Index* to place higher or lower emphasis on the livability features of most importance to them. The *Livability Index* website provides resources to help consumers and policymakers use livability scores to effect change in their communities. It is the first tool of its kind to measure livability broadly at the neighborhood level for the entire country, and it is intended to inform and encourage people to take action to make their communities more livable.

Why did AARP develop the *Livability Index*?
As the U.S. population ages, we face a serious challenge: Our communities are not prepared for an aging society. In an effort to address this urgent problem, AARP sought to help consumers and policymakers decide whether their communities are places where residents can easily live as they get older. Taking a multifaceted approach to assessing livability at the neighborhood level, AARP developed this groundbreaking tool to jump-start community conversations about livability and encourage action by consumers and policymakers alike.

What measurements does the *Index* consider?
Taking a holistic approach to assessing community livability is important, because every place has unique strengths. Central neighborhoods in major cities have the advantage of being close to job opportunities, shops and entertainment options, while rural towns often have more affordable homes, safer streets and less pollution. The *Livability Index* measures housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement and opportunity characteristics. For each category, the *Index* evaluates current conditions using a diverse set of metric indicators, and considers policies and programs that can enhance community livability over time.

The Transportation Score, Explained
How easily and safely we're able to get from one place to another has a major effect on our quality of life. Livable communities provide their residents with transportation options that connect people to social activities, economic opportunities and medical care; they offer convenient, healthy, accessible and low-cost alternatives to driving.

Metrics

- Convenient transportation options: frequency of local transit service
- Convenient transportation options: walk trips
- Convenient transportation options: congestion
- Transportation costs: household transportation costs
- Safe streets: speed limits
- Safe streets: crash rates
- PPI Data Explorer will give you data about traffic fatalities in your state by age and type
- Accessible system design: ADA-accessible stations and vehicles

Policies

- Safe streets: state and local Complete Streets policies
- Convenient transportation options: state human services transportation coordination
- Convenient transportation options: state volunteer driver

The AARP Public Policy Institute is always looking for better ways to measure livability. Metrics may change as new ways to measure transportation are found. Find the *Livability Index* and more information at *AARP.org/LivabilityIndex*.

Best Practices: Transportation

The National Center for Mobility Management launched its Rides to Wellness initiative in 2015. Through **Rides to Wellness,** the Federal Transit Authority invests in new partnerships and innovative transportation strategies that ensure more Americans have access to health care destinations. Public transportation can be an important enabler of access to those services, leading to more individuals reaching life-sustaining and preventive health care services.

In **Austin, Texas,** older residents and AARP Texas worked together to have an interactive traffic signal installed near a busy intersection on a fast-moving four-lane road adjacent to a senior citizens center. Read "How to Get a Traffic Light Installed" at *AARP.org/Livable-Lessons*.

In **Edgewater, Maryland,** the advocacy efforts of homeowners in a 55-and-older community led to the installation of a much-needed pedestrian crossing island. Read "How to Get a Pedestrian Island Installed" at *AARP.org/Livable-Lessons*.

In **Kansas City, Missouri,** the KC Streetcar offers level boarding at all of its stops, so it's friendly for wheelchairs, bicycles, baby strollers and anything with wheels. Kiosks at stops are within ADA-reach ranges and have push buttons for contacting a live customer service person. A headphone jack next to the button enables users to have a quieter, more private conversation. Touchscreens on the kiosks scroll with the light brush of a finger. Visit *AARP.org/Livable-Lessons* for the article "7 Ways to Make Communities More Livable for People With Vision or Hearing Impairments."

Read, order or download the *AARP Roadmap to Livability: Transportation Workbook* and other resources at *AARP.org/Livable*

To stay informed about livability efforts nationwide and receive our newest livability materials, subscribe to the free, award-winning *AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter*
Sign up now at *AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe*

We want to hear about your community and its progress.
Complete the form at *AARP.org/SharingLivableSolutions*

Find the AARP state office near you at *AARP.org/States*

Email the AARP Livable Communities initiative at *Livable@AARP.org*

Contact AARP at 1-888-OUR-AARP

The *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection* is a collaborative effort of AARP Livable Communities "Core Team" members
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as well as consultants Victoria Lemley and Patricia Oh.
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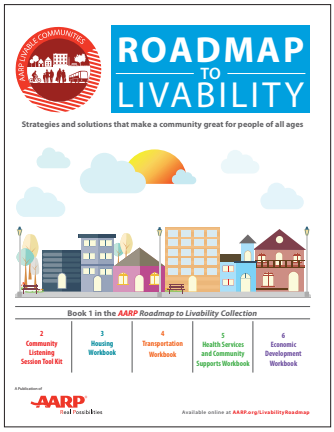

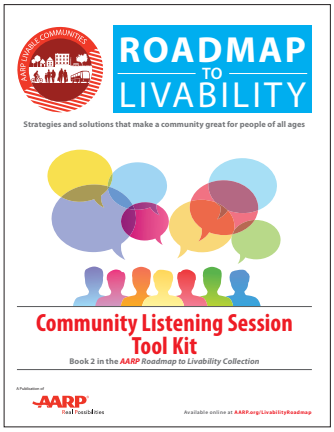

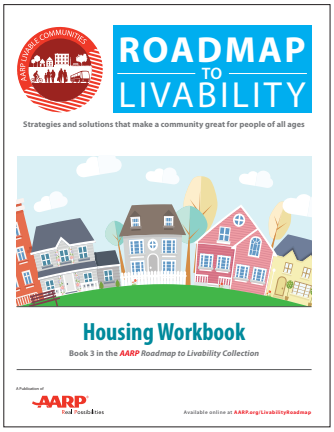

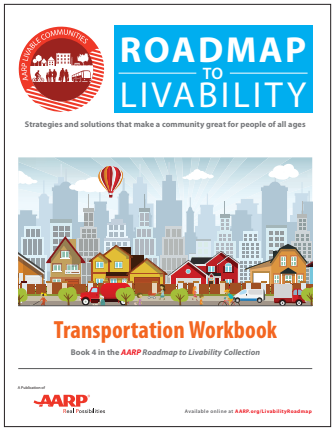

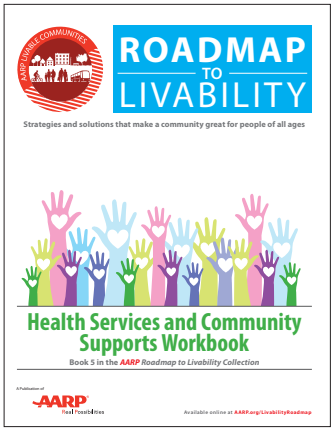

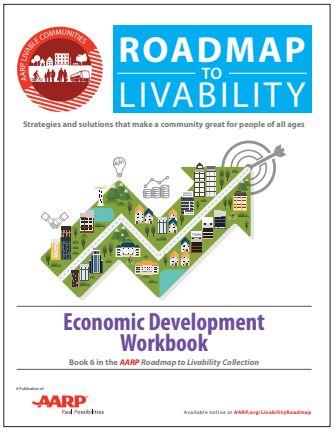

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