Equity and Accessibility:
Transportation Planning Grant Program

Summary

This planning grant opportunity is intended to support planning of program innovations that address transportation equity and accessibility in one of the following focus areas:

- Transportation Equity & Inclusion: Addressing the Transportation Needs and Preferences of Diverse Older Adults and People with Disabilities.
- COVID-19 Recovery: Addressing the Unique Transportation Needs and Preferences of Older Adults and People with Disabilities to Impact Social Isolation.

Focus Area 1: *Transportation Equity & Inclusion: Addressing the Transportation Needs and Preferences of Diverse Older Adults and People with Disabilities*.[1] Goal: To create equitable and accessible community transportation services designed to meet the needs and preferences of diverse older adults and people with disabilities. Planning projects funded under this focus area will identify transportation disparities experienced by diverse older adults and people with disabilities living in the grantee community as well as potential remedies for addressing identified barriers and concerns.

Equity concerns and underserved communities are critical issues demanding action at all levels of American society. The pandemic has highlighted the critical role of public transit in connecting essential workers to their jobs, yet public transit is not available or is extremely limited in many areas of the country and the impact of COVID-related service cutbacks has fallen disproportionately on those who have no other means of transportation. Even where public transit is readily available, it may not fully address the unique mobility challenges of older adults and people with disabilities. The mobility challenges facing this population, particularly those in

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[1] Diversity in this context encompasses race, ethnicity, cultural and gender differences among older adults and people with disabilities in the United States, including African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinx, Tribal elders and people with disabilities, new immigrant groups, those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and non-English speakers.

under-served groups, are longstanding and extensive, including lack of infrastructure, lack of transportation services responsive to their needs and a failure to consider their needs as new programs and modes of travel are developed. To begin to address equity challenges in transportation, diverse older adults and people with disabilities must be invited to the transportation planning table so their needs are recognized and their voices are heard. Projects funded in this focus area will highlight and respond to the specific needs and preferences of diverse older adults and people with disabilities in their communities.

Focus Area 2: *COVID-19 Recovery: Addressing the Unique Transportation Needs and Preferences of Older Adults and People with Disabilities to Impact Social Isolation*. Goal: To create effective approaches that address transportation problems and barriers that surfaced during the pandemic and ensure greater equity and accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities. Planning projects funded under this focus area will center on solutions for addressing longstanding mobility needs that existed prior to, and have been heightened during, the pandemic.

Studies have shown that social isolation negatively impacts health and mental health.[2] As communities nationwide begin to emerge from the pandemic, safety concerns, access to vaccination sites and coronavirus testing and the availability of transportation to a variety of settings, including healthcare, grocery stores, senior centers and re-opened restaurants and shopping, are at the forefront of issues to be addressed. Returning to 'normal' for those who are especially vulnerable will likely require new ways of thinking and robust public education to address fears and negative perceptions. Communities and transportation providers must identify new ways to address the mobility needs and social isolation of older adults and people with disabilities. Safety and security have taken on new importance and must be at the forefront of efforts to encourage re-connection to community living. Projects funded in this focus area will develop a framework for exploring the efficacy of potential innovations that respond to identified concerns, preferences, equity and accessibility barriers.

Planning Grant Objectives

These planning projects will offer communities the opportunity to consider current and future needs, engage older adults and people with disabilities in inclusive planning, and develop a written plan of action. Grant proposals in the selected focus area must detail how the project will identify and remove barriers and challenges and expand mobility options, transportation accessibility and opportunities for all older adults and people with disabilities living in the community. While specific ideas or innovations may be discussed as potential solutions to fill current gaps in service and remedy identified needs and disparities, applicants are expected to recognize that any proposed innovation must emerge from an inclusive planning process; will need to be fully developed and ready to move toward implementation at the end of the grant period; include a plan for building support for the proposed innovation(s) within the applicant's organization, as well as among transportation, aging and disability stakeholders; and of critical importance, gain the support of the target population.

