



ROADMAP TO LIVABILITY

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



Health Services and Community Supports Workbook

Book 5 in the **AARP** Roadmap to Livability Collection

A Publication of



Available online at [AARP.org/LivabilityRoadmap](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityRoadmap)

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](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)

Available for download at [AARP.org/LivabilityRoadmap](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityRoadmap)

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.

AARP 601 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20049

© AARP 2018 | All Rights Reserved

Health Services and Community Supports Workbook

Book 5 in the **AARP** Roadmap to Livability Collection

Introduction	5
A Bit of Background	6
STEP 1 Put Together a Team	8
• <i>Worksheet: The Starting Lineup</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Expand the Team</i>	
STEP 2 Invite Stakeholders	12
• <i>Worksheet: Make a List</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Expand Participation</i>	
STEP 3 Gather Information and Identify Priorities	16
• <i>Worksheet: The Health Services and Community Supports Asset Inventory</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Establish Priorities</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Impact/Feasibility Grid</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Top 3 Priority Areas</i>	
STEP 4 Write the Action Plan’s Mission, Vision and Goals	28
• <i>Worksheet: Develop the Mission, Vision and Values</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Create SMART Goals and Outcomes</i>	
STEP 5 Develop the Action Plan’s Strategies and Tactics	30
• <i>Worksheet: Adapt (as Needed) for Action</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: Put It All Together</i>	
STEP 6 Determine the Evaluation Process	34
STEP 7 Ready, Set, Go!	36
• <i>Worksheet: The Action Plan</i>	
• <i>Worksheet: The Communications and Marketing Plan</i>	
Appendix 1 National Organizations and AARP Resources	42
Appendix 2 <i>AARP Livability Index</i>	43
Appendix 3 Best Practices: Health Services and Community Supports	45



“Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities in which they live, learn, work, and play. Strategies to improve the public’s health are multifaceted and involve multiple entities, including federal and state governments, health providers, faith- and community-based organizations, and individuals.” — 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 **Health Services and Community Supports Workbook** is a companion publication in the *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection*. The workbook provides tools and worksheets to 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 health services and community supports. This AARP workbook can be used to guide a wide array of efforts to improve the health and well-being of residents in the community, including efforts that seek to:

- Develop a community para-medicine program
- Start an intergenerational child care and adult day care program
- Increase access to a local food pantry
- Work with a regional dental school to establish a monthly free dental clinic

The people working to improve health services and community supports in a town, city or neighborhood will work with residents and other partners to identify the types of projects that will make a community more livable. Our goal is to provide a framework that can be used to assess, plan, evaluate and implement the 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 health services and community supports, 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 health services and community supports 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 5's Collection Connection

The ***AARP Roadmap to Livability: Health Services and Community Supports Workbook*** is the fifth title in the six-part ***AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection***.

The steps detailed in this guide, created as a resource for individuals involved in making livability changes to enhance health services and community supports, 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

At some point, every person of every age gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs some help. At some point in our lives, we all interact with health services and/or community supports.

Many of the health-related examples in this workbook focus on the needs of people aging with chronic illness or a disability. However, the principles addressed here — and in the rest of the *Roadmap to Livability* series — apply to people of all ages and abilities.

Initiatives seeking to increase access to health services and community supports benefit from including people who have expert knowledge about what already exists in the community and the region.



“Public health professionals and various partner groups help ensure that community health is an explicitly stated goal in community planning processes as it relates to such specifics as density and design, housing mix and type, transportation infrastructure and land conservation.”

— from the article *How to Work With Public Health to Advance Livable Communities*, [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/livable)

Health Services

The health of people in a community depends on access to a wide array of health services, including primary care providers and specialists, mental health services, substance abuse prevention and treatment programs, preventive and health maintenance programs, quality rehabilitation programs, pharmacy services and dental care. Recreational opportunities that encourage people to maintain or improve their health are essential, too. When residents of a community are healthy, they're more likely to shop at local businesses, volunteer their time and be active in civic affairs.

Community Supports

Local services — such as an active intergenerational community center and recreation programs — make it easier for people to connect with one another and build community ties. Programs that promote food security, help residents make critical repairs to their homes, and provide affordable recreational opportunities enable residents to participate fully in community life — regardless of age, economic level or ability.



