INCLUSIVE PLANNING TOOLKIT

Planning for inclusion through the adoption of accessible practices

Abstract

A compilation of lessons learned from Hopelink and the King County Mobility Coalition's participation in the CTAA's Inclusive Planning Grant, and tips for how to bring the inclusive planning process into your organization.

2026- Edition 3

King County Mobility Coalition's Access to Healthcare Subcommittee

KCMobility.org

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Below is a picture of just a few of our wonderful partners who served on our Inclusive Planning Steering Committee at an end-of-grant celebration in 2020.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

Thank you all for your commitment to inclusive planning!

Our Background

The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) facilitates the coordination of King County transportation initiatives to better serve our community. Members include providers that serve people with disabilities, clients, and funders from the governmental, non-profit, and for-profit sectors in both rural and urban areas throughout King County. The Coalition brings together individuals and organizations to share information; assesses the needs of the local community and the current transportation network; provides recommendations to improve the system; and educates decision-makers, community groups, and the general public.

Spearheaded by the Access to Health and Wellbeing Workgroup, the KCMC took part in the Community Transportation Association of America's Inclusive Planning Grant between 2018-2020. This project used an inclusive planning process–a method for including end users in the discussion and development of programs designed to fit their

needs. The steering committee guiding grant efforts were diverse, comprised of both partners[1] and participants[2] from King County, Washington.

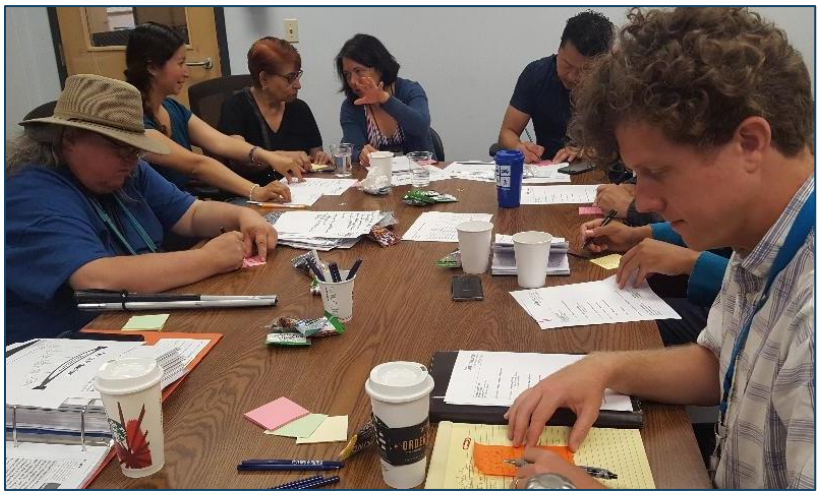


Photo courtesy of KCMC

Inclusive planning best-practices are always changing. The people and communities around us are not static.

The Inclusive Planning Steering Committee and its subcommittees identified many areas for improvement over the course of the grant cycle in 2018-2020, and this Inclusive Planning Toolkit is a result of the grant. The toolkit is a reference guide for strengthening inclusion both during KCMC meetings and while reaching out to the community. Nevertheless, the lessons we've learned are applicable to all agencies and institutions hoping to expand engagement and build more accessible organizations. KCMC created this toolkit with the intent of sharing it with all who are interested.

[1] Partners are employed representatives from stakeholder organizations.
[2] Participants are volunteer community members representing the communities of Older Adults, People with Disabilities, and Caregivers.

Inclusive Planning best practices are always changing. The people and communities around us are not static nor are their needs. As individuals change, so do their preferences on how to receive information, engage with organizations, and interact with their environment. While we hope the toolkit will help you bring inclusive practices into your organization, it is a living document. We will update it in dialogue with the communities we hope to serve.

This is the third edition of this document, weaving in learnings compiled since the first and second editions, and significant understandings gained related to accessible virtual engagement.

Introduction to Inclusive Planning

Inclusive Planning is a way of managing projects that includes the end-user in the design and implementation of a program. Too often ideas are implemented to aid a community without ever asking the impacted individuals what they need or want. Resources are used, time passes, and the community is no better--or may even be worse off than they were before. Moreover, community members can be left feeling hopeless, their voices unheard. Inclusive Planning was created to stop this cycle.

When community members design and implement programs, the result can lead to greater effectiveness and better reception by the community. The Pathway to Inclusion (shown below), developed by Transit Planning 4 All, measures the levels of inclusivity in which organizations are operating at any given time. The range shows the ever-evolving pathway that begins at the least inclusive, "programs developed *for* participants," and moves towards greater inclusivity, where "participants play lead roles" in program planning. Inclusion is a spectrum. Over time, an organization can move back and forth on the pathway to full inclusion, as shown by the non-linear graphic.

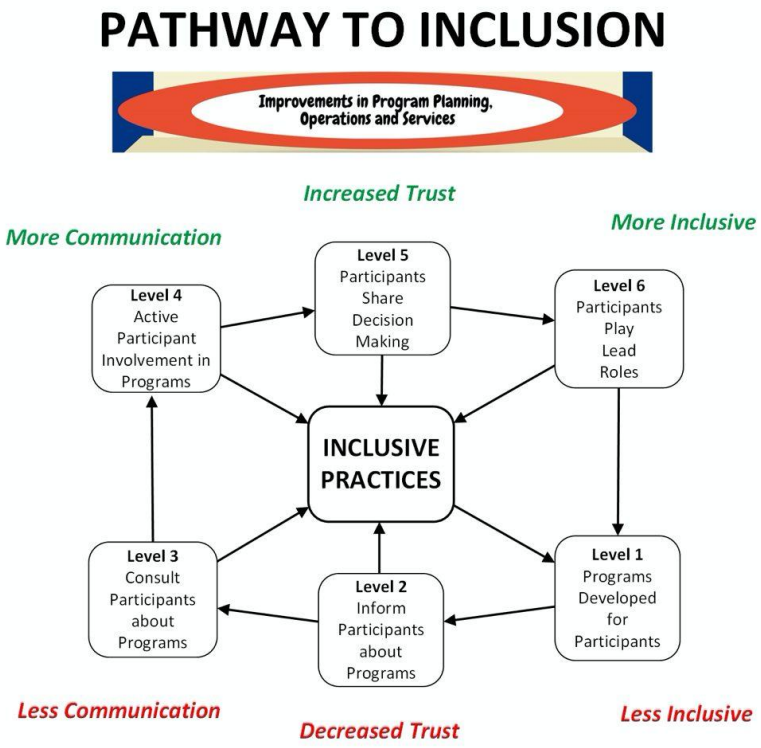




Photo courtesy of KCMC

The Pathway to Inclusion can be used by any group developing social or human service programs.

The King County Mobility Coalition used some inclusive practices prior to receiving the Inclusive Planning Grant. Our organization offered accessible accommodations and/or interpretation/translation when requested. Community members served on the Coalition and in its work groups. This process of preparing this handbook, however, really opened our minds to “think inclusively.” For example, we now take extra time to make sure all electronic and printed documents are accessible, and we invite more community members to the table more often. Inclusion requires planning ahead and making inclusive practices habitual.

Some organizations have Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Officers whose job it is to make sure the law is being followed. If your organization has one of these officers, check with them to help you design inclusive accommodation. Often these professionals

encourage embedding inclusion in their organizations more deeply than what is required by law. Both ADA Officers and staff members throughout an organization can benefit from this toolkit and inclusive planning techniques.

ADA Requirements

Inclusive Planning is more than only following what is required of an organization. Extra steps ensure all people are included at the planning table, regardless of ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, citizenship status, age, religion, or other identities. The process begins with understanding the baseline requirements.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990. It was the first federal legislation to grant equal opportunities to people with disabilities. The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and ensures equal opportunity to public services, programs and activities. The ADA is divided into five sections, called titles:

- Title I - Employment
- Title II - State & Local Government
- Title III - Public Accommodations
- Title IV - Telecommunications
- Title V - Miscellaneous Provisions

Inclusive Planning is more than only following what is required of an organization.

Title I prohibits employers with 15 or more employees, including state and local governments, from discriminating against qualified people with disabilities in hiring, pay, promotion, and other parts of employment. It also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces Title I.

Organizations must follow all regulations. Title II and III are most applicable for readers of this document. Title II requires state and local governments and their entities to protect people with disabilities when accessing government buildings, public areas and digital content. Within Title II, a new rule published by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) on April 24, 2024, sets a deadline for State and local governments to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 level AA by April 26,

2027, for public entities with a population of 50,000 or more, and by April 26, 2028 for public entities with a population less than 50,000.

Title III forbids discrimination against people with disabilities by private businesses and nonprofits that are open to the public, such as stores, restaurants, doctors' offices, and human service agencies. It also covers transportation services run by private companies. Public transit run by state and local governments is covered under Title II.

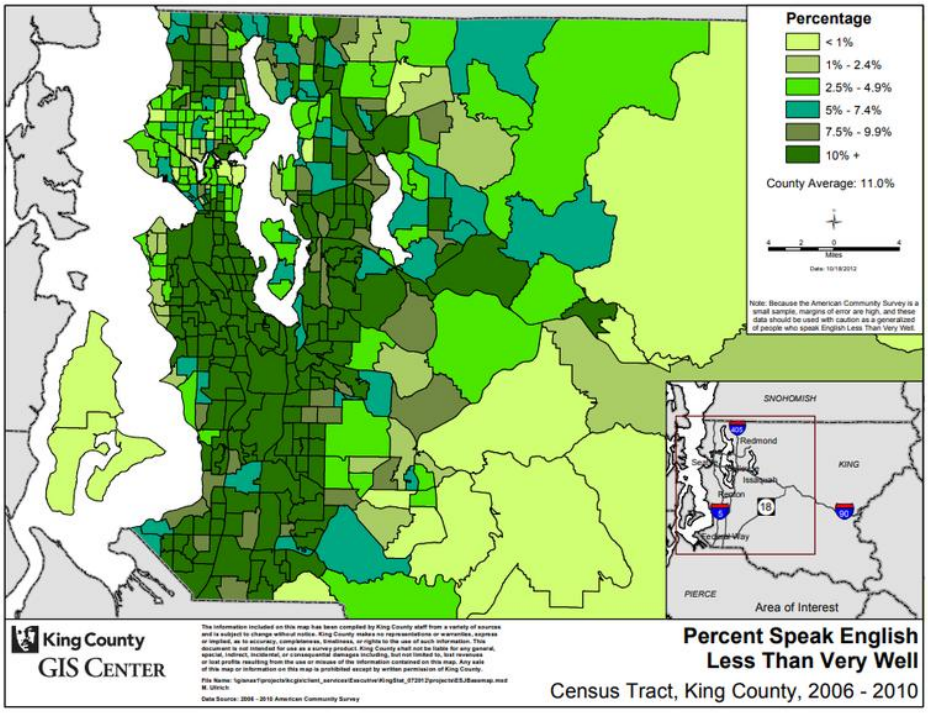
Title IV covers telecommunications relay services, which allow people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities to use the telephone system. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) enforces Title IV. Title IV also requires closed captioning of public service announcements that are funded by the federal government.

Title V covers a variety of miscellaneous provisions that apply across the whole law. For example, it protects people from retaliation for asserting their rights under the ADA, and it explains how the ADA relates to other federal and state laws.

For more information contact the DOJ (ada.gov) or the Northwest Americans with Disabilities Act Center (nwadacenter.org).

Demographics of King County

King County is the most populous county in the State of Washington and the thirteenth most populous county in the United States. Covering 2,132 square miles, it stretches west from Elliot Bay in the Puget Sound to rural Snoqualmie Pass and the Cascade mountain range in the east. King County is on the land of Indigenous Peoples, namely the Coast Salish tribes of the Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Sammamish, and Snoqualmie Nations. Over 2 million people reside in King County's 39 cities[3].



Graphic retrieved from King County GIS Viewer website.