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[2] "Social isolation, loneliness in old people pose health risks": https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/social-isolation-loneliness-older-people-pose-health-risks

Program Elements
Funded projects will be expected to include these specific elements:
- **Collaboration** involving local transportation, aging and disability organizations and other key stakeholders. <u>Note</u>: Projects funded under Focus Area 1 will be expected to include community-based organizations that represent the diverse populations living in the grantee community.
- **Coordination** with local transportation, aging and disability planning processes to the maximum extent possible and exploration of funding options to support potential innovation ideas that are identified in the plan of action.
- **Data collection** to identify current transportation options, gaps, needs and user preferences and perceptions.
- **Inclusive planning practices** to meaningfully and fully engage the target population in 1) conducting a needs assessment; 2) identifying and assessing potential solutions to identified problems/challenges; and 3) developing a written plan of action. An inclusive process engages older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers in all phases of the project.
- **Innovative communication practices** (e.g., social media, video conferencing platforms, interactive planning tools), as well as traditional communication tools (e.g., flyers, postcards, telephone calls) to support the community's transportation needs assessment, engaging older adults and people with disabilities in planning and/or collaborating with new partners.
- **Written plan of action** to move the concept toward full implementation after the planning grant period ends.

Outcomes
These planning grants will serve as the first step in the development of program innovations and new models for equitable and accessible transportation to meet the needs and preferences of vulnerable and underserved populations, especially older adults and people with disabilities from diverse communities. Project plans to be developed under this grant opportunity will serve as a gateway for the development of fundable project proposals to enhance equitable and accessible transportation and the exploration of potential federal, state, local and private funding sources. Specific planning outcomes may include:
- Increased understanding of, and support for, equitable and accessible transportation for all older adults and people with disabilities in the grantee community;
- More equitable inclusion of diverse, isolated, underserved and low-income older adults and people with disabilities in planning activities through the creative use of technology and other methods;
- Increased understanding of social isolation and the critical role transportation plays in addressing it;

- Improvements in data collection to identify transportation disparities and track and measure utilization of community transportation services, including changes in public transit ridership, by diverse older adults and people with disabilities;
- The adoption of equitable and accessible transportation innovations/models as priorities in the local coordinated planning process.

Funding and Grant Period

Grants of up to $20,000 each will be awarded to as many as ten communities (split between the two focus areas). Grant projects will begin in September/October 2021 and will be funded for five months. All planning grantees will be given the opportunity to implement one or more priorities identified in their plans, beginning in March 2022, contingent upon: 1) the availability of future funding for this purpose in FY 2022; and 2) achievement of specific milestones through the planning grant. Assuming the above conditions are met, successful planning grantees will each receive $50,000 in FY 2022 to implement their selected priorities.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are local and regional private nonprofit or government organizations, including: public transit agencies; Councils of Government; Metropolitan Planning Organizations; Tribal agencies (e.g., Title VI Aging Programs, Tribal Transit Agencies); Area Agencies on Aging; community action agencies; Centers for Independent Living; intellectual disability service organizations; community organizations involved in the administration, delivery or coordination of public transit, human services transportation, aging, or disability services.

Applications must be submitted by public transportation, aging or disability organizations, especially those who are eligible recipients or subrecipients of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) such as:
- Public and human service transportation providers;
- Planning organizations that are direct or designated recipients of Section 5310 funds;
- Aging, disability (physical, intellectual, or otherwise) or human services organizations that serve seniors and people with disabilities, reflecting required participants in the coordinated plan.

Note: For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply; however, applicants are encouraged to coordinate with all transportation providers in the community, including for-profit transportation providers.

Primary Contact

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Definitions

Accessible transportation is the passport to independent living for everyone. Mobility means having transportation services going where and when one wants to travel; being informed about the services; knowing how to use them; being able to use them; and having the means to pay for them….Accessible transportation encompasses: public [and human services] transportation services…; related operational procedures, ticketing, and travel information; and the design of such vehicles, terminals, and stops; intercity and regional transportation; intermodal linkages; personal vehicles; and the pedestrian infrastructure." (Adapted from Suen and Mitchell, "Accessible Transportation and Mobility," Transportation Research Board, Committee on Accessible Transportation, 2000; additions noted in brackets.)