“Livable communities are communities that people want to be in. I challenge anyone to tell me what city in the U.S. — or the world — is vibrant and livable yet filled with a lot of sick people. ”

— **Rose Gowen, M.D.**, commissioner,
City of Brownsville, Texas

Reading List

See page 42 to find online articles, reports and resources, including:

- ***Public Health and Age-Friendly Communities***, [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)
- ***How to Work With Public Health to Advance Livable Communities***, [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)
- ***A-Z Archives: Community Health and Wellness***, [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable)

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 information about 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!

STEP 1

➤ 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 will follow it through to completion?

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title/Community Affiliation</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>

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?

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title/Community Affiliation</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>

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

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title/Community Affiliation</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>

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 Health Services and Community Supports Goals

1. Develop an intergenerational garden
2. Create a lending library of seasonal recreational equipment, such as cross-country skis, pickleball or croquet sets, and alpine ski poles and walking sticks
3. Host an annual wellness walk for people of all ages
4. Establish a local warming or cooling shelter

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		

➤ 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)

“Imagine living in a community making sure the health of all of our children is a matter of fact and not a matter of chance. Imagine knowing that all of our employers, our mayors, our educators and our faith leaders were working together to give everyone the tools and the opportunities they need to make responsible choices. [Imagine] living in a society that not only believes but also insists that every person has the chance to be as healthy as [he or she] can be.”

— Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D.,
president emerita and former CEO,
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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 person to contact 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 subcommittee focused on emergency preparedness might be working with the police and fire departments to ensure that the needs of residents with special needs are met in an emergency situation and that people know what to expect if an emergency is declared.

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 health services and community supports for people of all ages, incomes and abilities, so everyone can enjoy an active, healthy and engaged lifestyle.

The **AARP Livability Index** (found at [AARP.org/LivabilityIndex](https://www.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 about the *Livability Index* and your community's scores, see Appendix 2.

**Find the community's baseline
Health Services and
Community Supports Score**

Social determinants of health — such as access to employment, education, housing, healthy foods, safe streets and neighborhoods, and social supports — are important predictors of health outcomes and health behaviors.

By the Numbers

A community's livability scores can be used to assess the area's access to health services and community supports.

Housing Score _____

Housing is a central component of livability. Deciding where to live influences many of the topics the *Index* covers. We spend more time in our homes than anywhere else, so housing costs, choices and accessibility are critical. Great communities provide housing opportunities for people of all ages, incomes and abilities, allowing everyone to live in a quality neighborhood regardless of his or her circumstances.

Transportation Score _____

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.

Neighborhood Score _____

What makes a neighborhood truly livable? Two important qualities are access and convenience. Compact neighborhoods make it easier for residents to reach the things they need most, from jobs to grocery stores to libraries. Nearby parks and places to buy healthy food help people make smart choices; diverse, walkable neighborhoods with shops, restaurants and movie theaters make local life interesting. Additionally, neighborhoods served by good access to more distant destinations via transit or automobile help residents connect to jobs, health care, and services throughout the greater community.

Environment Score _____

Good communities maintain a clean environment for their residents. Great communities enact policies to improve and protect the environment for generations to come. The *Livability Index* looks at air and water quality. It measures communities' actions to create resilience plans to prepare for emergencies and

natural disasters, and it awards points to states that have policies promoting energy efficiency and that protect consumers from having their utilities cut off during extreme weather events.

Opportunity Score _____

America was built on opportunity — and our nation's many thriving communities are no different. The degree to which a community embraces diversity and offers opportunities to residents of all ages and backgrounds is important to overall livability. Backed by a strong regional economy and fiscally healthy local government, welcoming communities provide residents an equal chance to earn a living wage and improve their well-being, from jobs to education.

Health Score _____

Community conditions influence health behaviors. Healthy communities have comprehensive smoke-free air laws, offer easy access to exercise opportunities, and have high-quality health care available. Because health is so deeply related to quality of life, many other categories of livability in this *Index* include metrics related to health. For example, access to healthy foods, jobs and education, number of walk trips, lower speed limits, social engagement measures, and air and water pollution are all related to health.

Engagement Score _____

A livable community fosters interaction among residents. From social engagement to civic action to Internet access, residents' individual opportunities to connect and feel welcomed help lessen social isolation and strengthen the greater community. The *Index* explores and examines the different ways in which residents engage with and support their communities, and how they impact livability as a whole.

Now complete **The Health Services and Community Supports Asset Inventory** on the next two pages to identify the community's strengths and areas where support and services are needed. This information will help set a baseline, measure the changes that result from the initiative and determine priorities.