At the time this toolkit was created, almost one half of King County residents were persons of color. Large populations of Asian/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and African Americans comprised this diversity. In 2026, over 25 percent of King County residents are foreign-born and are either immigrants or refugees. A multitude of languages are spoken, each with more than 1% of the population: Chinese, English, Hindi, Korean,

[3] This data represents 2018 demographic information and may have changed since the revision of this toolkit. Current demographic data can be found here: King County WA population - Census Bureau Tables

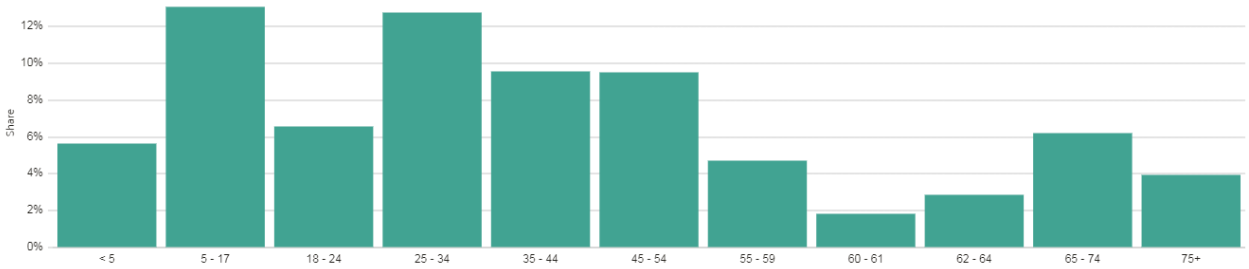
Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The map above shows by census tract the percentage of individuals who "speak English less than very well." Notice the areas west of Lake Sammamish where 10 percent or more of their population speaks English "less than very well". Exceptions are North Seattle and Mercer Island, where non-English speaking percentages are in the 2.5 to 5 percent range. Also notice east King County averages 5 percent or less. An interactive map that shows where speakers of varying languages live can be found online on the King County GIS Viewerwebsite[4].

Intersectionality is when individuals belong to more than one community and is very common.

Approximately 10% of King County residents identify as living with a disability. We have anecdotally heard from some of our participants with vision loss that Seattle, Washington has a larger population of persons with vision loss or who are blind than most other urban hubs in the United States. Individuals with a wide range of disabilities frequently need additional accommodations to participate fully in meetings, events, and other planning activities. Such accommodations are legally required of public organizations by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and are necessary to help these individuals feel welcomed and valued. Greater detail on how to fulfill accommodation requests can be found in the "Virtual Meeting Engagement" section of this toolkit.

At the time this toolkit was created, the average age of King County residents was 37 years old. The table below shows the percentage breakdown by age group for King County as of 2017. The largest age brackets for residents were children under 17, adults age 25 – 34, and all older adults over the age of 60.

[4] King County GIS Viewer based on data from the 2010-2014 ACS.
http://kingcounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=70a97e804e9b4991846cda2242985272



Data retrieved from King County demographics website 2017.

King County's population is heterogenous. Moreover, intersectionality is when individuals belong to more than one community and commonly exists in populations briefly covered above. For example, a Latinx older adult who predominately speaks Spanish and has a disability may live in a rural part of King County. What works in one area for one community may not work in another. It is recommended that organizations research the demographic makeup of their community and where their target population lives, then recruit members from that community for the planning committee for projects meant to benefit them.

Planning for Inclusion

Prior to receiving the Transit Planning 4 All grant, the King County Mobility Coalition considered ourselves halfway on the “Pathway to Inclusion,” at a place where we would “consult participants about programs” but not actively engage them in the planning process. While we were not experts on inclusive planning when we began the grant, we have learned a great deal and gained significant experience worth sharing. An inclusive meeting or project requires extensive preparation. This section provides a good idea of where to start.

To begin, take stock of the planning committee for your programs. Compare your project’s target populations with the number of participants representing that community on the committee. Establish where your group lies on the Pathway to Inclusion (see page 7) and set a goal for where you would like to be. This may be a good opportunity to ask participants how satisfied they are with their experience on your committee and what steps you could take to make them feel more included. Perception of inclusion is often a key metric for inclusivity. It is also important to improve your engagement based on their feedback in order to increase satisfaction in the long term.

We continually surveyed our partners and participants after every meeting to hear from them how well we were doing, making sure all attendees felt included. Even the survey instrument used is something that had many iterations before we found a more inclusive version. The first survey iteration we used had a classic Likert scale–a five-point scale ranging from “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied.” We found that there was a language barrier for some participants who primarily spoke a language other than English, so we ultimately changed it from words to images. Our current satisfaction survey is a five-point scale ranging from a frowning face to a smiley face. Below is an example of one question, and the whole survey can be found in the appendix.



After you have evaluated where your planning committee currently stands on the Pathway to Inclusion, begin a stakeholder analysis to establish who else needs to be invited to the planning table. This includes organizations and end-users who are in any way impacted by your efforts. Ensure you include any willing community members and diverse stakeholders as part of this brainstorming exercise process. Many resources exist online to guide you through this process. This will help you determine which communities you need to hear from over the course of your project beyond who is already at the table.

We continually surveyed our partners and participants after every meeting to hear from them how well we were doing, making sure all attendees felt included.

As you will see, this toolkit recommends accessibility practices that will help participants engage more easily with your group. Some of these accommodations are costly and may prohibit some smaller agencies from engaging fully in an inclusive planning process. In that case, you may be able to partner with organizations who donate in-kind accommodation services or other materials to help offset costs. Be aware that budgeting and planning for inclusive planning is just as important as carrying it out to ensure you establish an organizational culture that wholeheartedly embraces inclusive planning.

Accessible Meetings, Events, & Engagement

During our Inclusive Planning grant cycle, we engaged the community in the ways described below and learned a lot about accessibility that we are excited to share with others. This section covers different types of engagement and provides advice on how to design community engagement efforts that are inclusive and accessible.

Types of Engagement

Steering/Planning Committee

We used a diverse group of stakeholders and community members to guide our grant efforts. Our steering committee consisted of six partners from human services agencies, and six participants who identified as either having a disability or being an older adult. Such diversity of members on the planning team is a hallmark of any inclusive planning process.



Some members of our steering committee

Early in our process, our group briefly had a participant who did not speak English. This occurred before inclusive practices were thoroughly embedded in our organization. We struggled with the time and planning needed to translate every document and email into Spanish for our participant. During this process, however, we gained important learnings about the translation process (see the section Filling Accommodation Requests).

One-on-One Meetings & Interviews with Stakeholders

Because community gatherings and large meetings do not always permit specific feedback on topics from all the voices you seek to hear, one-on-one interviews can be helpful. These interviews enable you to ask follow-up questions and receive detailed information from end-users (participants) and partners.

It is this open and inviting nature that helps participants feel that their voice is truly valued.

One-on-one meetings are also a great way to get feedback from people who need extra time to process information or formulate thoughts or are timid about speaking in groups. Partners or participants sometimes ask for one-on-one debriefs after a meeting they were unable to attend. This is a great way to make sure you get feedback from those individuals and that their voices are included.

We have participants on our steering committee who are not always able to make it to every meeting. They know that they can always ask for a follow-up phone call with our staff to hear what was discussed in the meeting and provide their input to us directly. It is this open and inviting nature that helps participants feel that their voice is truly valued.

You can encourage interviews by offering contact information at the beginning and end of meetings. During the meeting, remind people that you are open to accommodating all types of feedback, including offline, so that those seeking more personal conversations know this option is available. In some instances, our staff also met with individual(s) before a meeting to give them a briefing on what to anticipate so they were prepared for the larger gathering. Given the variety of ways people process information, offering to chat one-on-one may empower people to ask questions and provide feedback regularly throughout the planning process.

Community Surveys

The King County Mobility Coalition conducted a community survey to gather feedback about transportation access during their Inclusive Planning Project. Our survey was open for three months, and we used three main methods for collecting surveys: in person at outreach events, sending copies to partner agencies for their members to complete and return to us, and online using Survey Monkey.

Offering a meaningful incentive increased participation for our survey.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

We also offered an incentive for completing the survey in an attempt to increase our response rate. Respondents had the choice to enter a drawing for a chance to win a $50 grocery store gift card. We noticed some community members were more interested in completing the survey after they learned of the chance to win a gift card. Offering an incentive resulted in increased participation for our survey, and we have since continued doing this for our other surveys.

A few accessibility issues arose during our surveying process and became learning opportunities for us.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

- Some respondents with vision loss were able to complete the online version of the survey using screen readers, which are software programs that allow users who are blind or low vision to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display. Some screen readers, such as Talk Back, used by respondents, were incompatible with the online survey platform we used, Survey Monkey. Be sure to test accessibility features of online surveys before launching and offer contact information for respondents to report difficulties they experience with the survey platform. To test features, you can ask participants who have vision loss to review the online survey (which is the best way), or you can review it yourself with a screen reader on your own device. Be aware that all screen reader applications are slightly different, so if it works for yours it might not work on someone else's. Always include contact information so respondents can reach out to your organization if they encounter problems. If you hear feedback, also forward to the survey company so there is a record of inaccessibility on their platform and corrections can be made.
- Other individuals with vision loss were unable to complete paper surveys. Having staff members help them complete the survey can introduce bias as it removes

anonymity. Respondents may answer with what they think the surveyor wants to hear. Having a third-party assist the respondent may be a better solution.

- Older adults were a targeted population for our survey. We primarily collected responses online and realized in the process of surveying that many older adults are offline or uncomfortable navigating electronic formats. Greater in-person outreach and survey collection should be done when targeting this sub-population.

Surveys should be translated into multiple languages whenever possible. Providing surveys only in English introduces language barriers for many respondents and can alienate populations who are vulnerable and whose voices are already often left out of 'community' feedback. Research the most common languages in your area based on census data and ask your planning committee what other languages may be beneficial. In our case, we translated the survey and flyers into six languages, some more spoken than others, after learning there are populations who 'miss the cut-off' and are therefore unaccustomed to participating in the process. The six languages were decided through our Inclusive Planning Steering Committee. We did not "cap" the number of languages but instead brainstormed whichever languages were important to include to garner meaningful feedback from our target populations. Generous translation and interpretation budgets should be crafted so limited program funds are not a barrier to engaging your populations.

Focus Groups

Arrange focus groups with partner organizations who serve the communities from which you want to hear. These gatherings can provide feedback from populations under-represented in other forms of engagement, such as surveying.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

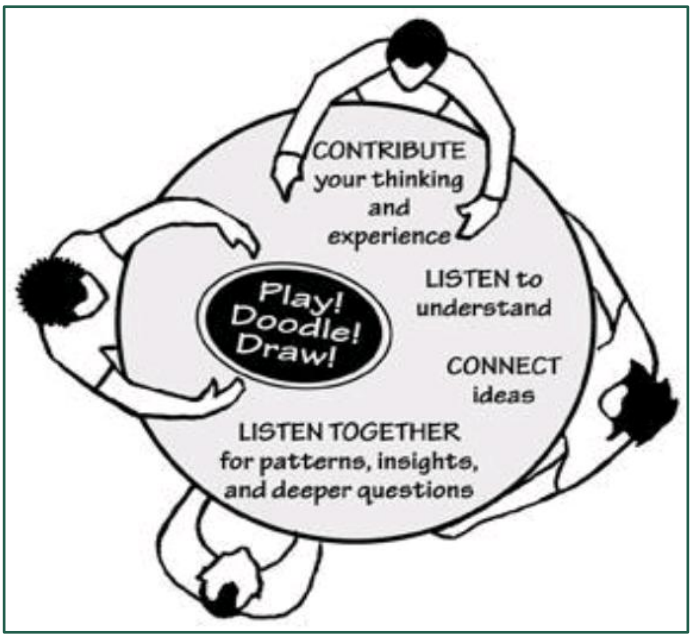
Occasionally focus groups may be a better form of outreach than open community meetings or surveys. These small group meetings typically have 8 – 12 participants. While surveys provide information to predetermined questions, focus groups give an opportunity for the facilitator to go off script for more in-depth feedback from participants on their unique experiences and why they are providing specific answers to questions. More narrative answers are received this way than through open-ended questions on surveys.

We conducted four focus groups after our community survey ended in order to hear from populations that represented rural communities, individuals experiencing homelessness, persons with cognitive disabilities, and Latine domestic workers. This last focus group was conducted entirely in Spanish, the language that participants spoke at home and were more comfortable conversing in. We recorded the conversation, and later had it transposed and translated into English so we could review what was discussed.

This small gesture went a long way in making the participants feel appreciated.

Similar to the survey, we offered participants of the focus groups an incentive for participating. We gave each attendee a $10 grocery store gift card as a way of honoring their time they spent with us. While passing out these incentives we heard from participants that they were excited about and grateful for the cards--some even sharing with us what groceries they were going to be able to buy later. This small gesture went a long way in making the participants feel both appreciated and compensated for their time.

World Café Summit



Graphic provided by Civic Reinventions, Inc.

The World Café is a form of large group facilitation that encourages the cross-pollination of ideas through rotating small group discussions. In a World Café, every attendee's ideas are incorporated into the larger discussion – regardless of the size of the gathering. These larger community conversations are appropriate when you are wanting to hear more in-depth ideas from participants. A World

Café is a long meeting that facilitates brainstorming. It also allows attendees to hear from others in their community and build off each other's ideas.