Community: NADTC includes a wide array of geographic areas in the term "community," including a single town, city or county, as well as a region that includes several counties, townships or other geographic divisions within a state. While grantees may target their efforts to a smaller subdivision of a town, city or county, they must also consider the impact of their efforts on the broader geographic area.

Diversity: For purposes of this project, NADTC defines diversity to encompass racial, ethnic, cultural and gender differences among older adults and people with disabilities in the United States, including African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinx, Tribal elders and people with disabilities, new immigrant groups, those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and non-English speakers.

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of all groups. (Excerpted from "Why Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Matter," https://independentsector.or/resources).

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group is welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate, embracing differences and offering respect for all in words and actions. NADTC assumes that people with disabilities and older adults will actively participate in advisory, decision-making and leadership capacities in planning, developing and oversight of community transportation services. (Derived from: "Why Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Matter," https://independentsector.or/resources; and Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Planning Partnership Project, supported by the U.S. Administration for Community Living)

Innovations in transportation/mobility could involve making changes to a longstanding program (but doing things in different ways) or developing a new program or service. Potential innovations include (but are not limited to) development and implementation of: new services; new approaches to service delivery or program oversight; new solutions to longstanding problems; new technological applications to enhance participation and accessibility; and/or new solutions to address old challenges. Innovations may be intended to provide better solutions to meet new requirements or respond more effectively to previously unarticulated needs. Transportation innovations, as used here, may be totally original or a creative adaptation of an approach that has worked in other places, program settings or to serve other populations. (Definition derived, in part, from Wikipedia.)

Output measures are defined as the products and services delivered. These are often stated as amounts (e.g., number of products or services) during a reporting period (e.g., 6 months). Outputs do not tell you anything about the actual results achieved or the impact of the products or services delivered.

Outcome measures represent the specific result(s) a program is intended to achieve. An outcome is not what the program produced (outputs) but the consequences or impact of those products and services. Outcomes are measurable and typically identify in precise ways how the project will impact the community (e.g., seniors, specific ethnic/cultural groups, caregivers, community agencies). Anticipated outcome(s) are ways in which the project will benefit older adults, people with disabilities, and the community. Outcome measures include:

    End Outcomes (Objectives): the ultimate outcomes the program has been designed to achieve. This is the most ambitious outcome or result that program managers can affect or influence and for which they are willing to be held responsible.

    Intermediate Outcomes: A critical outcome or result that must occur in order to reach the end outcome/objective. Progress must be made toward the intermediate outcome before you can achieve the end outcome. (From: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Evaluation Division)

Systems change is a shift in the way that a community makes decisions about policies, programs, and the allocation of its resources — and, ultimately, in the way it delivers services to its citizens." (Toolkit for Federal Staff Who Work with Comprehensive Community Initiatives)

Potential Transportation Innovations

Applicants are expected to identify potential transportation innovations that may be adopted as priorities in their final written plans. While this is an important first step, applicants should understand that the planning process itself may lead to the adoption of different priorities. Potential transportation program innovations may address, but are not limited to, the following:

- Accessible pathways (e.g., curb cuts, sidewalks, accessible signals)
- Door-to-door, door through door service
- Mobility management/travel counseling

- One-call/one-click
- Same day service
- Travel training
- Volunteer transportation
- Way-finding technology/signage
- Ride-sharing

Deliverables

The deliverables briefly described below should be customized to address the selected focus area.

    1)   Development of a planning partnership of community stakeholders (e.g., public transit, aging and disability organizations and others) who are critical to success in the selected focus area. The partnership must work as a team to guide the work of the project and is expected to closely coordinate with the existing public transit-human services regional

plan and other relevant community planning efforts to address transportation equity and accessibility.