Continued ➤

Worksheet: The Health Services and Community Supports Asset Inventory	Does It Currently Exist?		Is It Adequate?		Is It a Priority Issue?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteerism by people of all ages	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear and accessible information about local activities and events	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear and accessible information about health and social services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> A single point of entry where older people can turn for information and referrals (e.g. Aging and Disability Resource Center)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> A program to answer the legal questions of people who cannot pay full legal fees	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Home visitors or programs where postal carriers are trained to look for problems, etc., as related to homebound seniors	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Widely available information about how to contact a Health Care Ombudsman	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for people with dementia and training for family caregivers	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> A grocery store in the neighborhood or community	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> A pharmacy in the neighborhood or community	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> At least one pharmacy and one grocery store deliver to private homes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable recreational opportunities for active adults and children and for people who want to maximize their wellness	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Community emergency planning that takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of people with disabilities	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Food security programs, such as a food pantry, summer school lunch program and Meals on Wheels	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible and widely publicized lifelong learning opportunities	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> A community center, senior center or other place where people can gather for social and recreational events	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Worksheet: The Health Services and Community Supports Asset Inventory	Does It Currently Exist?	Is It Adequate?	Is It a Priority Issue?
<input type="checkbox"/> Respectful and helpful municipal, social service, and health care staff who are trained to serve people who represent the diversity in the community, including older people	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Safely constructed and fully accessible health and community service facilities	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Residential care facilities and affordable housing options located close to services and the rest of the community	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Health and social services conveniently located and accessible by all means of transport	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable, conveniently located and readily accessible mental health services	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> On-demand transportation programs to health care, social service and mental health appointments	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Home care services that include health and personal care and housekeeping	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> An adequate range of health and community support services for promoting, maintaining and restoring health	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Minimized economic barriers impeding access to health services and community supports	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Administratively simple and coordinated delivery of services	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Services to specifically address the needs of people isolated by physical or cognitive disability	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> End-of-life resources and supports	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient and accessible burial sites	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
OTHER (initiatives, funding, opportunities)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/>	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 health services and community supports where they live.

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. In the past 12 months, have you needed help with any of the following? Were you able to get the help?

		Did you need help?		Could you find help?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
a.	Filling out forms or preparing taxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Completing household chores or routine home maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Making home repairs/weatherization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Managing yard work, gardening, snow removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Looking into home modification program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Doing errands — shopping, banking, picking up medications, returning books to the library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Taking medications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Preparing meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How likely do you think it is that you will need the following services in the next five years?

		Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely
a.	Personal care at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Housecleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Caregiver support group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Wellness/fitness classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Home maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Home-delivered meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Safety checks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Library services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How often do you engage in some form of physical exercise (such as walking, running, biking, swimming, sports, strength training, yoga, stretching)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Every day
<input type="checkbox"/>	Several times a week but not every day
<input type="checkbox"/>	About once a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	About once or twice a month
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than once a month

4. How important is it to you to remain physically active for as long as possible?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely important
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not very important

Continued ➤

5. Does the community where you live have the following?

		Yes	No	Not Sure
a.	Health and wellness programs and classes in areas such as nutrition, smoking cessation and weight control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Fitness activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Conveniently located health and social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	A service that helps older adults find and access health and supportive services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Conveniently located emergency care centers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Easy to find information on local health and supportive services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Home care services including health, personal care and housekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Well-trained certified home health care providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Well-maintained hospitals and health care facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	A variety of health care professionals, including specialists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	Mental health care services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	Health care professionals who speak different languages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	Easily understandable and helpful hospital or clinic answering services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Option 2: Hold a Listening Session

Surveys do a great job of revealing how many people share a concern about community supports and about access to health services.

However, surveys don't 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 health services and community supports the survey might not have addressed.

For example, a survey we know of didn't ask questions about emergency preparedness, but during focus groups, the livability team learned that it 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 issue — such as determining a location and the hours for an urgent care medical clinic.

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.

Check Out Book 2

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

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?