Our group hosted two "Mobility for All Transportation Summits" using the World Café design. Around 70 community members attended each, and The World Café norms ensured everyone was engaged throughout the process. We also utilized a graphic recorder at both Summits to visually record the conversations. Graphic recording is the real-time translation of a conversation into images and key words by an artist. Attendees could review a visual representation of what had been discussed throughout the Summit. The artwork that results from a graphic recording is also a great way to send a follow-up summary of the event's conversation to attendees and stakeholders.



Graphic recording by Colibri Facilitation



Photo courtesy of KCMC

For our events we created special agendas, or menus, so attendees could know what questions would be asked of them over the course of the day. The conversation menu also provided instructions on how to participate in the small group discussions and change tables. We have provided this document in the appendix.

After the event we sent out an email to all attendees thanking them for participating, providing a summary of the conversation, and letting them know how our organization was going to use their input moving forward. Closing the loop in this way with participants of a large event is a simple way to further engage each person individually.

General Meeting Advice

This section includes information about creating "gracious spaces." The Center for Ethical Leadership in Seattle, WA defines gracious space as "a spirit and a setting where we invite the 'stranger' and learn in public." Below is general advice on making attendees feel welcome and safe in meeting spaces, applicable to any type of meeting or engagement method. Checklists can be used to ensure nothing is forgotten.

A gracious space is a spirit and a setting where we invite the 'stranger' and learn in public.

Agenda Creation

Our colleague shared that this practice made her feel more prepared for the coming conversation and helped to set a supportive tone in the group.

Keep accessibility in mind when drafting written materials -- including meeting agendas. For example, think about how every attendee will be able to participate in meeting activities. If attendees are required to write down ideas on sticky-notes, how will people with vision loss or attending remotely participate? These activities may still be acceptable but have plans for how to include all attendees. Dividing participants into pairs to discuss an issue or answer a question followed by a whole group discussion

is a great way to include every voice and perspective. Those attending remotely can reply in the chat feature of conference call systems or via email. Be aware that some topics are more sensitive than others and not all attendees will be comfortable discussing every agenda item. When these situations arise, give a warning to the group that the upcoming conversation may be difficult for some and invite them to not participate or leave the room if they feel the need to do so. Do not call on people or put them on the spot to share out if they have not spoken up. This situation did not arise during our inclusive planning meetings, but a member of our staff has attended other events where the facilitators give these sensitive topic warnings. Our colleague shared that this practice made her feel more prepared for the coming conversation and helped to set a supportive tone in the group.

Marketing

Getting the word out about your meetings or events is just as important as the meeting itself. Not all audiences access information in the same way so it is important to use a variety of communication methods.

Sending Outlook calendar invitations is a common way to invite stakeholders to your meetings, but this method does not work for all. Email from a non-Outlook provider will look different than from Outlook email and may cause confusion. Some formats may not be accessible for those using screen readers. Therefore, when sending email invites, we always send a calendar invite and a plain text email. This extra step is a small way to be a little more inclusive.

Include instructions for how to submit accessibility accommodation requests in email or flyer advertisements. Use this structure for reference: “[Group Name] encourages everyone to participate, regardless of ability. For accommodations or accessibility information, contact [Name] at [Phone Number] or [Email] at least [time duration] prior to the event.” Make sure you promote the event/meeting early so individuals have enough time to submit requests. If you already secured any accessibility accommodation, such as CART captioning, promote this service well in advance. More information on accessibility requests can be found later in this document.

This extra step is a small way to be a little more inclusive.

Flyers should include the accommodation request information in an easy to find location. The date, time, and location should be prominent. Individuals using screen readers should not have to search through large amounts of text to find out when and where your event occurs. Include bus routes and parking information to help people navigate. For those that need extra assistance in trip planning to the event, include the organizer's phone number or information to trip-planning resources in your marketing materials. A flyer example can be found in the Appendix.

When using social media to advertise your event or organization, use mixed caps hashtags (i.e., #AccessibleEvent). Mixed caps make it easier for screen readers to recognize the words. Place hashtags at the end of the post. It can be distracting while listening to a screen reader to hear "hashtag" interrupt the flow of the information.

When advertising for events to the general public, it is a great rule of thumb to leverage the existing communication channels that your priority populations are already using. Before sharing information out, consider where the communities you want to reach are getting their information form, and how you can adapt your outreach to reflect these existing methods.

Meeting Materials

When preparing meeting handouts and presentation slide decks, be mindful that not all people access information the same way. What works for one group may not work for all groups. Be open to feedback. Ask your participants what the best ways for them are to receive materials and information.

Share meeting materials well in advance of your meeting, including documents and presentation slide decks. Make sure these materials are accessible via screen reader by adding alternative text to images. For some participants, it may be helpful to provide Braille translations of printed materials ahead of time. Alternative text, or alt text, is a way to add text descriptions to visual elements. Participants feel more prepared for

conversations when we share meeting materials in advance. We have heard this more from participants who need to review documents or slide decks with a screen reader, but that doesn't mean that others don't also appreciate the extra time.

Participants feel more prepared for conversations when we share meeting materials in advance.

If you have a guest presenter, request they send their materials at least 24 hours in advance and provide tips on making their presentations accessible. When you review the materials for screen reader compatibility, make adjustments if needed and offer feedback to the presenter to strengthen the accessibility of their materials for future use.

Share PowerPoint slides and handouts digitally in advance of meetings. Reviewing materials in advance helps individuals who use screen readers and everyone who benefits by reviewing information prior to the meeting. With regularly scheduled meetings, set a standard of always sending materials in advance.

When giving a PowerPoint presentation, always read aloud the words on a slide.

Throughout the implementation of the Inclusive Planning grant, we sent documents to all attendees. No one felt singled out or different. We recommend establishing a policy for when to send documents in advance. The KCMC set a standard to send out the agenda two weeks in advance, handouts and documents were distributed one week in advance, and the meeting slide deck was sent one day in advance. When possible, minimize the number of e-mails to the group. Write clear subject headers to make it easier to find the right email if an attendee references these materials in an email during the meeting.

When giving a PowerPoint presentation, always read aloud the words on a slide. While some believe this is not a "good" presentation practice, it is more inclusive for individuals with vision loss. All visuals (graphs, tables, or images) should be explained

verbally to assist persons with sight impairments. As a facilitator, encourage all presenters to follow this same practice.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

Spelling out acronyms is another inclusive practice with two benefits. First, when individuals with low vision review the PowerPoint with their screen reader, the software cannot say each letter individually, but will try to pronounce the acronym as if it were a word, causing confusion. Secondly, using acronyms can alienate attendees who are less familiar with the jargon of your group or industry. Spelling out acronyms ensures that all are on the same page without having to ask.

When you receive an accommodation request for a language interpreter, translate meeting handouts into the requested language. The same is true when advertising the event to non-English speakers. If they attend, help them understand the information you are sharing. Equip them to participate fully. Don't forget to translate documents you have at your event, including the satisfaction survey.

Lastly, after you draft all your materials, review the documents using an accessibility checker to ensure that all materials meet universal design guidelines. Large font, color contrast, alternative text on images, and spelled out acronyms are easy places to start. (Seattle and King County's local Area Agency on Aging produces a guide entitled "Best Practices in Elder-Friendly Print and Digital Communication" that is in the Toolkit appendix.)

Guest Speakers

Having external stakeholders present to your group at a meeting is a great way to learn about other organizations and spread awareness of regional activities. However, not all speakers may be aware of inclusive practices for presentations. When arranging for guest speakers to attend your meeting, give them a one-pager of expectations, such as reading all words on slides, explaining visuals, and spelling out acronyms. You should also let them know when you are planning to send out the meeting slide deck to your group and ask for their slides ahead of time so you can send them out to your members. Our King County Mobility Coalition members are comfortable speaking up and asking guest presenters to verbally describe images, but not all individuals may be willing to ask for this when no one else has.

Virtual Meeting Engagement

Like in-person events, some steps can be taken to facilitate a more accessible remote or virtual space. The following best practices have been compiled through Hopelink Mobility Management's experience during COVID-19 when all events and meetings were held exclusively virtual. All virtual engagement should consider standard accessible practices – like compensation, color contrasting, and welcoming and inclusive meeting facilitation – which are covered in more detail in throughout this Toolkit.

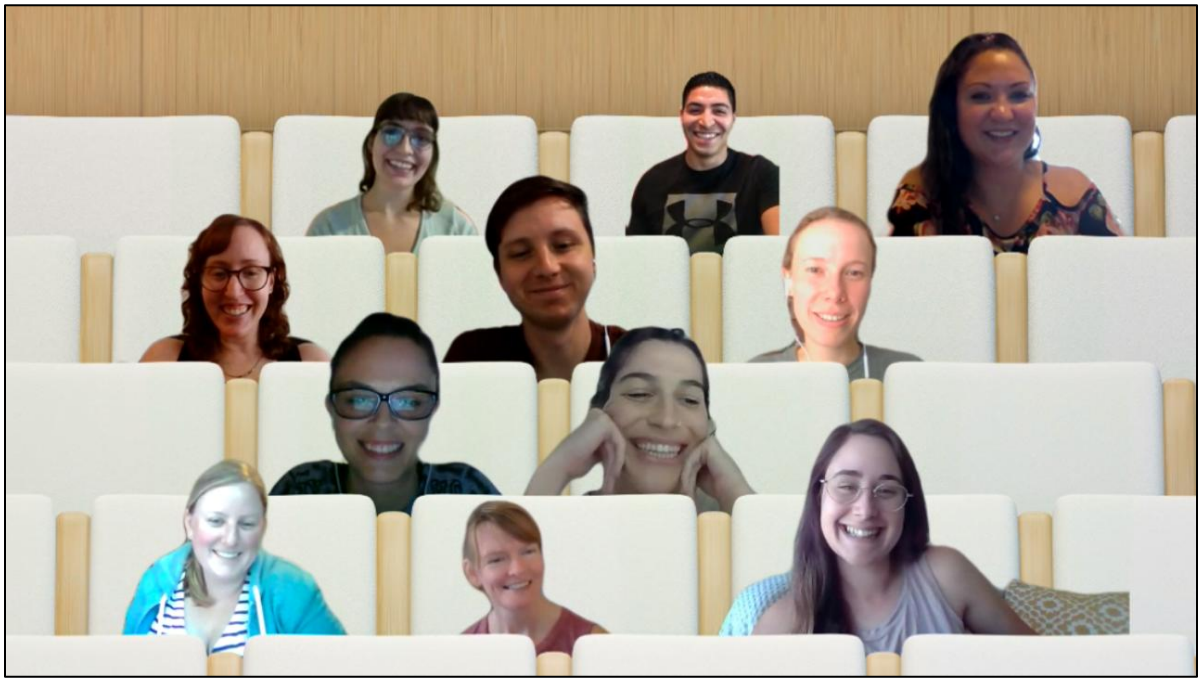
When organizing a virtual event or meeting, we recommend taking the following steps to ensure inclusivity:

1. Define Goals and Level of Engagement

As is the same with in-person gatherings, a meeting format varies greatly depending on what level of participation you are hoping to achieve from attendees. In the virtual space, this means thinking through what platform and tools will be the most conducive to the outcome you are trying to reach. If you are presenting information or updates to a group, a webinar format may work well. If you hope to facilitate small-group discussion, a platform that enables Breakout Rooms could be a good fit. If you want to engage with a larger group, finding software that allows for polling or interactive integration would help. You may even want to use several digital tools during your engagement. In these cases, consider how much time and effort your audience will need to spend learning and navigating each tool, and whether you are creating an unnecessary technological burden.

The level of engagement expected from audience members may also impact what type of virtual space you are creating .

All these considerations come after determining how you want your audience to engage with what you are sharing. Having this clarity is a necessary framework to establish before building out a virtual plan for gathering.



A virtual meeting

Public Participation Spectrum[5]

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to help them understand the problems, alternatives, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including developing the alternatives and identifying the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to, and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools	Fact sheets, websites, open houses	Public comment, focus groups, surveys, public meetings	Workshops, deliberate polling	Citizen Advisory Committees, consensus-building, participatory decision-baking	Ballots, citizen juries, delegated decisions

The level of engagement expected from audience members may also impact what type of virtual space you are creating. Below is a non-exhaustive list of common

kinds of digital tools and virtual formats to use, along with the type of environment they host.