2) Adoption and implementation of <u>inclusive planning practices</u> to meaningfully engage older adults and people with disabilities, including riders and non-users of transportation, as well as the broader community, in the planning process. Inclusive practices may include focus groups, surveys, advisory bodies, community forums and other formal and informal efforts to encourage involvement.

3) <u>Identification of the community's needs</u> through data collection and information gathering. Community transportation needs may include gaps in service and user preferences for improving transportation equity and accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities.

4) Development of a <u>written plan of action</u>, which includes the identification of innovation priorities that emerge from the planning process and a framework for implementation. <u>Note</u>: NADTC will provide guidance on development of the written plan of action to selected grantees.

Involvement of Older Adults and People with Disabilities

The importance of considering the experiences and perceptions of transportation users and potential riders cannot be overstated. Projects must involve older adults and people with disabilities and include activities to obtain input and guidance from them throughout the project. <u>Applicants must also incorporate the perspectives of older adults and people with disabilities into their grant proposals.</u>

Key Partnerships

Partnerships and collaboration among public transportation, aging, disability and other human services organizations that serve people with disabilities and older adults are essential for the success of these grant projects. Collaboration with key community organizations that represent older adults and people with disabilities, including diverse community organizations that work with the target population, and develop, advocate for, provide and/or arrange transportation (e.g., local transportation providers, community/civic groups) is also important to success. <u>Evidence of commitment from at least 3 (but no more than 4) key partners must be included in the grant application, as specified below</u>.

<u>Note</u>: A letter of commitment is preferred from the local entity responsible for the Section 5310 coordinated transit-human services plan indicating willingness to participate in the project and to consider incorporating the proposed program innovation/approach into the area's coordinated human services transportation plan or Section 5310 funding proposal. Applicants unable to obtain this letter should explain the reasons why in response to question 5.

Sustainability

Ongoing funding and sustainability of efforts undertaken by NADTC grants are primary concerns and will be addressed by NADTC and awarded grantees, working together during the grant period. At a minimum, grantees will be expected to work to build ongoing community support and be willing to seek funding to continue the efforts begun during the grant. Should sufficient funds be available from FTA to support the NADTC in FY 2022, funding may be provided to selected grantees to implement their project plans.

NADTC Support and Technical Assistance

NADTC will undertake the following activities to support awarded grantees:

1) Convene a kick-off orientation and training workshop for awarded grantees.
2) Develop a Learning Collaborative to support grantees through provision of information and technical assistance, monthly check-in calls and at least two educational webinars developed in response to identified grantee needs, featuring expert presentations on best practices in planning and other relevant topics and facilitating peer exchange among grantees.
3) Leverage lessons learned from the Administration for Community Living's *Inclusive Mobility on Demand Project* to support grantees' adoption of inclusive planning practices.
4) Track progress and provide reporting tools and other assistance to support grantees' reporting and documentation of their progress in implementing transportation innovations.
5) Make technical assistance and monitoring visits to each grant site. The purpose of the site visit is to conduct an on-the-ground assessment of grantee progress, meet with grantee staff and primary partners, and provide additional technical support as needed. If site visits cannot be conducted, Learning Collaborative activities will be adjusted to ensure that sufficient support is provided to ensure grantee success.

The Request for Proposals

NADTC will publish the RFP in a special e-alert and on its website (www.nadtc.org), including instructions for accessing and registering on the SurveyMonkey Apply grant application portal. All questions related to this solicitation should be directed to Melissa Gray at nadtcgrant@nadtc.org.

A NADTC Applicant Zoom Meeting for interested applicants will be held at 3 pm ET on July 27, 2021. A link to the zoom meeting will be posted on the NADTC website (www.nadtc.org). Questions can be directed to Melissa Gray at nadtcgrant@nadtc.org.

Following the zoom meeting, a **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** document will be developed and published on the NADTC website; the FAQ will be updated as needed to reflect questions received after the teleconference.

