



INCLUSION & INVOLVEMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN MOBILITY PLANNING

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Inclusive Planning



A process whereby **Stakeholders**
(Participants and Transportation Partners)
are actively and meaningfully involved
in the plan's development.

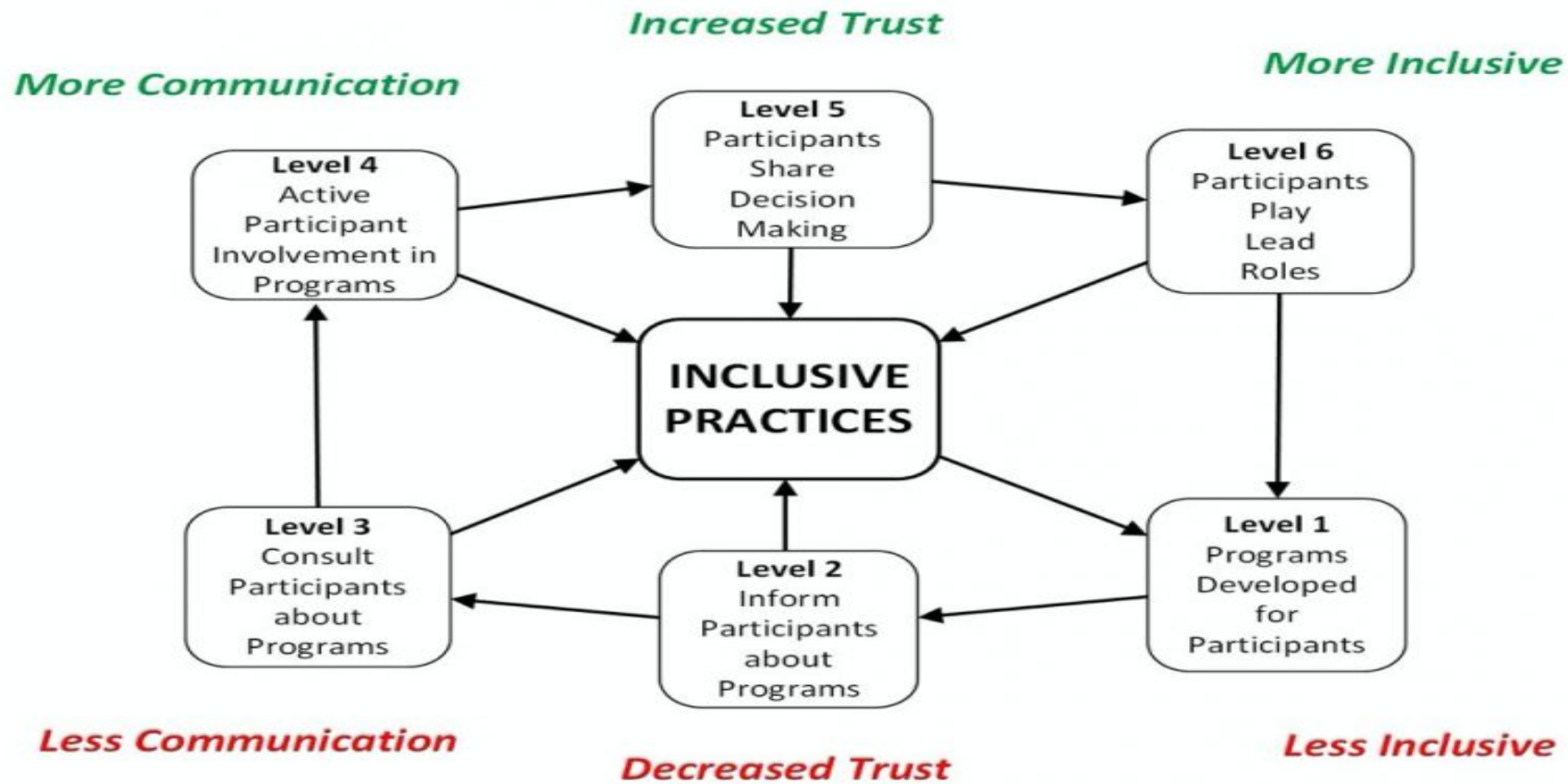
Participant Engagement

All people, regardless of age or disability, should be able to live independently and participate fully in their communities. Every person should have the right to make choices and to control the decisions in and about their lives. This right to self-determination includes decisions about their homes and work, as well as all the other daily choices most adults make without a second thought.