Type of Virtual Space	What does this format entail?	Ideal Engagement with Audience
Standard Meeting	This is the basic meeting you set up when using a virtual meeting platform.	A standard virtual meeting offers the most flexibility in what kind of engagement you're looking for, as you have the option to employ breakout rooms, share and present, and encourage verbal or chat discussion all within the same meeting, dependent on what expectations you set for the audience.
Phone Call	This is typically a one-on-one conversation where you directly call someone but can also be done with three participants.	A simple phone call is a good option for an intimate, personalized conversation that is purely discussion-based and does not require any outside materials to reference or require additional technology
Conference Call	This is a conversation through a phone with multiple people.	A conference call is a good option when you have a small group (3 – 5) and do not rely on a presentation or visuals to communicate your purpose.
Webinar	This format looks the most like a standard meeting, except it has one leading presenter sharing.	This format will work well if you intend to share information or updates. Depending on the technology platform, participants may only have the opportunity to contribute through the chat or if there is a scheduled Q&A section in the presentation.
Telephone Town Halls	Tele-town halls are meant to simulate an in-person town hall. It offers the opportunity to brings groups together to learn about and discuss a specific topic	A tele-town hall event is a good format to use when you want to engage people through phone, which is often more accessible than laptop, but are still relying on a presentation or informational style format.
Breakout Rooms	This is an additional feature of standard meetings in which you can divide your total attendees into smaller, separate groups.	Breakout rooms work well when facilitating small group discussions or conversations between a more narrowed group of stakeholders. Make use of them when you want to encourage all participants to provide feedback, which can be achieved more realistically in an intimate setting.

[5] This table has been adapted from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, developed by the International Association of Public Participation.

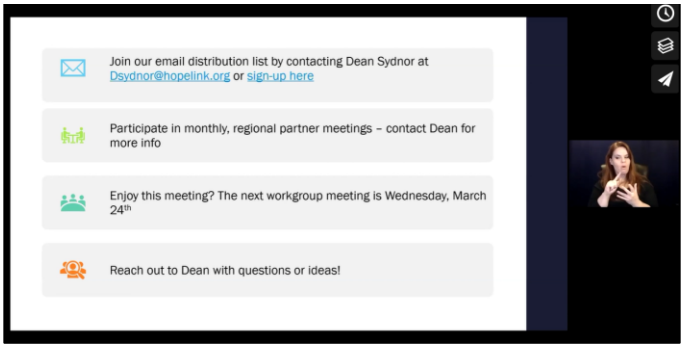
Type of Virtual Space	What does this format entail?	Ideal Engagement with Audience
Social Media	There are many ways various social media services can be leveraged to engage with audiences based on the platform's user-focus and interaction. The format will adjust depending on the application you use – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, the possibilities are endless!	Ideal engagement looks different based on the media format you use. For many of these platforms, posting offers the opportunity to share a static message and invite participation from commenters there. The audience that receives this sharing differs and should be the focus when deciding to use social media. Social media can be best leveraged with intention about the people you are reaching through it (for example, if you know a particular demographic uses a specific platform) and how you are sharing within it (for example, if you know there is an audience subscribed to a certain social media group, posting within that group or audience subset). TIP: When using social media, make sure that any text presented to your audience over images is also included in pure text format for accessibility purposes.
Social Media – Live Streaming	A subset of social media options includes live streaming – as available on Facebook, Instagram, and others. Here, you can present and share with viewers who join an active live stream. Viewers can send comments and choose to invite participants to stream with you in some cases.	Using live streaming on social media is best leveraged using the same strategy of assessing social media usage in general – by understanding if this social media platform will reach a targeted audience. Live-streams are best used when presenting information or having a presenter address comments, as comments are the primary way participants interact with a speaker. TIP: As is the case with social media broadly, it is important to note that audience access depends on where you live stream. Public streams are open to anyone, while streams in private, members-only groups are limited to members. Beyond this, there is little control over who can join in a live stream.
Virtual Open House	Virtual open houses use a mix of media to inform and ask for comment. They are often housed on a website that provides project or document details and then asks participants to	Commonly used now by larger agencies, virtual open houses are ideal when the feedback you are looking for can be provided without the need for discussion or conversation – as they usually include a participant providing comments. They are also good if you would like a period for feedback to be open 24/7, as websites

Type of Virtual Space	What does this format entail?	Ideal Engagement with Audience
	review and provide feedback on certain aspects of the presented information.	allow people to view and share insights on their schedule.

For each of the above virtual engagement options, different accessibility considerations apply. For example, many rely on stable access to either internet, WiFi, or data. Many would field requests for captioning or interpreters in different fashions, including that some may not fulfill this request. Think through what accessibility elements you need for your event and ensure the type of engagement reflects this.

The majority of this document is focused on virtual standard meetings, but many takeaways can be applied across the various engagement methods.

2. Assess Your Audience



An interpreter translates into American Sign Language

The virtual space, much like the in-person space, inherently leaves some communities out. Virtual meetings can be held using meeting software platforms, like the internet or applications, or only over the phone. Either way, these meetings may require secure internet access, a telephone or computer, a smartphone, and/or data. It is essential to be mindful of these gaps when planning an event. You must ask yourself:

- What resources do I require attendees to have to attend my meeting?
- Who may not have access to my virtual meeting?

- What reasonable accommodation could I offer that will make it easier for communities to attend my virtual meeting? (e.g., interpreters, closed captioning, call-in options).
- Is the technology I'm using easy to navigate for my intended audience?
- In general, am I being inclusive for people who communicate in diverse ways (e.g., a communication device or people who would rather type than speak)?

Your ability to mitigate factors that hamper inclusion will depend on the scenario. We recommend that if you plan to offer educational or informational resources through the virtual space, consider supplementing this through other outreach options that include individuals without technology access – like mailers, flyers, phone numbers, texts, or more. It is also essential to provide any presentations, documents, or reference tools to your audience in advance, allowing enough time to review them and, when needed, arrange accessible formats or supplies. The amount of advance time may depend on the complexity of the materials and accessibility needs..

In understanding your audience and their needs, you may run into conflicting needs. This means that the needs of one group conflict with the needs of another. For example, one group may benefit from a lighting or color contrast that another group does not. Or screen share may be necessary to engage with a portion of the group but could make it harder for other participants to view an interpreter. If this challenge comes up, you should evaluate either breaking up one meeting into multiple to better accommodate each community or defining the scope of the community you are hoping to interact with more narrowly.

Ask yourself: who may not have access to my virtual meeting?

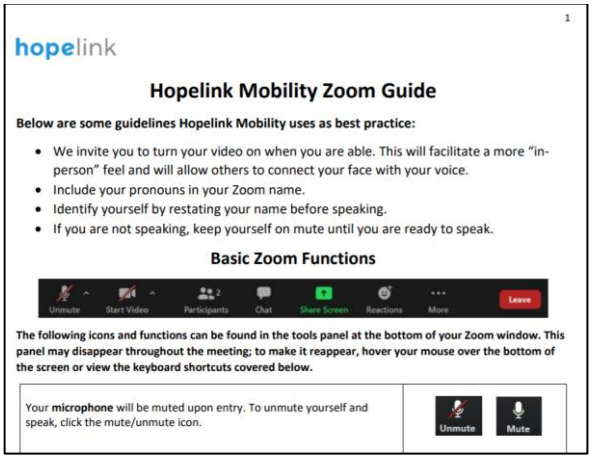
3. Research Your Platform

There are many reasons why different stakeholders choose one meeting platform over the other. Some of these factors include security, user-friendliness, price, and

technology features. The market for virtual platforms is plentiful. Accessibility should be a critical variable incorporated into a platform choice. It is vital to assess how well a platform can integrate accessible tools – like ASL interpretation, closed captioning, and user design – before committing to it. Some platforms will be easier to use than others. This will require research to compare the offerings of either platform and feedback from users about their experiences and preferences. If you intend to reach a specific community, you should ask yourself: does this community already have a preference in the virtual tools they use?

At Hopelink Mobility Management, we did thorough research before determining whether our team would use Zoom. We chose Zoom because it offered all the features we wanted (like Breakout Rooms and security features), was intuitive and easy to use, and had established mechanisms for accessibility. Our decision to go with Zoom was also based on our own experiences and empirical evidence on other platforms like Skype, GoToMeeting, and BlueJeans. Being able to assess your preference through personal use is a helpful way of analyzing usability. (Since the creation of this toolkit, Zoom has largely become the industry standard)

4. Set Default Accessibility Settings


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hopelink

Hopelink Mobility Zoom Guide

Below are some guidelines Hopelink Mobility uses as best practice:

- We invite you to turn your video on when you are able. This will facilitate a more "in-person" feel and will allow others to connect your face with your voice.
- Include your pronouns in your Zoom name.
- Identify yourself by restating your name before speaking.
- If you are not speaking, keep yourself on mute until you are ready to speak.

Basic Zoom Functions

Unmute Start Video Participants Chat Share Screen Reactions More Leave

The following icons and functions can be found in the tools panel at the bottom of your Zoom window. This panel may disappear throughout the meeting; to make it reappear, hover your mouse over the bottom of the screen or view the keyboard shortcuts covered below.

Your **microphone** will be muted upon entry. To unmute yourself and speak, click the mute/unmute icon.

Unmute Mute

Screenshot of Hopelink's Zoom Guide

After choosing a platform to host your event on, there are still steps to take to make sure the meetings you create will include accessible settings as a default.

To begin this process, we recommend developing a technology guide to provide attendees. View our Zoom Guide in the Appendix for reference. Compiling a brief user guide that details how to interact with your platform is an asset to ensure participants have the opportunity to establish comfort with the technology before your meeting. Within the user guide, you may want to include the following:

- Relevant log-in information and what each means
    - For example, many meeting platforms offer multiple links and numbers that an attendee can use to access a meeting. Include the most important ones and tell attendees what the significance of each is. Remove any non-essential numbers and links, as this adds to confusion.
- What basic icons signify
    - Turn on/off video, mute/unmute, raise hand
- How to mute and unmute yourself

We recommend sharing this user guide document out in your calendar invites and meeting reminders. You may also want to review the user guide quickly at the beginning of your meeting.

Beyond this, here are some best practices that our team follows when creating meetings:

- Enable closed captions and the option for attendees to save closed captioning.
    - For Zoom, you have the option to use automatic closed captioning or assign an attendee to type closed captions manually. Professional CART captioners are recommended whenever possible as they provide the highest accuracy. Either way, you will want to enable this feature for attendees to make use of whichever options you employ.

Share your user guide in calendar invites and meeting reminders.

- Enable nonverbal reaction features.
    - On some meeting platforms, there is the opportunity to offer attendees additional reaction icons to provide nonverbal feedback – for example, they can select displays that ask you to slow down, speed up, or tell you that they are stepping away from the meeting. If your platform provides these options, you should enable them if it is helpful for attendees to communicate through them.

These settings may be unique depending on the meeting platform you choose, so ensure that you thoroughly examine what accessibility features your choice software is capable of as part of your research.

We also recommend performing due diligence on what your platform's security features are and enabling these. For Zoom, this would be allowing a passcode and a waiting room. Security is crucial to protect privacy, ensure a smooth meeting, and facilitate a welcoming and comfortable space for attendees.

5. Always Offer Accessibility Accommodations

Accessibility accommodation for a public event is a right all participants have. This right extends to virtual meetings. Once you know that an event or meeting is scheduled, the accompanying advertising should include an accessibility statement that lets participants know by what deadline they can request accommodations. We recommend providing this statement as soon as the meeting is advertised and allowing for a minimum deadline of two weeks before the event date. However, you may be able to accommodate a request up until the day of the event. As a result of COVID and a trend that will likely continue, remote ASL and language interpreters' availability can be limited; therefore, it is essential to get the planning done early if these accommodations are requested.

Consider accessibility accommodations before a request is put in, depending on your audience and the type of engagement you expect.

Similarly, you should consider accessibility accommodations before a request is made, depending on your audience and the type of engagement you expect. For large events, open and advertised meetings to the public, or gatherings where you target attendance from a specific demographic, it would be reasonable to hire a closed-captioner or language interpreter(s) without a particular accommodation requested.