Mandatory Letter of Intent Prior to Submitting Proposal

All prospective applicants must complete a Letter of Intent Form via **NADTC's SurveyMonkey Apply** online portal, no later than August 6, 2021. The link to download the Letter of Intent template is posted in the SurveyMonkey Apply portal. The Letter of Intent Form asks prospective applicants to select a focus area, but focus area selection is not locked in. Letters of Intent will assist staff to estimate the overall volume of applications, as well as the number of potential applications in each focus area.

Proposal Format and Submission

Applications consist of the following: **Grant Application Form, Narrative, and Demonstration of Capacity (including Organizational Capacity Question, SAM Registration, Grant Budget Form** and **at least 3 (and no more than 4) Letters of Commitment)**. Only the attachments specified in the Application Instructions posted in the SurveyMonkey Apply portal will be accepted.

All proposals must be submitted via NADTC's SurveyMonkey Apply online portal no later than 11:59 pm on August 27, 2021.

Proposals received after the due date and time, as well as those submitted by fax or mail will not be accepted.

Application Evaluation Process and Criteria

Incomplete or non-responsive proposals will not be considered.

Minimum Criteria

Applications must be submitted through the SurveyMonkey Apply portal. The grant application portal will reject any incomplete applications that do not meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Application received by the deadline.
2. Application package is complete. The application package consists of all of the following elements:
    a. **Grant Application Form**
    b. **Narrative (Questions 1-4)**
    c. **Demonstration of Capacity**
        i. **Organizational Capacity Question**
        ii. **Grant Budget on Budget Form**
        iii. **Evidence of SAM registration**
        iv. **At least 3 (and no more than 4) Letters of Commitment**

Compliance Review by NADTC Staff

A compliance review is conducted by NADTC Staff to determine whether the Basic Program Requirements, described in the Application Process section and specified below, are met. Only applications that meet all of the Basic Requirements will be considered acceptable and will be forwarded to the Review Committee. Basic Program Requirements consist of the following:

1. The application is submitted by an Eligible Organization and provides evidence of SAM registration.
2. All Narrative questions are answered.
3. At least 3 required (but no more than 4) Letters of Commitment are included with the application submittal (see Key Partnerships). Applicants unable to obtain a letter from the entity responsible for the Section 5310 transit-human service plan must explain why they were unable to obtain it. Letters of Commitment must meet the following criteria: letters are obtained from required partners; letters are individually composed rather than standard letters; letter writers specify how they will support and/or participate in the planning project.
4. Application provides evidence that the applicant organization and partners have the strength and ability to accomplish the proposed planning project. Responses to Question 1 and the Organizational Capacity Question and the Letters of Commitment will be reviewed to determine:
   a. The experience, knowledge and ability of the applicant and key partners to carry out the proposed planning project.
   b. A plan for conducting a community needs assessment to determine the priorities of the planning project is included.
   c. Involvement of appropriate partner organizations in the planning project with roles and tasks identified for each partner in the proposed project.
   d. Demonstrated understanding of inclusive planning, including a reasonable, workable approach for engaging older adults and people with disabilities in the planning process.
5. Request for funding to support the planning project does not exceed $20,000 and the proposed budget is reasonable, follows the Budget Form categories and includes a narrative that fully explains all proposed expenditures.

Upon completion of the Compliance Review, applications will be deemed Acceptable (if all Basic Programs Requirements are met) or Not Acceptable (if the application falls short of any criteria specified above). Only applications that are deemed 'Acceptable' as described above will be forwarded to the Review Committee for quality review.

Quality Review by Independent Review Committee

An independent Review Committee, consisting of individuals with expertise in aging, disability and transportation will be convened. Responses to the Narrative questions 1-4 of each acceptable application will be reviewed independently by panels consisting of 2-3 members of the Review Committee.