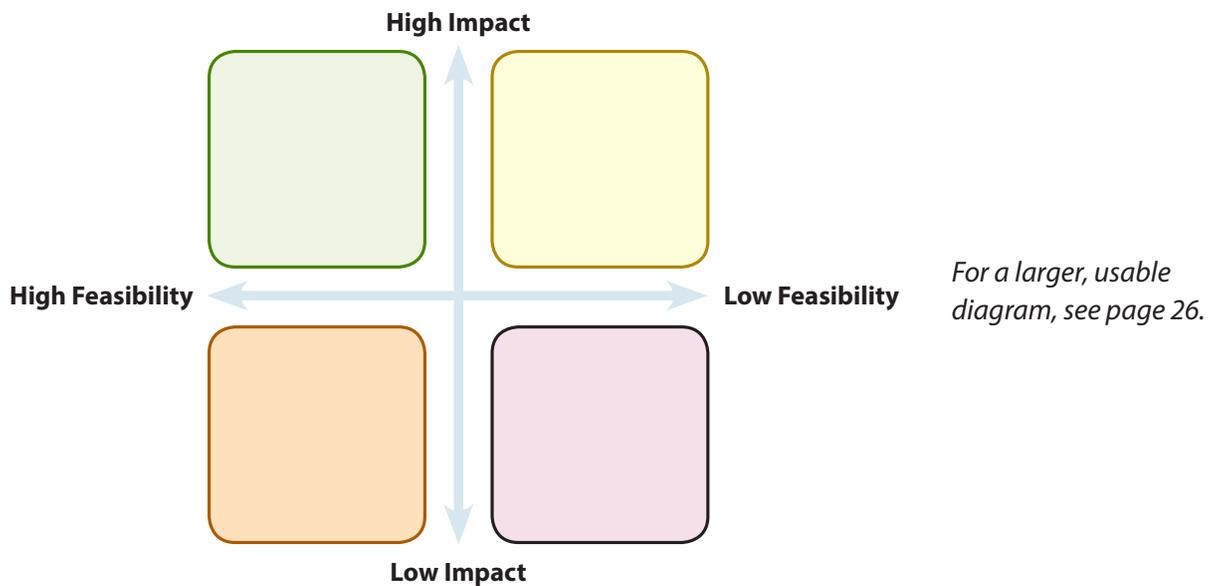
- What might affect the ability and/or success of addressing potential priorities?

The **Impact/Feasibility Grid** on page 26 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 would be hosting a walk to raise funds for a local food pantry.
- **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 service to help residents make critical repairs or modify their homes to make them safer and easier for people to live there if they have a disability.

- 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 of a fill-in activity could be identifying free space in the community to host activities that, in the future, would take place at a community center the team is working to raise funds to build.
- Low priority activities fit into the **Low Feasibility/Low Impact** category. An example is working to create an urgent care clinic in a small community that already has three urgent care clinics.

As the team moves through this process, be sure to engage community members in the discussions.