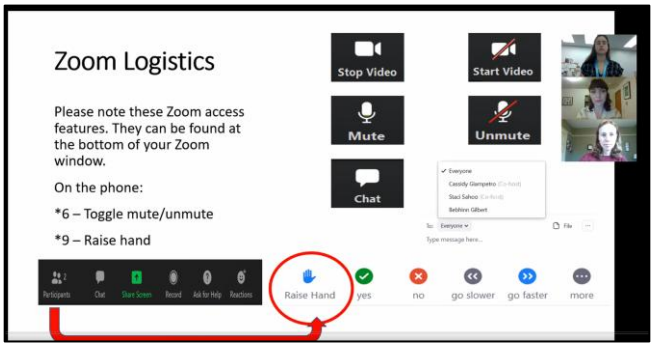
TIP: When scheduling an American-Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, it is best practice to find someone locally. This will increase the likelihood that they are familiar with regional signs. You should also try to send ASL interpreters any useful documents you will review or a list of jargon words ahead of the meeting so that they are prepared.

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6. Prepare for Your Meeting

Test runs are especially important for virtual meetings, where software and technology can introduce unexpected issues.

We recommend setting up a time for you and your supporting team to review logistics before an event. This would include familiarizing yourself with the platform, testing how meeting flow works with your technology, and scanning at what points in the meeting to provide the audience with specific technology cues.



Facilitator reviews Zoom logistics with meeting attendees during a virtual meeting.

Assigning a technology point-person for your meeting can be a useful practice for virtual engagement. This behind-the-scenes staff support can help manage virtual logistics like ensuring the chat is orderly, admitting attendees from the waiting room, and muting/unmuting attendees if necessary. They can also help manage

accessibility accommodations, such as ensuring an interpreter is spotlighted, pinned, and visible during times when screenshare is turned on and reminding participants to speak one at a time, pause between speakers, and allow the interpreter a moment to finish interpreting before moving on. This will reduce the burden on the meeting facilitator(s) and contribute to better meeting flow.

We suggest offering attendees an opportunity to practice navigating the virtual space with you before the meeting. This way, if a guest wants to join but is unfamiliar with the format, you create a welcoming space for them to gain comfort.

Technology expectations often revolve around how you are asking participants to engage with virtual features based on the interaction you're asking of them.

Lastly, as part of your meeting preparation, you should make intentional decisions about the expectations you set for your audience in the way they interact with you, each other, and your chosen technology. By this point, you have already done some thinking on how you'd like your audience to engage with you as part of defining your goals for an event (see step one). However, setting technology expectations has more to do with the direct asks you will make of attendees as participants – meaning establishing what methods for interaction with technology features you will request from them.

Technology expectations set how participants use virtual features, based on the interaction you want from them. In large meetings where not everyone can speak in the time available, the chat feature works well; in smaller or longer meetings, verbal discussion may be better. If your goal is to hear from as many people as possible, plan for a longer discussion and structure your meeting and feedback expectations around it, even if you're unsure how engaged your audience will be. No attendee count makes verbal discussion or chat the clear choice. It depends on your meeting's length, your understanding of your audience, and the insight you want to gain. Use these considerations to build your plan, then share it with your group at the event.

An internal technology expectation you should decide upon before the meeting is a contingency plan. Determine triggers and actions to take if things do not go as planned in your meeting. For example, if a guest is being disruptive to the meeting, you'll want to minimize the time spent dedicated to this event. Thinking through what actions you will take against individual distractions to preserve the collective meeting flow can be very helpful.

7. Follow Standard Inclusive Practices

There are many accessible guidelines outlined in our Inclusive Planning Toolkit that apply to meeting facilitation in the virtual space. We advise following these standard inclusive practices. Beyond this, there are a few accessible practices that are unique or emphasized in the virtual space. Here are some recommendations that the Hopelink team has that are especially important in the virtual space:

- **Send presentation materials and discussion questions in advance of the meeting.**

  While this is a best practice that we recommend for both in-person and virtual meetings, it is imperative when meetings or events are held exclusively virtual as attendees may be calling into the meeting through the phone and may not otherwise see a shared screen. Make sure to share these materials in formats that are accessible and work well with screen-reading applications. We recommend sending materials out a minimum of one day before the meeting, with any earlier being better.

TIP: It can be challenging for those relying on interpreters during the meeting to have multiple screens pulled up, as this makes the interpreter's video smaller. Also, if you are referencing materials outside of the meeting context, those using screen readers may need to have the resources read to them out loud, which

conflicts with their ability to tune into the active meeting. Therefore, including all materials you will be referencing on the slide deck you create to minimize cross-referencing multiple windows can help prevent this issue.

- **Review technology expectations during the beginning of the meeting.**

  It is best to share your pre-determined meeting and technology expectations with your attendees when the meeting starts. This is also a good time to reference the technology guide we recommend developing and put it in the chat so participants can reference it. Note that meeting attendees who join the meeting late will not see the discussion before their arrival. This emphasizes the importance of including all referenceable materials in the calendar or meeting invites,

  Here is a table detailing some of the expectations our team covers at the beginning of Coalition meetings:

Expectation	Why?
Mute yourself when you are not speaking.	Background noise can distract other attendees, and an unmuted microphone can occasionally cause echoing or odd audible issues. We ask attendees to mute themselves when they are not speaking to avoid these concerns.
Enable your video if you are comfortable.	This standard is more subjective based on the goal you have for the meeting. We believe that having camera visuals enabled facilitates a greater in-person feeling, so you can feel like you are directly talking to someone. It works to keep attendees more engaged and present. However, not everyone is comfortable turning their cameras on – so it is important to suggest but not mandate this standard. If your meeting is presentation-based and does not invite discussion from attendees, enabling video is less relevant. TIP: Turning on video can be a helpful accessibility accommodation, as some people read lips.

Expectation	Why?
Participate in the discussion by…	This expectation is highly variable on the group's size, meeting intention, and agenda item or activity. Regardless of what your expectation amounts to, it is critical to share with your audience how you would like them to provide feedback at the beginning of the meeting. This may include using the chat, raising their hands, being asked to speak, muting/unmuting themselves, or whatever structure you have created to invite their participation. TIP: Sometimes, heavy reliance on the chat can be problematic for people using screen readers. Having the chat being read aloud by their screen reading software conflicts with the audio of the ongoing meeting. Many JAWS users will turn chat messages off for this reason. If you are using the chat, make sure to read the conversation happening aloud, so attendees do not have to manage two audio tracks. And, sharing a transcript of the chat after the meeting can provide information like links or URLS to those individuals.
Review how to use closed captioning.	Whether you are using real-time or automatic closed captioning, let attendees know how they can view this feature if they'd like.
If interpreters are present, let attendees know.	Share with attendees if an ASL or language interpreter is present at the meeting. If an ASL interpreter is present, review how attendees can "pin" the interpreter's video to see it more distinctly throughout the meeting.
When speaking, introduce yourself.	It is helpful for those using CART captioning or interpreters to understand who is speaking, which can be done if they identify themselves by stating either name before they speak.
If recording, let attendees know and provide the option to opt-out.	If you have determined that your meeting will be recorded, it is necessary to inform your audience. Do so at the beginning of the meeting before you press record. Offer attendees the opportunity to privately message you or state their discomfort if they do not wish to be

Expectation	Why?
	recorded and adjust accordingly. You should determine ahead of time what your policy will be if someone is uncomfortable with being recorded – with your main two options being to simply not record the meeting or to ask the person to leave and send the recording of the meeting afterward. Your policy is dependent on how vital recording your meeting is to you.

Note that using Zoom backgrounds can cause trouble for ASL interpreters, as the user's sign language can become blurry.

We recommend offering multiple options for participants to engage in if possible. This allows attendees to choose which virtual communication method works best for them – chat, raising their hand, or muting/unmuting.

- **Explain all visual elements of a presentation verbally while presenting.**

We recommend fully sharing information visible to those who can see a shared screen or read the chat for those who cannot. This includes describing images and graphs and sharing any descriptors shown on presentation materials. Use descriptions that don't rely on visual indicators to explain these elements.

Try to read the chat out loud when appropriate.

Similarly, try to read the chat out loud when appropriate since conversation occurring in the chat feature may not be accessible to all. As mentioned in a tip above, reading the chat out loud prevents those using screen readers from having two ongoing audio tracks. It is also important to read the chat aloud so you are including the insight of those providing nonverbal feedback into the meeting. Patience is key to accessibility when asking people to contribute at paces appropriate for them, considering they may need to spend some time typing or processing information you share.

8. Offer Accessible Follow-Up

After an event, following up with participants with meeting notes, a recording of the meeting, or a meeting transcript is helpful. Include a transcript of the meeting chat if possible. This allows attendees to process the meeting events on their own time. Some communities especially appreciate the value of listening to the meeting afterward over reading notes about what happened. Performing this follow-up also makes the opportunity to provide feedback more inclusive by sharing meeting information with those who were unable to attend. Providing a recap of the meeting through notes or recordings can help attendees remember thoughts they wanted to share but didn't get the chance to during the meeting.

9. Ensure Feedback Loops are Available

Whether this is by providing contact information, distributing a form, or carving out space to discuss, your participants must have a safe space to give feedback on things like accessibility. Managing new technology software can feel like an uncomfortable experience for most, which can be exacerbated when specialized needs require attendees to utilize new features on an unfamiliar platform. Since knowledge of virtual engagement grows organically through use and practice, it is crucial to learn from participants about their experience to guide process improvements.

It is crucial to learn from participants about their experience to guide process improvements.

Virtual engagement is an accessible tool when it is the only option and a supplemental option. It offers a vital opportunity for engagement. However, like in-person meetings, an inclusivity lens must be integrated into virtual organizing to meet all community members' needs best.

For more learning on virtual engagement, view the following resources published by agencies across the nation:

- Publications - Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center by Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center
- Access That: Accessible Media Resources – Rooted in Rights by Rooted in Rights
- Inclusive & Accessible Virtual Engagement: Lessons from the Field by the Greater Portland Council of Government
- Introduction to Virtual Facilitation for Collaboration by the National Association of County & City Health Officials
- City of Seattle Style Guide (Public) by the City of Seattle

Best Practices for Engagement During COVID-19 by Salt Lake City

- Public Participation Spectrum by the International Association of Public Participation
- Shared Practices for Engagement in Virtual Meetings by Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Virtual Public Engagement Best Practices by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

General Interpreter Information

There are many types of accommodation requests. Be sure to consider your clientele before booking interpretation services. Keep in mind those with sensory limitations may not know all signing languages.

- Language interpretation – *speakers of another language*
- American Sign Language (ASL) and CART – *deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabilities*
- Tactile interpretation – *deafblind*
- Communication access real-time translation (CART) real-time transcriptions of what is being spoken, typically in English – *deaf or hearing impaired, or speechless people who do not know ASL*
- Graphic recording (visualization of conversations) – *great for all alternative learners who still possess sight*
- Hearing loops for hearing aids – *broadcasts a signal directly to hearing aids*
- Print translation – *readers of another language*

Note that American Sign Language (ASL) and Tactile Sign Language interpreters often come in pairs. If the meeting is for an hour or less, one interpreter is usually sufficient. This ensures clients receive information in an adequate timeframe as interpreters must give their hands break time. Interpretation colleagues switch back and forth to support one another while not breaking communication with attendee(s) who requested interpretation. Multiple clients require increasing the number of interpreters. The brokering agency will handle logistics, but this will increase your costs.

Interpreters and translators should be accurate, and culturally sensitive. They should maintain confidentiality, be impartial, and maintain a professional demeanor. Interpreters/translators will never add, omit, change meaning, or give opinions. For this reason, be sure you thoroughly review your materials from your original copy for accuracy as interpreters will not correct your errors and may unknowingly provide misinformation to clients. Sending meeting attendees and deaf presenters the CART transcripts after a meeting can also be helpful to ensure the interpreters have translated as intended.

Filling Accommodation Requests

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 dataset in King County, the number of people who speak a language other than English in the home is over 660,000, and that the total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population with a disability was over 228,000. With such high numbers, it is essential to provide translation and/or interpretation services to be fully inclusive and equitable.

When scheduling translators and interpreters, follow these practices:

When Signing Agreements

- Research the average cost for translators and interpreters in your area. Find an agency that charges similar rates. Consider holding shorter meetings to cut down on hourly interpreter costs.
- Inquire how far the interpreter will need to travel to reach your events. Travel time may affect overall cost.
- Be aware that some agencies charge more when events exceed the planned ending time.

When Scheduling or Booking

Prepare the following information before reaching out to interpreter/translation agencies:

- Number of Stakeholders Needing Assistance
- Names of Stakeholders
- Type of interpretation participants will need
- Documents that interpreters can use to familiarize themselves with the meeting content (PowerPoint slide decks, agendas, graphs, etc.). Interpreters need to know the jargon of your industry and how to adequately describe visual displays. Compiling a list of words, or acronyms unique to your setting helps them prepare.
- Prior Notice – many person-to-person interpretation companies request as much as two weeks, minimum, of time prior to an event to search for interpreters, as they are always in high demand. Many also ask that emergency requests be made a minimum of 48 business hours in advance. Document translation is

incumbent upon the number of words that you are requesting be translated. Pacific International Translations has produced a handy table that displays average document translation times[6].