<https://www.acl.gov/about-community-living>



PATHWAY TO INCLUSION



Inclusive Engagement: Critical Issues

- How do you make each person feel that they are an important part of the project?
- Is it easy for all invited participants to attend?
- What is the best way to bring people into the process? Is it a meeting or something else?
- How can you ensure that everyone's opinion is sought and valued?
- What is your feedback loop?

Inclusive Engagement: Critical Issues

- Recognize expertise
- Track ideas and solutions; also keep track of and acknowledge contributions
- Don't assume satisfaction
- Give up control
- Go beyond your own comfort level
- Never, ever assume you've reached everyone who could contribute!

Successful Approaches

- Clearly understanding and recognizing Participant and Partner/Stakeholder roles
- Evolving Steering Committee members & roles
- Participant-led focus groups
- Town halls & community meetings that invite open dialogue



How to Promote Inclusion

- Education for everyone/the solution is in the room!
- BORPSAT: “bunch of the right people sitting around the table” – does it look like your community?
- Not just the "Usual Suspects"
- Practice Openness to new ideas/thinking outside the box
- Recognize and seize opportunities



Older Americans – A Dynamic Population

- In 2019, there were 54.1 million Americans age 65+: 30 million women and 24.1 million men
- Growth in overall numbers of 65+ population expected to reach 98 million by 2060
- Nearly 1 in 4 older adults were members of racial or ethnic minority populations in 2019; expected to increase to 28% in 2030

Aging itself is dynamic....

- There are vast differences in life experiences between 60 and 80 year olds
- The different generations of older Americans also have different perspectives on such things as the use of technology
- BUT age alone is not a predictor of health, mobility or receptivity to new technologies, including smart phones and the internet: *A March 2020 Pew Trust survey found that 74% of older Americans used email early in the pandemic*

Ageism/Changing the Frame

- We have successfully extended the human life span, BUT the increased number of older adults is often viewed as a burden.
- Yet older adults continue to contribute to their families and communities as:
 - Workers
 - Taxpayers
 - Volunteers
 - Consumers
 - Carers

And as keepers of our history and culture



Ageism/Changing the Frame

All older people are not alike!

*If you know one older person, you know
one older person....*

Strategies for Engaging Older Adults

- **Be aware** of your own implicit biases and automatic responses
- **Replace stereotypes:** Instead of assuming a need for help, ask if assistance is needed
- **Embrace new images** but also understand the pitfalls of doing so
- **Individualize:** What unique challenges does this person face? How does this individual cope with day-to-day challenges

Strategies for Engaging Older Adults

- Be open to **changing your perspective**
- Get to know older adults through the planning process
- Older adults have a great deal to contribute to the work of improving transportation in your community....
 - But first, they need a seat at the table and a way to get there!



Reaching Diverse Older Adults

- Recognize there are unique challenges faced by underserved, marginalized populations.
- “Improvement projects” often focus on the majority at the expense of those who need the service the most.
- Important to figure out ways to engage community and stakeholder voices.

Engagement vs Outreach

- Engagement and outreach are not the same
- You have to talk to people
- Ditch any pre-made, self determined conclusions
- Ask them what they want
- Ask yourself, “is our engagement equitable?”



Identify Your Equity Commitment

- DEI isn't static, but rather an ongoing cycle of design and reiteration.
- Define equity for YOUR community
- Equity comes from a process and an outcome

Incorporating Equity Through Partnerships

- All partnerships are not created equally
- Be coordinated when engaging the community
- Start with defining and committing to equity
- It is not “ok” to not have community partnerships

Critical Considerations for Engagement & Inclusion

- Understand the pressure points
- What are the political barriers?
- What does your community need?
- What are their limitations?
- What do they need to actively engage?
- What can you do to position community members as the leads on projects and pay them for their expertise?





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**Diversity of
people,
perspectives**



**Inclusion:
power, voice,
organizational
culture**



**Equity = results
from policy,
practice,
position**



Inclusion Requires Shifting of Power

- Do you just have diverse faces at the table?
- Do they have decision making power?
- Do they have a voice in organizational culture?
- Can they shift and direct budgets?
- Can they say “yes” or “no” to things?

Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Strategies for Overcoming Systemic Transportation Barriers

- Don't assume you know what the barriers are
- Understand intersectionality
- Find partners who know the communities you are trying to reach
- Consider information and language access
- Offer alternative formats for engagement
- Balance needs and desires without creating access barriers





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