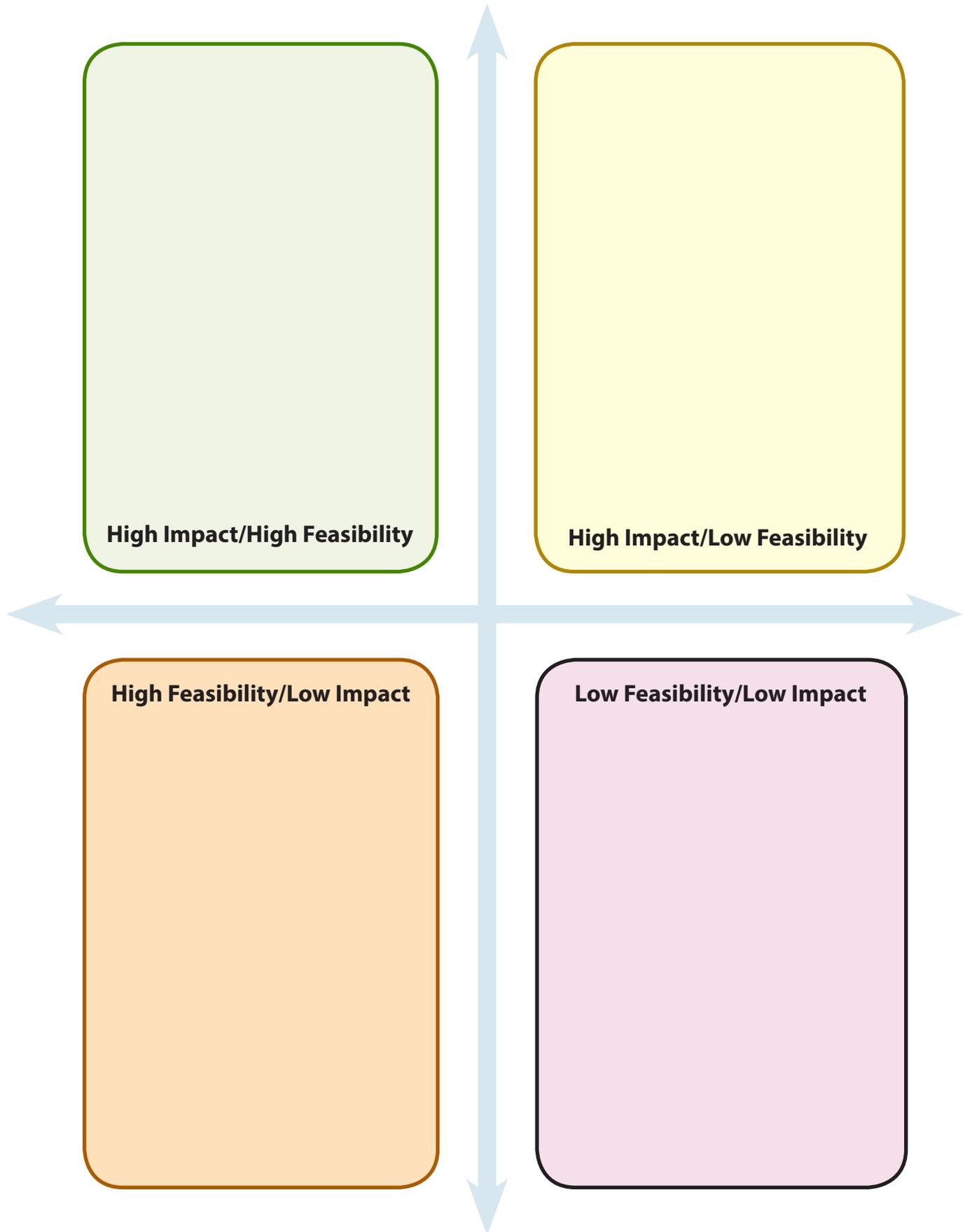
This could be an opportunity to conduct listening sessions to share the results of the assessment. Feel free to copy and enlarge the diagram on page 26 and give participants sticky notes so everyone in the room can have input. And don't feel restricted by the small amount of space for writing responses 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."

Goal Examples for Health Services and Community Supports

1. Create a neighborhood-based intergenerational after-school program
2. Maximize awareness of resources to prevent becoming the victim of a scam and provide fraud-prevention training
3. Increase and promote community awareness about warming and cooling centers
4. Advocate for the creation of a disaster preparedness plan that includes the needs of all people
5. Promote awareness of municipal property tax reduction programs
6. Develop and expand a community center with programs for people of all ages — from toddlers to centenarians
7. Organize a neighborhood block party
8. Partner with a local organization to provide mental health and dementia awareness training for first responders and municipal employees
9. Create a free clothing closet

➤ 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
<p>The overall action plan for addressing a specific goal</p>	<p>The <i>How</i> and <i>By Whom</i> statements that explain how the strategy will be implemented</p>
<p>Example:</p> <p>Address the need for more information about available health services and community supports (<i>The Goal</i>) by partnering with municipal government, social service organizations and health care providers to increase awareness of the programs, services and activities available in the community (<i>The Strategy</i>).</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edward (<i>Who</i>) will attend the regional service provider meeting (<i>How</i>) to introduce the plan. 2. Maria (<i>Who</i>) will meet with the Healthcare Coalition (<i>Who</i>) to learn which organizations offer wellness programs that are open to everyone in the community (<i>How</i>). 3. Rose (<i>Who</i>) will meet with the website coordinator (<i>Who</i>) to learn if it's possible to put a resource list on the town website (<i>How</i>).
<p>Example:</p> <p>Address social isolation (<i>The Goal</i>) by developing a community garden (<i>The Strategy</i>).</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shelby (<i>Who</i>) will contact Neighbor City (<i>Who</i>) to find out what process it followed to develop its community garden (<i>How</i>). 2. Tony (<i>Who</i>) will contact the state AARP office (<i>Who</i>) to find out if it has guidelines for developing community gardens that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities (<i>How</i>). 3. Ali (<i>Who</i>) will contact the municipal public health office, parks and recreation, and the Downtown Association (<i>Who</i>) to see if they are interested in partnering on the project (<i>How</i>).

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**

<i>The initiative ...</i>	Priority			<i>Questions/Comments</i>
	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	
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 38) and **The Communications and Marketing Plan** (page 40).
- A livable community initiative is dependent on goodwill 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 38 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*.