- Driving and parking instructions
- Conditional**:** Proprietary Relationship – some interpretation companies ask that if you reach out to them within a two-week timeframe, that you not balance any competing requests with other companies as they should be able fulfill the request within a two-week time and do not engage in "call before send" relationships.



A participant and Hopelink staff member communicate with the help of an ASL interpreter.

Lastly, all your preparations are useless if the person who requested accommodation is not connected with them at your event or meeting. All staff working the event should know what to do to welcome an attendee with a disability and connect them with the accommodations they requested. Do not dismiss an interpreter if the attendee does not show up immediately as it's normal for people to run late.

[6] Link: https://www.pactranz.com/cms3/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Translation-times.pdf

Event and Meeting Set-up

Over the course of our inclusive planning grant we held many meetings, listening sessions, and focus groups. Each time we surveyed attendees afterwards to gather feedback on what they liked or would like to see improved. We heard from participants that this consistent surveying was important to them and made them feel as though their voices were heard. Over time we have learned some best practices for venue scouting and meeting set up and have shared that information below.

Venue Selection



Photo courtesy of KCMC

When scouting for a venue keep in mind how your attendees will get to the location *and* inside the building. Look for venues less than a quarter mile from transit stops that are serviced by main bus routes and that have parking available close by. Don't forget to check the bus route schedule to make sure it's operating during your event window. If able, visit the locations beforehand and look for accessible entrances, wide doors and hallways, spacious meeting rooms, and accessible bathrooms. Double check to make sure all automatic accessible door openers are operational in the building. Ask if there is a microphone available for the space, as you should use one when presenting even if it has not been specifically requested. Both stand and portable microphones work fine, it

just depends on your presenting preferences. If you plan on hosting your event during a time when the building may not be fully open or receiving lots of foot traffic, consider if an intercom will be utilized by those helping set-up or attending the meeting, as the use of an intercom may be a barrier for deaf participants.

501 Commons operates a resource webpage of venue places in the Puget Sound Region that is a catalogue of places that are free or have reduced fees for non-profit organizations. The interactive map also has filter features so you can search for venues with more specific amenities.

This was a fatal flaw of our event where we were trying to make sure all attendees felt welcomed and comfortable in the space.

At one of our Transportation for All World Café Summits we had issues with the accessibility of our venue. A participant in a mobility device came back from trying to use the restroom to ask our staff for assistance. The accessibility button was not working, and the door was too heavy for them to open on their own. This was an unfortunate outcome at an event where we were trying to make sure all attendees felt welcomed and comfortable in the space.

General Advice for Setting Up the Space

- Hang venue signs with your event name and arrows pointing toward the meeting room. Start hanging these signs in the parking lot or nearest transit stop and continue all the way to the door of the room. This will help people navigate to your meeting and help reduce confusion. Also set up staff and volunteers at key navigation points to ensure all attendees can receive assistance in accessing the venue.
- Have a sign-in table and greeter for your event so staff can direct new arrivals to their respective tables, accessibility accommodation, or answer any questions.
- When setting up tables and/or chairs for attendees, be sure to leave wide aisles between all furniture so that attendees using mobility devices can get around the room easily.

- Provide presenters or panelists with tabletop name cards so that deaf or hard of hearing attendees can see names more easily.
- If interpreters are coming, provide them with a designated place to sit and reserve the seats closest to them for attendees who will require their services.
- Right before starting your event or meeting tell attendees about general housekeeping, such as pointing out restrooms, emergency exits, and inviting people to stand or leave the room as needed.
- Verify that accessibility features of the space, such as automatic doors, are functional.

Below is some additional feedback for event design we have learned that will help attendees who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- Concrete buildings and hard surfaces create bad environments for people who are hard of hearing. They create loud environments and produce echoes. Buildings with wood floors are often preferred.
- Deaf and hard of hearing individuals should be allowed to sit near the front. It is a good idea to save seats in the front row or near an American Sign Language interpreter for deaf and hard of hearing attendees. These attendees may also need to use an assistive listening system, which requires good seating to use the system.
- Backlighting on presenters and American Sign Language interpreters is an issue because it causes people's hands and faces to be shadowed, which makes it harder for attendees to read lips or see gestures. Set up to focus light on the speakers' faces, not on their backs.
- Before your event:
    - Make sure there is a sound system available and advertise this to the public.
        - Test and double check that the sound system works.
        - A check list for checking the sound system can be beneficial and an example is included in the appendix.

    - Give notice of all hearing options or how to request accommodations for them.
    - Offer an email through which accommodation requests can be made as phone calls can be difficult for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- Make sure there is attention given to people who are hard of hearing but not using American Sign Language. They have to listen to speakers, so make sure there is not a lot of ambient noise for these attendees to hear and understand the speaker.

This section includes any additional tips for inclusive practices that we have learned but do not fit neatly into any of the previous categories. These items can also be moved into earlier sections if we believe they will be a better fit there.

Incentives and Stipends

Reducing barriers to participation is very important for ensuring that your target population is at the planning table with you. To that end, an organization may need to offer stipends or other incentives in order to provide some sort of compensation for participant's time. Examples of potential reimbursement costs include:

- Transportation to / from meeting;
- Honorariums to thank participants for their time;
- Reimburse child / respite care costs incurred by attending the meeting; and
- Offer to address other barriers to participation as they arise.

We provided stipends for our participants during the second round of our inclusive planning grant. Feedback for this practice was overwhelmingly positive. Participants shared that the honorarium they received was meaningful for feeling valued and respected among the group. The honorarium agreement and terms of payment we used can be found in the appendix.

"Thank you very much for the recognition. Much appreciated."

– Inclusive Planning Participant upon receipt of honorarium

In the King County Mobility Coalition's continued efforts to understand fair compensation, we have adopted an important lens. When asking individuals to provide their insight, time, and feedback, you should ask yourself: how can I make sure my participant's needs are met? This reflects a broad understanding of what "compensation" can mean and look like when honoring participation. It may look like organizing Internet access or phone data for them, figuring out childcare, or can simply be an hourly stipend.

Another important consideration related to the fairness of compensation is that the purpose is not to influence or bias participants' feedback. Rather, compensation should adequately value the time and effort participants contribute in providing their honest insights. The goal of compensation should be to adequately value the time and effort participants make to provide their honest insights. For more information about fair compensation, read the Washington State guidelines here: Community_Comp_Guidelines_V2_July2025.pdf

Date, Time, Location

Another way to reduce barriers to attending meetings for participants is to meet your target population where they are. Choose venues with access to public transit options that are in regions where your target population lives and/or works. Provide a call-in option for people to limit transportation barriers, but keep in mind some low-income participants have limited cell-phone minutes and may not be able to participate in long calls. Consider holding weekend meetings to reduce time a participant will have to take off work to attend your gathering.



Photo courtesy of KCMC

This is something our Steering Committee discussed at length when planning our Transportation Summits. We wanted to limit caregiving, work, and transportation barriers as much as possible for community attendees. In the end we decided to hold two events – one in the city of Seattle and another in a neighboring suburban city closer

to where harder-to-reach participants lived. This second event was also held on a Saturday morning to capture attendees who work Monday – Friday. Finally, the weekend Summit was accompanied by a transportation resource fair, so attendees who were hoping to get more immediate transportation help could discover resources that were available to them.

To restate information conveyed in the demographics section of this toolkit, there are a multitude of languages spoken in the area, including Chinese, English, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Before sending copy to a translation agency, gather everything that needs translating so you can submit it all at once. Agencies often charge minimum fees, so sending one sentence at a time gets expensive. Batching also shortens turnaround and ensures all your translated materials arrive together. Expect most requests to take about a week, depending on the size and number of documents.

Some of our smaller translation projects were completed by a bilingual volunteer. If you have bilingual staff or volunteers, and it fits within their role, they can handle simple translations to cut costs, though professional translators are preferred. They can also review completed translations for accuracy, since they may know industry-specific terms (e.g., transportation jargon) better than an outside translator.

When creating collateral, keep in mind that not all phrases or terms translate into other languages well, and they may end up confusing participants more than helping. If you are able, ask the translation agency to *transcreate* your document. Transcreation is the process of adapting a message from one language to another, while maintaining its intent, style, tone, and context. This may be

There were some smaller translation projects we were able to have completed by one of our bilingual volunteers.

more appropriate for some of your documents than translation alone.

Website Accessibility and Digital Files

Keep your participants with low-vision or other disabilities in mind when creating websites or digital files. We heard some feedback over the course of our grant that some participants experience frustration with online interfaces. We investigated a few best practices that were shared with us and have listed them briefly below for readers of this toolkit to explore further.

Some of our Steering Committee members have vision loss and recommend being cautious about saying what is or is not accessible for screen reader users. People use many different tools and what works with one set of tools may not work with a different combination. Sometimes a small coding mistake on a webpage can completely undo any attempts at accessibility. When in doubt, have a partner with vision loss test online accessibility features.

WCAG

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 covers a wide range of recommendations for making Web content more accessible. Following these guidelines will make content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including accommodations for blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity, and combinations of these.[7] The WCAG is extremely comprehensive and should be consulted when designing any major aspect of a website. The King County Mobility Coalition's website, KCMobility.org, has an accessibility icon with many features that the user can chose from. We are committed to ensuring as many people as possible can easily use our website.

More information about Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) can be found here: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1

[7] Abstract. https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/

Color and Font Standards

- It is vitally important that people can read the content on your documents and view the visual elements. People with low vision, color blindness, degenerative diseases, and so forth can have difficulty with documents that have been oriented around attractive design rather than readability. Here are some standards and tools for your use:WebAIM on Fonts: this webpage goes into the fonts and acceptable contrasts
- WebAIM: Contrast Checker this tool allows you to test how legible text is based upon the text color and background colors interact.
- WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Toolsallows you to check the accessibility of a whole page at once. This is a web extension for Google Chrome and Firefox.
- NoCoffee: this tool allows you to understand how people with various levels of vision loss, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and more see your page. This is a web extension available for Firefox.
- Colour Contrast Analyser: this is a desktop application for Windows/Macintosh that you can use to test color contrast of numerous documents.

Header Standards

When constructing online or off-line documents for screen reader use, you must use Header hierarchies. Headers are the way that people with low vision or blindness navigate webpages and document. Each sequential Header within a section should use the next numerical Header type. Without these headers, people with screen readers will struggle to use your site or document. Here is an example:

Title (Heading type 1)

Sub-Header 1 (Heading type 2)

Example content text.

Subsection 1.1 (Heading type 3)

Example content text.

- *List Item 1.1.1 (Heading type 4)*
- *List Item 1.1.2 (Heading type 4)*

Subsection 1.2 (Heading type 3)

Example content text.

These styles are preset in Microsoft Word and can be found on the "Home" tab. Highlight the text you want to designate as a header and then select the style on the top banner. This will help to guide screen readers through your document.

HTML

This is a common language for coding content on webpages. However, this can introduce new graphical elements and formatting that make it harder for users of screen readers to navigate your document, email, or webpage. It is always important to give visitors of your site or subscribers of your email campaigns to choose a plain-text version that will strip out all the unnecessary formatting. However, it can be difficult to find this option for emailing platforms, so be sure to shop around.

Alternative Text

Always code your images and URL hyperlinks with alternative text. This is text that will describe visual elements and links to external documents and webpages so that screen reader users are best able to navigate your site and understand its content. Many platforms have unique ways of accomplishing this, so discovering these options is up to you, the reader. However, to start things off, you can view Microsoft's page on how to "Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities[8]."

Collecting Feedback

All throughout your inclusive planning process, you will get feedback from your participants about their experiences and ideas for future change. These are invaluable insights and what inclusive planning is all about! Capture every idea that is shared

[8] "Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities." Ref: https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d

about your program and keep track of them in a spreadsheet, noting when it was said, by whom, topic, and who the agency responsible for addressing the comment. A screenshot of our Excel tracking sheet can be seen in the appendix to this toolkit.

At the end of year one we reviewed all the feedback we had gathered and created an Inclusive Planning Transportation Action Plan comprised of projects that would address the issues raised by participants. By collecting feedback in this manner, we were able to develop projects that directly addressed the concerns of our target populations, and participants are able to see their voice reflected in the document.

Participants are able to see their voice reflected in the document.