Applications will be rated on the basis of highly recommended (HR), recommended (R) or not recommended (NR) in the following areas:

1. The significance of the planning grant's goal and its fit with the goal set for the selected focus area; major activities to be undertaken in order to accomplish the required deliverables; and workplan. (Question 1)

2. How this planning project will address current conditions and help move the applicant's community toward addressing transportation equity and accessibility in the selected focus area. (Question 2)

3. Anticipated challenges and barriers and how they will be addressed. (Question 3)

4. Impact: Proposed output and outcome measures; expectations of success based on community conditions; plans for sustaining the effort begun by this grant project. (Question 4)

The review committee will follow these guidelines:

- Highly Recommended (HR) applications are those that receive HR on the following Narrative questions: 1, 2, 3 and 4 and receive no NR ratings. Many major strengths are identified and only minor weaknesses are noted. Highly Recommended applications provide thorough and detailed responses to questions and offer evidence to support the likely success of the proposed project.
- Recommended (R) applications are those that receive R or HR on the following Narrative questions: 1, 2, 3 and 4 and receive no more than one NR rating. Recommended applications show several major strengths, provide evidence of probable success in achieving goals and respond to all questions.
- Applications rated as not recommended (NR) are those that receive NR on two or more of the Narrative questions: 1, 2, 3 and 4. Applications that are Not Recommended do not respond fully to all questions, leave out key information and show few strengths.

Panels of 2-3 reviewers assigned to the same set of applications will be convened for discussion by an assigned NADTC Grant Manager. The purpose of the discussions is to ensure common understanding of the applications and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each application reviewed, as well as areas of disagreement and agreement among the reviewers. Following panel discussions, the reviewers will submit their individual results.

Development of Funding Recommendations
In developing funding recommendations, NADTC staff will consider grant applications that received the highest ratings from independent reviewers as well as consideration of the following criteria established for the planning grant program:
- To the extent possible, an equal mix of grants in each of the focus areas.
- Geographic diversity, achieved by awarding grants in different states and ensuring a mix of urban, suburban, rural and frontier/tribal grants.

- A mix of different types of grantee organizations, including transportation, aging and disability organizations.
- Final assessment of the grant applicant's and partners' capacity to carry out the grant and achieve success. Criteria for making this determination includes:
  - Adequate staff assigned to work on the grant as reflected in the budget;
  - Past success in grant administration;
  - A well-developed work plan
  - Partnerships in place among transportation, aging and disability organizations and other critical stakeholders;
  - A commitment to and the capacity to engage the target population meaningfully in planning activities (experience using inclusive planning practices will be considered).

Application Package

The Application Package consists of the Grant Application Form; the Narrative; the Grant Budget Form; and at least 3 (but not more than 4) Letters of Commitment.

Grant Application Form

All requested information must be provided.

I. **Applicant Information**

(1) Applicant Name, Address, Contact Information

(2) Agency/Organization is: check one from the list. Applicant must fit one of the categories provided: nonprofit or government agency. <u>Applications will not be accepted from for-profit organizations</u>.

(3) Agency/Organization Type: check one from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

II. **Grant Focus Area**

Applications must specify the focus area selected for the project.

III. **Target population**

Applications must focus on older adults and people with disabilities residing in the community and all older adults and people with disabilities in the community should be able to benefit from the work to be undertaken. As appropriate, applicants may identify a subset of the broader target populations as needing specific attention, such as one or more specific cultural or ethnic groups, older adults with particular characteristics (e.g., physical disabilities, dementia) or specific disability groups (e.g., persons with visual impairment, cognitive or intellectual disabilities).

(1) Age: check one from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided (e.g., adults with disabilities and seniors 60+). Adults younger than 60 may be included in the target population but a primary focus on seniors is required.

(2) Disability: check all that apply from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

(3) Race/Ethnicity/Culture: check all that apply from the list; if *other*, please provide specific information in the space provided.

(4) Income: check one or both of the named options. (a) If "low-income" is checked, the definition to be followed by the project should be specified (e.g., 100% Federal Poverty Level [FPL]). (b) If "other income range" is checked, the definition to be followed by the project should be specified.

IV.   **Geographic Area**

(1) Type of geographic area (i.e., urban, suburban, rural, Tribal): check all that apply from the list.

(2) Brief description of the area: may include the percent urban/suburban/rural of the area, square mileage, and/or a descriptor such as "very spread out," "densely populated," "blighted urban area," rugged, mountain terrain, etc." that provides reviewers with a concise picture of the area.