Or consider the following ideas:

Access to medical services and community supports is key for the health and well-being of residents of all ages, especially the youngest and oldest in the community. Some communities have emphasized food security. Others have looked at elder abuse prevention, started a warming shelter, advocated for a local urgent care clinic, or developed an enhanced disaster preparedness plan.

- If an initiative wants to make sure people with disabilities, people in residential care facilities and people with pets are included in the community's disaster preparedness plan, ask the town or county government for a copy of the plan and document the way it includes special populations and pets.
- If the initiative's focus is food security, look at the American Community Survey data (factfinder.census.gov) to find out what percentage of people in the community who are eligible for benefits from the federal government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) get them.
- You also might want to find out if there are people in the community who are food insecure but don't use the food pantry. You might be able to help the food pantry by mounting a publicity campaign or recruiting volunteers. The American Community Survey data is slow to change, but an increase in the number of people participating in the pantry or volunteering will be evident a few months into the initiative.

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 the number of income-eligible people who are using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP, formerly known as food stamps)
- Program and public data (such as the number of people who participated in a program)



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
<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for the task completion?</i>	<i>By what date will the action be done?</i>

Person/People Responsible for Maintaining and Updating Information: _____

Frequency and Schedule of Meetings: _____

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

Resources Needed	Community Contact	Team Member Responsible	Notes <i>(barriers, successes, schedule ...)</i>

National Organizations

Search the Internet for the websites of organizations with information about health services and community supports.

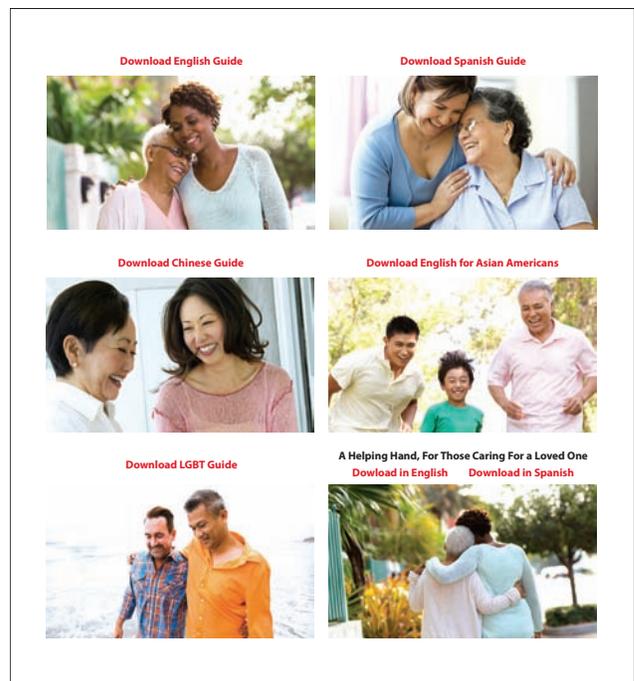
Here are a few to start with:

- *Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC)*
- *Alzheimer’s Association*
- *Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors*
- *Eldercare Locator*
- *Faith in Action*
- *Hearing Loss Association of America*
- *Long-term Care Scorecard*
- *National Cancer Society*
- *National Council on Aging*
- *New Eyes for the Needy*

AARP Resources

Visit [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.aarp.org/Livable), the website of the AARP Livable Communities initiative, and search for the following articles, fact sheets and guides. (Policy materials can be found via [AARP.org/LivablePolicy](https://www.aarp.org/LivablePolicy).)

- AARP HomeFit Guide and Worksheets
- AARP Policy Book: Health
- AARP Public Policy Institute
- AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Online Tool Kit
- A-Z Archives (Community Health and Wellness)
- “How to Work With Public Health to Advance Livable Communities”
- “Public Health and Age-Friendly Communities”



Visit [AARP.org/Caregiving](https://www.aarp.org/Caregiving) to download the free AARP guides *Prepare to Care: A Resource for Families* and *A Helping Hand: For Those Caring For a Loved One*. (Available in English, Spanish and Chinese.)

AARP Livability Index

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, transportation, neighborhood, environment, opportunity, health and engagement. 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 ground-breaking 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.