Looking Towards the Future

The King County Mobility Coalition is invaluably bettered by Inclusive Planning efforts. With many Inclusive Planning partners and participants also engaging with the King County Mobility Coalition, there will be an extra layer of accountability when transferring inclusive practices to Coalition work. The Coalition can particularly benefit from the lessons learned in accessible meetings, events, and engagement.

With its own website, newsletter, Committees, participants, and outreach, the King County Mobility Coalition can use inclusivity recommendations to be more mindful and cognizant of accessible practices explained in almost every section of the Inclusive Planning Toolkit. Beyond putting inclusive practices into motion, like sending out materials beforehand and distributing inclusive and intentional communications, this process has also proved to King County Mobility Coalition staff the importance of allowing for highly accessible and consistent feedback loops. Partners and participants should always be welcome to share and guide the Coalition experience as the stakeholders who support our work.

Moving forward, the King County Mobility Coalition will adopt Inclusive Planning practices in hopes of fostering an even more authentically welcoming partnership.



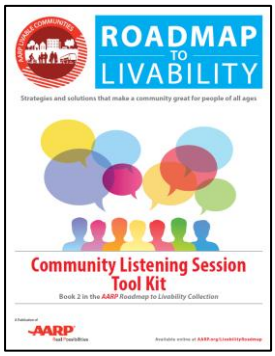
Photo courtesy of KCMC

The KCMC hopes to model Inclusive Planning practices to be witnessed and shared with the agencies we work with and beyond.

Additional Resources

Many toolkits or how-to guides for various inclusive planning and universal design practices have already been created by other organizations. We do not want to duplicate efforts. Therefore, we have included this section so that readers can reference other guides when appropriate and to serve as a list for "future reading." We have a similar list of resources related to virtual engagement in that section above.

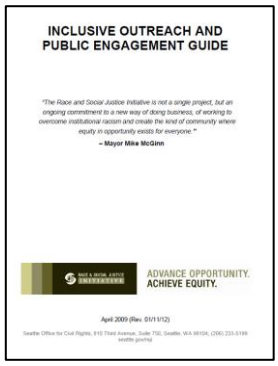
AARP's Community Listening Session Toolkit



"This toolkit was developed to gather public feedback in small group settings. The guidelines apply whether a livability team is holding a focus group, where 8 to 12 people are brought together to discuss a specific aspect of the work, or a larger community listening session, which is a well-publicized meeting that's open to community members who want to learn about the livability project and share their opinions."

This resource can be found on the American Association of Retired Persons' website (aarp.org/livablelibrary) along with other resources on empowering people to choose how they live as they age.

City of Seattle's Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide



"This guide is designed to provide City staff with the tools to: create effective public processes and forums with opportunities for communities of color to fully participate; identify the impacts of institutionalized racism and cultural complexity on public process; identify and use instruments that help select racially and culturally appropriate public processes; identify strategies to generate increased interest and involvement in the entire spectrum of government processes and services; and identify and use culturally appropriate stakeholder and data analysis tools that recognize and utilize communities' cultural assets and knowledge."

This resource can be found on the City of Seattle's website (Inclusive-Outreach-and-Public-Engagement-Guide.pdf) along with other resources on the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative.

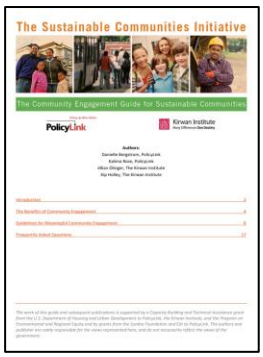
FemNorthNet & DAWN Canada's Toolkit for Diversity Through Inclusive Practice



"Emerging from our shared work and need to develop and model inclusive practices, this toolkit shares what we learned about best practices. It combines our common principles of participation, inclusion, and equality for all with the collective wisdom gathered by women from both organizations over a period of years."

This resource can be found on the DisAbled Women's Network Canada website . Diversity through Inclusive Practice: An Evolving Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Processes, Spaces & Events

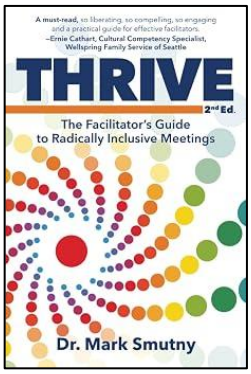
The Sustainable Communities Initiative's Community Engagement Guide



"This program is poised to catalyze new networks of relationships, new problem-solving methods, and new, inclusive decision-making tables. By bringing together diverse and disparate interests while developing new leaders, Sustainable Communities is seeding an opportunity for regions and communities to craft an authentic vision for an equitable and prosperous future."

This resource can be found on the National Center for Mobility Management's website (www.ccam-tac.org) along with other resources on approaches to public participation.

Thrive: The Facilitator's Guide to Radically Inclusive Meetings



" Picture organizations that embrace all voices and are committed to justice, equity and opportunity. Imagine businesses, nonprofits and the public sector creatively engaging people in thousands of ways—seeking their best ideas, empowering the silenced, and building communities where all are treated with dignity and respect.

That's what Thrive seeks to create.

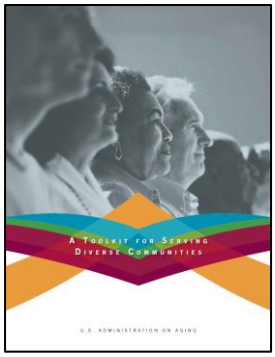
This resource was written by Mark Smutny, a member of our Steering Committee, and can be purchased on Amazon or AbeBooks.

Transit Planning 4 All's Inclusive Planning Toolkit



"Transit Planning 4 All has funded a series of pilot projects across the nation, each seeking to increase inclusion. This Inclusive Transit Planning Toolkit is a collection of key lessons learned and strategies for transit systems, leaders, and advocates to help them increase inclusive planning wherever they are."

This resource and other Inclusive Planning resources can be found on the Administration for Community Living's website

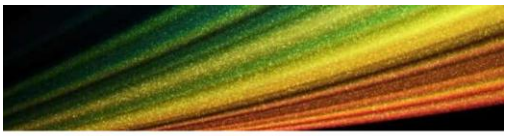


U.S. Administration on Aging's Toolkit for Serving Diverse Communities

"This Toolkit provides Aging Agencies and their state and local partners with a starting point for conversations regarding how to better serve diverse populations of older adults. It is hoped that the dissemination and use of this Toolkit will enhance Older Americans Act services."

This resource can be found on the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging website along with other resources on serving older adult communities and individuals.

The LGBT Great Inclusive Language Guide



The LGBT Great Inclusive Language Guide

Navigating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Language in an Everchanging World

This Guide is intended as an introductory tool to help our Corporate Member community and wider network navigate LGBTQ+ inclusive language across both written and verbal communications. This Guide is a direct response to requests from Members for more comprehensive guidance and best practices and includes: - - An introductory, accessible, and practical set of recommendations on how to approach LGBTQ+ inclusive language at work. A series of guiding principles for inclusive language.

The LGBT Great Inclusive Language Guide

Appendices

Glossary of Jargon and Acronyms

Limiting the use of jargon and acronyms helps to make people who may be less familiar with the terms feel more included in your group. However, avoiding these more specialized terms can sometimes be unavoidable. When this happens, think about including a glossary of jargon and acronyms in documents that community members will be reviewing. We have included one here to help readers understand the content of this document better and to serve as an example.

We first created a list of terms for an interpreter we worked with for an event. After compiling this document, we shared it with our steering committee members and heard feedback from participants that it was helpful for them to use as reference from time to time. We now receive requests from participants on other projects to produce a glossary of terms for those documents as well. It seems to be a practice that is easy to follow and that participants appreciate greatly. Make your own list of jargon and acronyms to have on file that you can easily share with participants and partners via email prior to meetings and bring hard copies with you to meetings to serve as a reference.

Our List of Jargon

Community Transportation – A general term to describe a variety of different transportation options, including public transit.

Curb-to-curb – This refers to services that picks people up at their origin's street curb, and deposits them at their destination's curb.

Deviated Fixed Route/Flex Route – A deviated fixed route operates primarily as a fixed route service with set stops and a set time schedule with one exception—a flex zone. Flex Zones are sections of a community not easily served by fixed routes. Riders can call ahead to request that the bus leave its regular route to pick them up or drop them off within the select zone.

Door-to-door – This is a style of transportation whereby a driver picks up people at their residence or current location, and deposits them directly at their destination.

Door-through-door – This is a style of transportation whereby a driver picks up people inside their residence or current location, and deposits them directly in the lobby at their destination. The driver assists them walking from buildings to the car and vice versa.

Find-A-Ride – Online service maintained by Hopelink that locates transportation services for individuals based on information that they provide about themselves and their transportation needs.

First-Mile/Last-Mile – The distance between transit stops and an individual's origin or destination, such as place of work or home can be disqualifying if they possess mobility

issues. Mobility options that provide reliable service to these populations—otherwise limited by personal disability, poor/dangerous infrastructure, topography, distance, or any combination of the aforementioned—help to “Close the First-Mile/Last-Mile Problem.”

Fixed Route – This refers to services with set schedules and routes where the sequence of stops never change.

Hand-to-hand – Hand to Hand services can help load a person with a severe mobility limitation. Hand to Hand drivers must be trained to help these riders, and therefore these services are more rare and more expensive.

Hyde Shuttle – Free van service for older adults 55 or older and people with disabilities operating in King County, WA by Sound Generations. Operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Based in certain neighborhood areas. Operates as a door-to-door bus service for those who would otherwise have no options.

Inclusive – Inclusivity is a principle that focuses on including the voices or serving the needs of the community.

Medicaid – Medicaid is the federal low-income insurance option. Locally, many people may know about the Washington equivalent, AppleHealth. Molina is a common sub-contracted insurance for Medicaid recipients. Anyone mentioning these are generally referring to Medicaid.

Mobility (industry) – An industry centered around improving the transportation ability and range of options to vulnerable populations.

Mobility (noun) – A person’s state of easy access to alternative transportation regardless of factors that would otherwise inhibit their ability to own a personal vehicle or used fixed transit services—like disability, age, demographics, income, etc.

On/Off Peak – “On peak” time is when transit experiences it’s highest rider volume throughout the day. “Off peak” is all other times.

People Disproportionally Impacted – Individuals who experience barriers to services or aid.

Providers – Refers to service providers of social programs and/or human services.

RapidRide – Bus routes operated by King County Metro that run on more frequent time schedules than their regular buses. These buses also have all door boarding and wi-fi on board.

Rideshare – These programs are alternative transportations options—typically referring to work commuting options, but not always—that help people use vans or cars to travel. This mode is ‘door-to-door,’ which means the driver comes to pick up passengers in her/his home community. Next, all of the passenger’s commute to their destination community, and the driver drops each person off at his/her destination. Oftentimes,

multiple passengers work at the same company and choose this mode because it makes sense to all go into work together. It may be faster than transit and help to build community within the van/car.

Screen Reader – software programs that allow users who are blind or visually impaired to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.

Silos – when organizations are working on similar programs, or should collaborate, but they are not communicating effectively, they are working siloed from one another.

Special Needs/Vulnerable Populations – Special Needs and Vulnerable Populations are general terms that encapsulate any demographic that is poorly served by social services including low-income, older adults, people with disabilities, Veterans, limited English proficient populations, youth, immigrants, and refugees.

Stride – Sound Transit's version of RapidRide service.

Tabletop Exercise – In Emergency Management this is a simulation exercise used to test an emergency plan to validate a management plan.

Theory of Change – A comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.

Volunteer Driver Programs – Volunteer driver programs provide transportation to vulnerable populations by recruiting volunteers to use their personal vehicles to help these riders reach grocery stores, pharmacies, medical appointments, and beyond.

Our List of Acronyms

AAA – Area Agency on Aging – Plans, coordinates, and advocates for a service delivery system for older adults, family caregivers and people with disabilities.

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act – Passed in 1990, the ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the public.

ADS – Aging and Disabilities Services – The AAA for King County, WA.

AWX – Adverse Weather – Sub-optimal weather conditions such as rain, fog, ice, snow, fog, nuclear fallout, and dust that can create dangerous situations for transportation.

AFN – Access and Functional Needs – Populations whose members may have additional needs before, during and after an incident in functional areas, including but not limited to: maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision, and medical care.

BIPOC – stands for Black, Indigenous and People of Color. A term used mainly in the US and Canada to refer collectively to people who are not white.

BNOA – Bellevue Network on Aging – Organization dedicated to healthy aging in the community by promoting awareness of needs and resources that support older adults.