Narrative
The Narrative includes the Project Summary and the Narrative Questions.

Project Summary
Provide a specific and concise sketch of the project, the purpose (selected focus area and overall goal), objectives and the specific outcome(s) you expect to attain from the planning grant. (Limited to 100 words)

Narrative Questions
Responses must adhere to the specified word limits which are incorporated into the electronic application.

1. **What is your goal in developing a plan to increase transportation equity and accessibility in your community? What do you expect to accomplish?** (Limited to 1,000 words)

   Applicants should address the following:

   - Specify the focus area selected for the project, state the goal, discuss why the proposed project is important and its significance in terms of the community's development of transportation equity and accessibility solutions.

- Identify and describe fully the target population of the project, including both those who will be involved in the planning project and the ultimate beneficiaries of this effort.
- Briefly describe the community's current array of transportation and mobility options and the ways the target population currently gets to jobs, to healthcare and other important destinations.
    - o <u>Focus Area 1</u>: Identify transportation disparities and barriers facing the target population and discuss the impact on their lives.
    - o <u>Focus Area 2</u>: Identify longstanding mobility needs, discuss how the pandemic has exacerbated those needs and the impact of social isolation on the target population.
- Describe the innovations you anticipate will emerge from the planning project and why.
- Specify the outcomes that this project will achieve and the anticipated impact of the planning project on the target population.
- Provide a brief but detailed description of the work you will undertake to conduct a community transportation needs assessment; engage key stakeholders and the target population in inclusive planning to address the selected focus area; garner community support for the work; and develop a final plan of action for implementing the plan in your community.
- Identify significant milestones and outputs within a set timeframe. A separate 1-page (8½ x 11) workplan in 10-point Arial font should be uploaded in the application portal (not included in the word limit). <u>Note</u>: A workplan format is posted in the NADTC Grant Application Portal and may be downloaded, completed off-line and uploaded as part of a completed application.

2. **How will the planning project respond to conditions in your community?** (Limited to 500 words)

    The proposed project should be discussed within the context of the community, its resources, past efforts and current priorities for the selected focus area. The response should:

    - Discuss briefly the <u>most relevant and pertinent</u> efforts in the community, both current and in the recent past, that were/are intended to improve community transportation equity and accessibility (e.g., efforts related to transit, paratransit, human services transportation, livable communities, walkability, bicycling, accessible technology, coordination, planning, mobility management, travel training). Include things that have worked, as well as those that did not succeed.
    - Provide detail about the community's current use of federal, state and local funds to support transportation and describe its success or past efforts in accessing and utilizing federal funding (especially, but not limited to, Section 5310 funds). Include information about pending applications or other potential funding.

- Provide numerical and descriptive data to quantify or approximate current ridership for the target population and the current level of accessible transportation available to older adults and people with disabilities, including unmet needs (local, state and/or national data may be used). Anecdotal information may be included to paint a picture of current community conditions. It is understood that a needs assessment will be conducted during the grant; the information provided in the application may serve as a starting point for that effort.

3. **What challenges and barriers are anticipated and how will they be addressed?**
(Limited to 500 words)

Applicants should identify potential challenges and barriers, and identify strategies for overcoming identified barriers. The response should:

- Discuss likely challenges to the planning project's success posed by past community efforts that have not succeeded, tensions or conflicts regarding different options for improving community transportation, or competition between the aging and disability communities or between transit and human services.
- Identify potential barriers to success, such as lack of funding, lack of community consensus, and/or competing priorities.
- Describe the strategies to be used to address anticipated challenges and barriers, and discuss why these efforts are likely to succeed and help to ensure the overall success of the proposed innovation.

4. **Why will this planning project succeed and lead to improvements in transportation equity and accessibility in your community?** (Limited to 500 words.)