Housing Score

Metrics

- Housing accessibility: basic passage
- Housing options: availability of multifamily housing
- Housing affordability: housing costs
- Housing affordability: housing cost burden
- Housing affordability: availability of subsidized housing

Policies

- Housing accessibility: state and local inclusive design laws
- Housing affordability: state and local housing trust funds
- Housing options: state manufactured-housing protections
- Housing affordability: state foreclosure prevention and protection
- Commitment to livability: state and local plans to create age-friendly communities

Transportation Score

Metrics

- Convenient transportation options: frequency of local transit service
- Convenient transportation options: walking
- Convenient transportation options: congestion
- Household transportation costs
- Safe streets: speed limits
- Safe streets: crash rates
- PPI Data Explorer data about traffic fatalities by state, age and type
- Accessible system design: ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)-accessible stations and vehicles

Continued ➤

Policies

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

Neighborhood Score

Metrics

- Proximity to destinations: access to grocery stores and farmers markets
- Proximity to destinations: access to parks
- Proximity to destinations: access to libraries
- Proximity to destinations: access to employment by transit
- Proximity to destinations: access to employment by auto
- Mixed-use neighborhoods: diversity of destinations
- Compact neighborhoods: activity density
- Personal safety: crime rate
- Neighborhood quality: vacancy rate

Policies

- Mixed-use neighborhoods: state and local transit-oriented development (TOD) programs
- Commitment to livability: state and local plans to create age-friendly communities

Environment Score

Metrics

- Drinking water quality
- Air quality: regional
- Air quality: near roadways
- Air quality: local industrial pollution

Policies

- State utility disconnection policies
- Local hazard mitigation plans
- State energy efficiency scorecard
- State and local plans to create age-friendly communities

Opportunity Score

Metrics

- Income inequality
- Jobs per worker
- High school graduation rate
- Multigenerational communities

Policies

- Local fiscal health
- State minimum wage increase
- State expansion of family and medical leave act
- State and local plans to create age-friendly communities

Health Score

Metrics

- Healthy behaviors: smoking prevalence
- Healthy behaviors: obesity prevalence
- Healthy behaviors: access to exercise opportunities
- Access to health care: health care professional shortage areas
- Quality of health care: preventable hospitalization rate
- Quality of health care: patient satisfaction

Policies

- Healthy behaviors: state smoke-free laws
- Commitment to livability

Engagement Score

Metrics

- Broadband cost and speed
- Civic engagement
- Voting rate
- Social engagement
- Cultural, arts, and entertainment institutions

Policies

- Internet access
- Voting laws
- Local human rights commission
- Local LGBT anti-discrimination laws
- State and local plans to create age-friendly communities



The AARP Public Policy Institute is always looking for better ways to measure livability. The metrics used in calculating scores may change. Find the *Livability Index* and more information at [AARP.org/LivabilityIndex](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityIndex).

Best Practices: Health Services and Community Supports

In **Brownsville, Texas**, the **CycloBia “Open Streets” program** reduces the rates of chronic disease among the city’s residents by promoting healthy eating and active living. Surveys indicate that people who come to the CycloBia have increased their physical activity after attending. Studies about ciclovias in other cities have also shown increased physical activity for participants. A more active community results in lower rates of obesity and, consequently, fewer people with Type 2 diabetes.

In **Newport, Vermont**, the **Fresh Start Community Farm**, an intergenerational urban community garden, helps provide access to food in a place where some residents find it difficult to get nutritious and affordable ingredients for meals.

In **Littleton, Colorado**, the **Littleton Aging Well Resource Center** helps connect older residents to resources in the community.

In **Rochester, New York**, a **weekly dance** at a local Whole Foods supermarket is a fun social activity for people of all ages that also benefits cardiovascular health, coordination, flexibility, cognitive skills and memory. “People can dance forever,” says a local dance instructor. “Our feet might not move as fast as when we’re older, but the music and the energy are still there even if we’re sitting down.”

In **Watertown, Massachusetts**, the quarter-mile **Braille Trail** enables people with impaired vision to spend time outdoors and walk along the Charles River without any help. Instead, a guide wire with different kinds of beads distributed along it indicates the presence of nearby features such as signage and benches.

Read more about these examples at [AARP.org/Livable-Lessons](https://www.aarp.org/Livable-Lessons).

Read, order or download the
AARP *Roadmap to Livability: Health Services and Community Supports Workbook*
and other resources at [AARP.org/Livable](https://www.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](https://www.aarp.org/Livable-Subscribe)

We want to hear about your community and its progress.
Complete the form at [AARP.org/SharingLivableSolutions](https://www.aarp.org/SharingLivableSolutions)

Find the **AARP** state office near you at [AARP.org/States](https://www.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
Director: Danielle Arigoni | Senior Advisors: William Armbruster, Melissa Stanton (Editor), Mike Watson | Advisor: Rebecca Delphia
as well as consultants Victoria Lemley and Patricia Oh.

