

Clean Mobility Options Voucher Pilot Program Community Engagement Guide for the Community Transportation Needs Assessment



**Clean
Mobility
Options**



Prepared by:



Contents

Program Support	3
Introduction	4
How to Use This Guide	5
Community Engagement Requirements	5
Community Engagement Planning	6
Step 1: Determine Community Engagement Goals	6
Step 2: Identify Target Audience and Community Partners	7
Step 3: Select and Implement Community Engagement Events	8
Step 4: Document the Community Engagement Process	9

Program Support

For questions about this guide and to request individualized technical assistance, please contact:

CMO Hotline: 626-744-5670

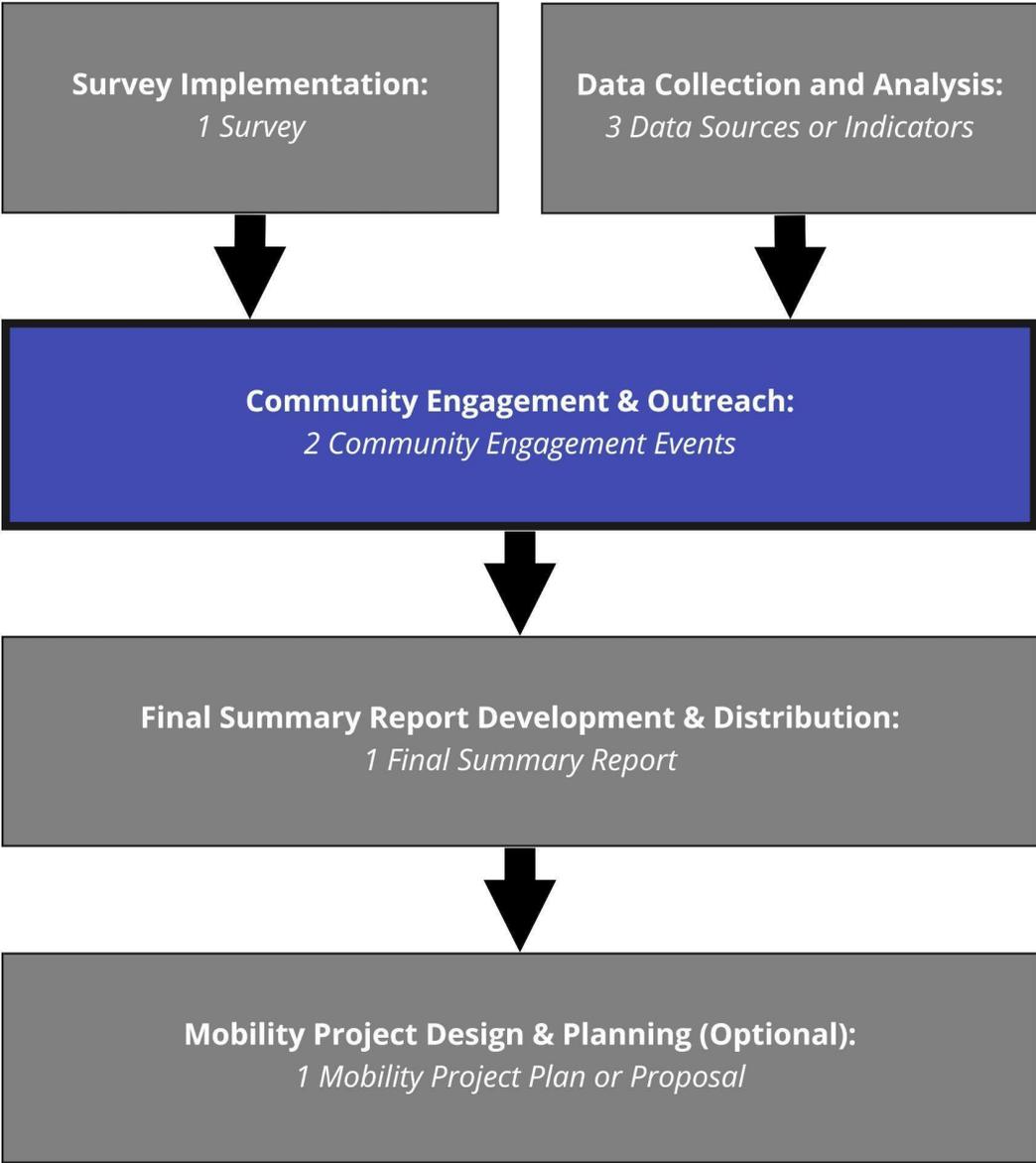
Available Monday to Friday, 9AM- 5PM Pacific Time

Email: info@cleanmobilityoptions.org

Program Website: www.cleanmobilityoptions.org/help

Introduction

In order to apply for Clean Mobility Options Voucher Pilot Program (CMO) voucher funding, applicants must conduct a community transportation needs assessment (needs assessment), which identifies transportation gaps and proposes solutions to meet community needs. **This guide is intended to help MPV applicants (and awarded CTNA voucher recipients) complete the Community Engagement portion of the needs assessment.** See the graphic which shows the sequence and required components of the needs assessment process:



For a project to be successful and reflect the values of CMO, efforts must be made to undo years of biased, exclusionary planning processes. Historically, community engagement has not taken into consideration the transportation needs of under-resourced communities, particularly low-income residents, people of color, and non-English speakers, and as a result these residents struggle with access to adequate transportation options.