- Discuss how the proposed innovation responds to current and anticipated community conditions described in response to question 2.
- Identify conditions in the community that will support the effort to increase transportation accessibility for the target population as well as other motivating factors for increasing transportation accessibility in this community (e.g., the local transit-human services coordinated plan, local livability initiative).
- Describe the broader community's attitudes and the willingness of the target population to work with your organization, as well as the efforts you will undertake to encourage and facilitate participation in the planning process. A brief description of established relationships and/or previous work with the target population, as well as other older adults and/or people with disabilities, should be included.
- Identify committed project partners (agencies and organizations) and describe their planned contributions to the project.

- Specify the roles that older adults and people with disabilities from the target group will play in the proposed project and discuss how partnerships and community involvement will help to ensure success.
- Make the case that the right players (your organization, project partners, and community members) are engaged and committed to this effort and why conditions are right – in this community, at this –time – for this innovation to succeed.

Demonstration of Capacity
Demonstration of Capacity includes the Organizational Capacity Question, SAM Registration, the Budget and at least 3 (but no more than 4) Letters of commitment.

Organizational Capacity Question
What assets and advantages do your organization and committed project partners bring to the table for developing a plan to address transportation equity and accessibility in your community? (Limited to 500 words)

Applicants should include information on:

- Previous grant management experience, including information on grant budgets, scope of work and major accomplishments.
- Key partners, including but not limited to partners who submitted letters of commitment.
- Current and past experience with inclusive planning as well as other planning experience.
- Experience working for and/or providing accessible transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. The applicant agency and project partners together should include organizations that administer aging, disability and transportation programs.
- Current and/or past experience working with the target population, as well as outreach efforts directed toward older adults and people with disabilities.
- Current involvement in the coordinated transit-human services transportation planning process and/or other local or regional transportation planning experience.
- Experience managing a Section 5310 program or other transportation programs funded with federal, state or local funds that provided transportation services to older adults and/or people with disabilities.
- Experience conducting needs assessments, collecting quantitative and descriptive data on transportation usage by the target population and a commitment to collect data under this project to track progress in achieving identified outputs and outcomes.

SAM Registration
SAM registration certificate must be uploaded into the application portal.

Budget

The proposed budget must be provided on the **NADTC Grant Budget Form** available on the SurveyMonkey Apply grant application portal and may include the following items. In no case may the budget request exceed $20,000. Matching funds are not required but applicants are encouraged to consider specifying any additional staff supports (including management support) to be provided by the applicant agency, as well as other administrative costs that the applicant agency will cover.

- Personnel costs should specify salary costs and associated fringe benefits to carry out project activities.
- Meeting/training costs may include the costs of holding one or more community forums plus costs associated with smaller collaborative meetings. Such costs may include space rental, copying materials, AV equipment rental, speaker fees/travel costs. Food/beverage costs are not eligible expenses.
- Travel costs are for staff travel and must include funds to travel to Washington, DC for a two-day kick-off workshop.
- Consultant fees and travel anticipated by the applicant should be included as a separate category in the budget.
- Other direct costs may include office space rental/utilities (to be calculated based on personnel costs), telephone/fax, photocopying, printing, postage, project related supplies, computer costs (equipment may NOT be purchased; costs related to personnel usage only), marketing/media/outreach costs, focus group/survey costs (if applicable).
- Indirect costs may be included in the budget. Details regarding how indirect costs are calculated, including a copy of the organization's approved Indirect Rate, must be submitted as part of the final budget that grantees must develop within two weeks of award notification.

Letters of Commitment

All applicants must provide at least 3 (and no more than 4) letters of commitment from key partner organizations. If the applicant is not the local entity responsible for the Section 5310 coordinated transit-human services plan, a letter of commitment should be included from that entity indicating willingness to participate in the project and consider incorporating the innovation developed under the grant as a funding priority in the next coordinated plan. If this letter cannot be obtained, the reason why should be stated in response to Narrative question 5. The letters should specifically describe the planned role of the project partner in the proposed project, anticipated support (including monetary or in-kind support) to be provided and a list of anticipated project activities in which the partner will be involved. Letters of commitment may be attached to the grant application; more than 4 letters will not be reviewed.