The *AARP Roadmap to Livability Collection* was designed by Jennifer Goodman

Unless indicated, all images are from 123RF.com

Page 4: Image 24569620

Page 6: Image 26933852

Page 7: Image 43952298

Page 9: Image 44429714

Page 14: Image 10184295

Page 16: Image 10184295

Page 23: Image 22966967

Page 33: Image 31295122

Page 34: Image 28241335

Page 36: Image 28374815

Page 42: [AARP.org/Caregiving](https://www.aarp.org/Caregiving)

Page 45: Image 79059255

Front Cover

Image 14551235

Back Cover

Roadmap to Livability Images 37024713 and 30553112

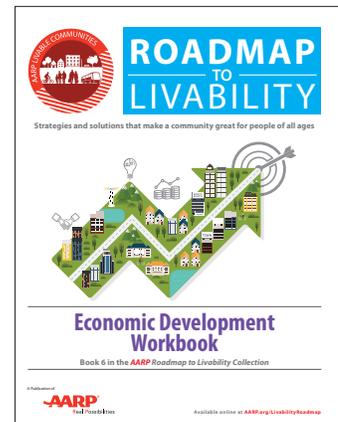
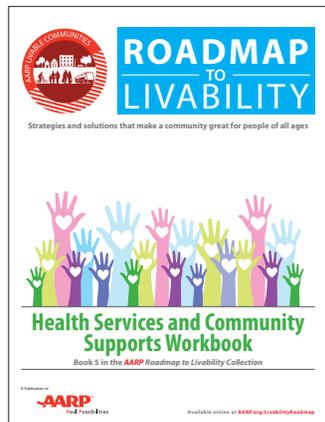
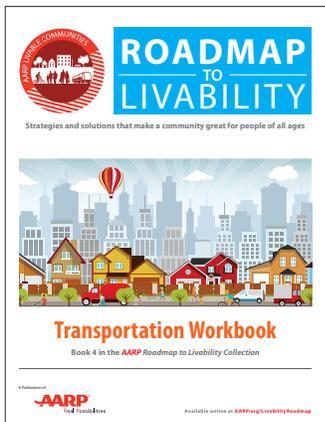
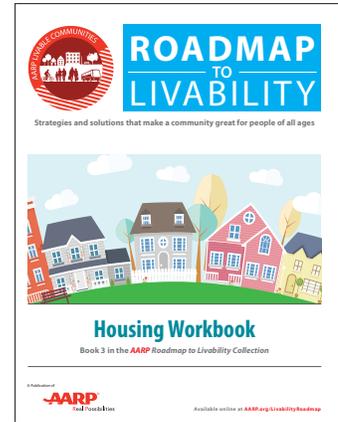
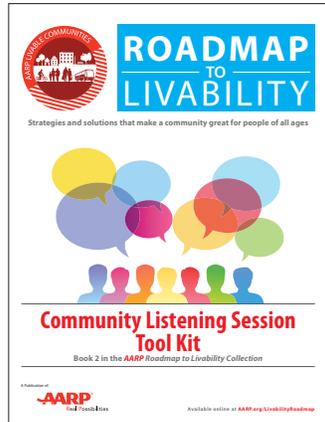
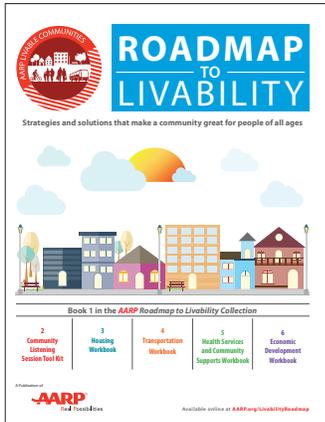
Roadmap to Livability: Community Listening Session Tool Kit Image 25524437

Roadmap to Livability: Housing Workbook Image 39788676

Roadmap to Livability: Transportation Workbook Image 23833327, 32509317

Roadmap to Livability: Health Services and Community Supports Workbook Image 14551235

Roadmap to Livability: Economic Development Workbook Image 45625568



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

[AARP.org/LivabilityRoadmap](https://www.aarp.org/LivabilityRoadmap)



A Publication of

AARP[®]
Real Possibilities