How to Use This Guide

The Community Engagement Guide is part of a suite of guides intended to help applicants complete the needs assessment. Particularly, this guide focuses on the community engagement portion of the needs assessment and provides guidance to capture community input on their preferences for mobility solutions. This guide provides a brief overview of the program requirements for community engagement, the main steps to include when conducting community engagement, and the accompanying [Community Engagement Guide Appendix](#) contains examples of community engagement events and considerations for planning community engagement.

Use this guide to understand the steps necessary to conduct your community engagement and refer to the [appendix](#) for recommended event activities and how to make sure these events provide direct and meaningful benefits but are also clear, accessible, transparent, and representative of the community.

Community Engagement Requirements

CTNA Voucher Awardees and MPV Applicants must conduct meaningful and representative community engagement to understand community perspectives on transportation needs and preferences for mobility solutions, and to build trust in the community. At a minimum, community engagement conducted for a needs assessment must meet the following requirements:

1. **Host at least two engagement events:** See the community engagement types described in the [Community Engagement Guide: Appendix](#) for a thorough description and examples of potential engagement events to consider.
2. **Offer opportunities for residents to provide input on preferred mobility solutions:** The Implementation Manual provides questions to frame discussion and engagement activities with residents. See [Step 1: Determine Community Engagement Goals](#) for questions to consider.
3. **Be clear, transparent, accessible, and representative of the community:** Throughout the process of planning, conducting outreach, implementing, and documenting community engagement events, make sure these principles inform your approach and can be explained later in your final summary report.

Community Engagement Planning

Prior to conducting community engagement, it is important to develop a community engagement strategy or plan that aligns with the goals of the transportation needs assessment. For instance, familiarize yourself with the data collected from the survey and other sources; define specific goals for community engagement and identify the target audience; identify community partners who can help you reach the community; and finally, understand which engagement events can adequately capture additional community input. The steps below offer additional considerations to developing a community engagement plan.

Step 1: Determine Community Engagement Goals

Consider what is the desired outcome and what is the purpose for the community engagement activities you're planning to implement. What specific questions are you trying to answer through additional input and discussion with community members?

The main questions to address are listed in the IM and below:

- **Existing Transportation:** How are existing transportation system(s) in the community structured and what options are currently available? Who has access to the current options?
- **Transportation Planning:** What is the transportation planning process like in your community? Who is/are the lead entity/ies and who has been traditionally involved or excluded from transportation planning?
- **Community Representation:** What populations in the community have been traditionally underrepresented?
- **Transportation Needs:** What are community perspectives on transportation needs, preferences, and input on potential mobility solutions?

Potential Goals for Community Engagement

There can be multiple goals for community engagement, however, the main goal should include gathering input from community members on transportation gaps and identifying potential mobility solutions.

Listed below are potential goals for community engagement.

- **Input:** Gather additional input on transportation needs and proposed mobility solutions
- **Discussion:** Facilitate in-depth discussion of transportation gaps and proposed mobility solutions
- **Ground-truth:** Verify or challenge preliminary data from surveys or transportation access data sources through experiences and observations directly from community members
- **Progress:** Share current progress of the needs assessment process, the purpose of current engagement activities, and next steps following the engagement activities
- **Education:** Provide educational information on previous transportation planning context, existing transportation gaps, potential mobility options, etc.
- **Questions:** Provide opportunities for community members to ask questions and seek clarification on the needs assessment process and preliminary results

- **Demonstration:** Provide opportunities for community members to interact with potential mobility options equipment or vehicles

Mobility Needs and Solutions

Throughout the engagement process, it is important to focus on community needs and potential solutions. Here are some examples of how the engagements could work together to gather additional input on community needs and mobility solutions:

- One engagement session on **needs** felt / perceived in the community about mobility, and the analysis of transportation access data, and another session on **solutions**.
- Two Identical sessions on **needs/solutions** but through different participation types.
- Large group meeting on **needs** followed by focus groups on **solutions**.

Integrating robust community engagement that draws out community residents' deep knowledge on existing transportation needs and obstacles in their community can lead to more effective planning decisions. For example, quantitative data may show that people in an area do not own vehicles, and their local knowledge may explain that they do not own vehicles because residents do not have drivers' licenses. Consider these questions:

- Do these indicators (X, Y, Z) from the Transportation Access Data reflect the mobility patterns of the community? If not, why?
- What are the main gaps that are shown through the data and felt needs?
- What barriers are preventing travel or access to work, education, health care, grocery stores, entertainment, and recreation destinations?
- What would be the main concern when thinking about transportation inside the community and connections outside of the community?

Community engagement should also aim to identify the preferred transportation solutions for the needs identified by the community. The proposal of solutions could include the service models that the Mobility Project Voucher covers such as carsharing, bikesharing, ride-hailing and vanpooling and cover other transportation solutions as well, such as sidewalk repair, additional bike lanes or subsidized public transit tickets.

Step 2: Identify Target Audience and Community Partners

Community engagement outreach should be broad and representative of the community. This requires making the events and activities accessible, but also using various strategies to incentivize or reduce barriers for underrepresented community members. Identify which population groups may need further engagement in order to be representative of the community.

Target Audience: Consider which marginalized or vulnerable groups need to be prioritized and what partners (such as local community organizations) can increase engagement. While your community engagement strategies and events should aim to reach all residents of the community, not all community members have the same access or ability to participate due to limited time, limited experience with community engagement, transportation barriers, etc. Consider the following questions:

- Who is in the community? Who is often underrepresented?
- Is survey engagement so far representative of the community?

Based on your responses to these questions, you may have an idea of which groups need additional outreach strategies and incentives to ensure there are less barriers for them to participate.

Community Partners: Marginalized and vulnerable groups may be distrustful of larger organizations or government agencies, so it is often beneficial to partner with local community-based organizations (CBOs) that understand their unique needs, priorities, and engagement barriers. Consider the following suggestions for collaborating with community partners:

- **Partnerships with CBOs:** Partner with organizations to support outreach, community engagement planning and implementation. Try to compensate for time whenever possible.
 - For project leads such as local government or transportation agencies that are not as involved with community members on the neighborhood or local level, prioritize developing long-term relationships with local organizations to better understand overall community needs and transportation gaps throughout the needs assessment process.
- **Existing Relationships:** Identify any existing relationships to groups, institutions, and organizations that can help with reaching those hard-to-reach community members.
- **Existing Events:** Leverage existing outreach events and discuss with key community leaders what the best methods for outreach and engagement would be to reach target audiences.
- **Other Organizations and Agencies:** In addition to local CBOs, consider different types of organizations such as schools, religious organizations, housing authorities, affordable housing sites, neighborhood associations, or libraries that also serve the same population groups.

Step 3: Select and Implement Community Engagement Events

Identify the specific community engagement events that best support the goals and attract the intended audience to participate. Projects are required to conduct at least two community engagement events to meet requirements. See the accompanying [Community Engagement Guide Appendix](#) to understand the range of activities that can be used. Consider the following questions when considering community engagement events:

- **Where:** Where will the community engagement activity or event be held?
 - How much time is there to plan the event or activity?
 - Are there any requirements or costs to use a specific space?
 - Is the space accessible to residents?
- **When:** What date and time will the event be held? How long will the event last?
 - Is this timing feasible and reasonable to residents?
- **Who:** What level of staffing or volunteer support is needed?
 - Will there be stipends or compensation for community members?
- **Outreach:** How will the engagement activities be advertised and shared with audiences?
 - How much time is there to market or conduct outreach for the event?
 - Who will benefit most from outreach and how will you reach them?
- **Materials:** What material or equipment is needed to ensure a successful event?
- **Additional Components:** What additional community engagement components will be provided to make it more inclusive?
 - Consider ADA accommodations, cultural relevance, language, childcare, food, virtual options, health and safety measures (i.e., COVID-19), considerations for time/location,

incentives, etc. See the Event Considerations section of the [Community Engagement Guide Appendix](#) for more in-depth information on these additional components.

Step 4: Document the Community Engagement Process

It's important to document the community engagement through various methods that capture quantitative and qualitative information. Prior to the event develop a plan for documenting the process to ensure information shared by event attendees is captured. Listed below are some strategies for documenting the community engagement process:

- **Online Registration:** Some platforms allow you to obtain information when potential attendees sign up or register online to attend.
 - You may want to include information such as name, phone number, email address, their neighborhood or zip code, how they heard about the event.
- **In-Person Sign-Up Sheets:** Include a sign-up sheet near the entrance of your event location for attendees to register their attendance.
 - This can also be an opportunity to greet attendees and answer any questions, provide additional flyers or event material, or ask attendees to fill out the survey if it is still being collected.
- **Notes:** Take notes of what community members share at the event.
 - **Individually:** Have a team member or volunteer help take notes of what was shared by attendees at the event on a computer. Depending on preference, notes can be in summarized bullet points or a verbatim transcription of what was discussed.
 - **Collectively:** Alternatively, a team member or volunteer can collectively take notes for the group on a large poster-sized sticky note, allowing audience members to see what is being recorded and add suggestions or ask for clarification when needed.
- **Photographs:** Take photographs of the event, of large poster-like sticky notes, of staff or volunteers speaking, etc.
 - Photos taken during community engagement events can also be included in the final summary report for a greater visual impact! Be sure to get peoples' permission before taking pictures of them.
- **Planning Activity:** If you are conducting some sort of planning activity, such as dot-voting or asset mapping, make sure you capture the results of the activity either through a photo, notes or preserving the activity materials.
- **Documented Observations:** Document other general observations such as the demographic make-up of who attended the event, what kinds of questions were asked, how engaged people were, etc.
 - If you had a team of staff or volunteers helping at the event, this may be a helpful topic to discuss and debrief as a team after the event is over.