BORPSAT – Bunch of Right People Sitting Around the Table – Philosophy for conducting stakeholder analysis.

CCS – Catholic Community Services – Human service provider that also operates a volunteer driver program to provide older adults and people with disabilities of limited income with the transportation they need to be able to get to their medical appointments, the grocery store, and to other essential errands.

CISC – Chinese Information and Service Center – A branch of United Way of King County, CISC provides services to support immigrants and their families by creating opportunities for them to succeed, while honoring their heritage.

CLC – Community Living Connection – Seattle and King County's information and support service for older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers.

CT – Community Transit – A transportation provider that operates in Snohomish County and has routes that connect riders to downtown Seattle. The agency prefers to be known as “Community Transit,” not the acronym, but some people may still use it.

CTAA – Community Transportation Association of America – A national organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of age, ability, geography or income, have access to safe, affordable and reliable transportation.

CTANW – Community Transportation Association of the Northwest – A Pacific Northwest organization that provides tools, resources and information, and advocates for favorable policies and practices to provide equal opportunities and mobility and transportation options for all people, particularly those with specialized transportation needs.

DART – Demand Area Response Transportation – Deviated fixed route transit service by King County Metro, operated by Hopelink. Could also stand for Dial-A-Ride Transportation (the Snohomish County paratransit service).

EERC – Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative – A sub regional mobility coalition comprised of stakeholders and mobility partners in East King County (Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, Sammamish, and Mercer Island).

ELL – English Language Learner – Individuals where English is not their first language. They either do not know English or do not know enough to have conversations in English.

ESN – Emergency Snow Network – A network activated during inclement weather that severely reduces Metro service to include only core bus routes and shuttles primarily serving key arterials and transit centers. Some neighborhoods and areas of the county may have limited or no bus service because of difficult travel conditions or geography.

FTA – Federal Transit Administration – Federal agency that provides financial and technical assistance to local public transit systems.

HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 is United States legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information.

HSBT – Human Services Bus Ticket –Subsidized bus tickets given to eligible human service agencies serving persons who are experiencing homelessness and/or low income in King County, WA.

IAWW – India Association of Western Washington – An organization who supports the local Indian community with social, cultural, and educational programs.

IRC – International Rescue Committee – Provides humanitarian relief to people affected by crisis.

KCM – King County Metro – Major transportation provider in King County, WA. Operates a large network of bus routes and the water taxi.

KCMC – King County Mobility Coalition – mobility coalition which informs the planning of special needs transportation services in King County and develop strategies, tools, and projects to improve mobility for people with limited transportation options due to age, income, disability, limited English proficiency, or other limiting factor.

LEP – Limited English Proficiency – Individuals where English is not their first language, and they speak English less than very well.

MM – Mobility Management – An approach to designing and delivering transportation services that starts and ends with the customer. It begins with a community vision in which the entire transportation network—public transit, private operators, cycling and walking, volunteer drivers, and others—works together with customers, planners, and stakeholders to deliver the transportation options that best meet the community's needs.

NCMM – National Center for Mobility Management – This organization is a national technical assistance center whose primary activities support mobility management professionals.

NEMT – Non-Emergency Medical Transportation– NEMT services help transport people to and from medical appointments. Typically, these services run with volunteer

drivers, or only serve clients that are seniors, disabled, or have Medicaid insurance. NEMT cannot help an individual access emergency medical care. Individuals must still call 911 to be taken to an emergency room.

NKCMC – North King County Mobility Coalition – A sub regional mobility coalition comprised of stakeholders and mobility partners in North King County, WA (North Seattle, Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Kenmore Bothell, and Woodinville).

ORCA – One Regional Card for All – Bus pass for the Puget Sound region that is accepted across many transportation providers, including King County Metro, Sound Transit, and Community Transit. As of 2019, there is a $5 fee for buying the card and the fare for Metro buses is $2.75.

ORCA LIFT – One Regional Card for All Low-Income Fare Transportation – Bus pass for low-income riders. The income threshold varies based on the poverty line, but if a rider qualifies for Medicaid, they are immediately qualified for an ORCA LIFT card. As of 2019, there is no cost for acquiring the first card, the fare is $1.50, and the permit must be renewed every 2 years.

PPPPP – Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance – Philosophy of process development.

PWD – People with Disabilities – Person-first language used to describe individuals who identify as having a disability.

RARET – Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation – Hopelink staffed workgroup whose goal is to increase the life-sustaining transportation services available to seniors, people with disabilities, low income individuals, and other vulnerable populations in the event of a major emergency in the Central Puget Sound region.

RFP – Request For Proposals – An organization releases an RFP and applicants submit a document indicating their plans for how they would use the RFP funding to implement a project or program. Applicants must indicate how their proposal meets the scope of what the funding can accomplish.

RRFP – Regional Reduced Fare Permit – Bus pass that entitles senior riders (age 65 or older), riders with a disability and Medicare card holders to reduced fares on the following public transportation systems in the Puget Sound region. As of 2019, there is no cost to acquiring the card and the fare for RRFP holders is $1.00.

SDOT – Seattle Department of Transportation – Local agency who maintains roads, traffic signals, and pedestrian zones in Seattle, WA.

SKCMC – South King County Mobility Coalition – A sub regional mobility coalition comprised of stakeholders and mobility partners in South King County (including South Seattle, Tukwila, Auburn, Renton, Kent, Federal Way, Pacific, and Algona).

SOV – Single Occupancy Vehicles Trips – Also known as ‘drive alone trips’. SOV trips occur when an individual uses their personal vehicle to drive to work, school, or any other destination by themselves with no other passengers in the car. This is the dominant method of American personal transportation and leads to rampant congestion due to poor spatial efficiency. The more people you can fit into transit modes, or alternative transportation modes, the more cities can reduce congestion.

ST – Sound Transit – Transportation provider that operates in Snohomish, King, and Pierce Counties. Their routes usually connect riders to Seattle from more distant cities, like Tacoma or Lynnwood. They operate services such as LINK Light Rail, Sounder Train, and Stride buses.

SVT – Snoqualmie Valley Transportation – Local transportation provider for cities in Snoqualmie Valley, WA.

SVTC – Snoqualmie Valley Transportation Coalition – A sub regional mobility coalition comprised of stakeholders and mobility partners in Snoqualmie Valley (Carnation, Duvall, Fall City, Preston, Monroe, North Bend, and Snoqualmie).

TDM – Transportation Demand Management – Efforts focused on understanding how people make their transportation decisions rather than the infrastructure behind transportation.

TNC – Transportation Network Companies – Companies such as Uber and Lyft.

WAV – Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle

WSDOT – Washington State Department of Transportation – State department that maintains the highways, toll roads, and ferries in Washington State.

Satisfaction Survey

Inclusive Transportation Planning Satisfaction Survey

1. Are you an older adult and/or a person with a disability?

☐**Yes** ☐**No**

Indicate whether you disagree or agree with the following statements. Circle one response. The scale goes from **Positive to Negative.**

2. I was satisfied with the planning process today.



3. My participation/comments had an impact on the planning or activities.



4. Were you asked to review any materials/information?

☐**Yes** ☐**No** if yes, answer #5

5. If yes, the materials were useful for people with disabilities or older adults.



If you were dissatisfied with anything, please let us know what we could have done better:

Stipend Honorarium

Compensation Honorarium

This compensation is given with the recognition that we are not offering full wages equal to the amount of time and effort contributed on the part of the participant. We are limited in the amount we can give, but we want to give something to show respect and appreciation of what our participants are offering and want to ensure that every participant is able to receive the same amount. All older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers and other individuals who are not being paid for their time by another organization are eligible to receive this compensation.

Participants will be reimbursed for their time after each meeting and/or event, such as a listening session. Participants will receive {$X} per hour whether they attend in person or by phone or video. Reimbursement will be given for only the length of the scheduled meeting. Participants will not receive additional payment for arriving early or staying late. Payment will be given immediately following each event or the next time staff support sees the participant in person if they called-in to a meeting. Recipients must sign a tracking document each time to acknowledge that they received the reimbursement.

Participants on the Steering Committee or project workgroups will be given an additional, one-time payment of {$X} at the conclusion of Round 2. This is to honor their time spent between meetings reading project documents and responding to emails. The payments will be in cash, if possible. Alternative payment methods may include grocery store gift cards or Visa gift cards. Check reimbursements are an option; however, payment would not be provided day-of as this method could take up to 2 weeks after a meeting or event for processing. Additional reimbursement or arrangements for travel to and from meetings can be arranged as needed.

Compensation is provided to qualifying participants to honor the time and energy they put into attending meetings. We recognize that often there are systemic barriers that make it more difficult for folks to participate and we hope that the honorarium will act at least as a partial relief to those barriers. We do not withhold funds because of what the individual shares with the group. We welcome honest feedback, unbiased information, and personal perspectives based off the lived experiences each of our participants have to offer.

By accepting this honorarium, participants agree to take part in the meeting. Participants choose what they share, without fear of judgment, and are never required to share personal experiences. Participants must stay for the entire duration of the meeting, except in the case of personal/familial emergency or care need, or the participant has communicated with the project staff support that they will need to leave early. Participants do not need to share personal details or show proof of a need to leave the meeting or event.

By signing below the participant agrees to the above terms and conditions.

X _____

Participant's signature

Mobility for All Summit Flyer

King County Mobility Coalition

Mobility for All Summit

Every person matters, and every person's transportation needs deserve good service.



Join a community conversation

Older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers can face challenges finding transportation that fits their needs. We want to hear about your experiences.

Everyone is welcome, including advocates and community partners. What you share will help improve how people find and get transportation in King County.

Two dates: choose the one that works for you

Tuesday, October 23

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

New Holly Gathering Hall
7054 32nd Ave S
Seattle, WA 98119

Includes: lunch

Saturday, November 3

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Crossroads Community Center
16000 NE 10th St
Bellevue, WA 98008

Includes: a transportation resource fair and light snacks

RSVP (optional)

RSVPs help us plan, but you can come without one.

Online:
surveymonkey.com/r/mobility_for_all

Phone: 425-943-6760
Email: mobility@hopelink.org

Need an accommodation?

Call or email us at least one week before the event. We can also answer questions about accessibility.

Can't attend? Take our short survey

surveymonkey.com/r/inclusive-transportation

In English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese.

Directions and ways to get to both events are on page 2.

How to get to the Summit Flier

How to Get to the Summit

EVENT 2 OF 2

November 3: Crossroads Community Center

16000 NE 10th St, Bellevue, WA 98008

By bus

Four King County Metro bus routes stop near Crossroads Community Center, at two different stops.

Stop: NE 8th St & 160th Ave NE

About a **4-minute walk**

- **Route 221** from Redmond Transit Center or Eastgate Park & Ride
- **Route 226** from Bellevue Transit Center or Eastgate Park & Ride

Stop: 156th Ave NE & NE 10th St

About a **7-minute walk**

- **Route 245** from Kirkland Transit Center or 124th Ave SE & SE 44th St in Factoria
- **RapidRide B Line** from Bellevue Transit Center or Redmond Transit Center

By bike or on foot

A paved trail connects Crossroads Golf Course to Crossroads Park. You can use this trail to reach Crossroads Community Center.

Walking routes and other options for people on foot:
tinyurl.com/ycyowe8g

By car or taxi

Parking is available at Crossroads Community Center.

If you can, we suggest sharing a ride: carpool, use a rideshare app such as Lyft or Uber, or take a taxi.

Half-price taxi rides: If you have a Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) and qualify based on income, you can buy taxi scrip (prepaid taxi vouchers) at half price. Buy scrip before your trip.

Learn more: bit.ly/2y3YzpQ or call **206-553-3000**.

Need help getting there?

If you have questions or can't find a way to get to the Summit, we can help you plan your trip.

Email: mobility@hopelink.org

Phone: 425-943-6760

Mobility For All Agenda/Menu

MOBILITY FOR ALL
TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT
STRATEGY WORLD CAFÉ

MENU

1:00 p.m. – Welcome and Announcements

1:10 p.m. – 1-2-4-All Icebreaker

- For one minute, reflect silently on the question:

  What challenges do I typically face with transportation?

- In pairs for two minutes, share your key thoughts.
- In groups of four for four minutes, share your key ideas. Note similarities and differences.
- In the whole group, share one key theme.

1:30 p.m. – What is a World Café?

1:45 p.m. – Three Rounds of Café Conversation – 20 minutes each

Strategy Question: *What bold steps might we choose to guarantee success for older adults and people with disabilities* ***to find and secure transportation****?*

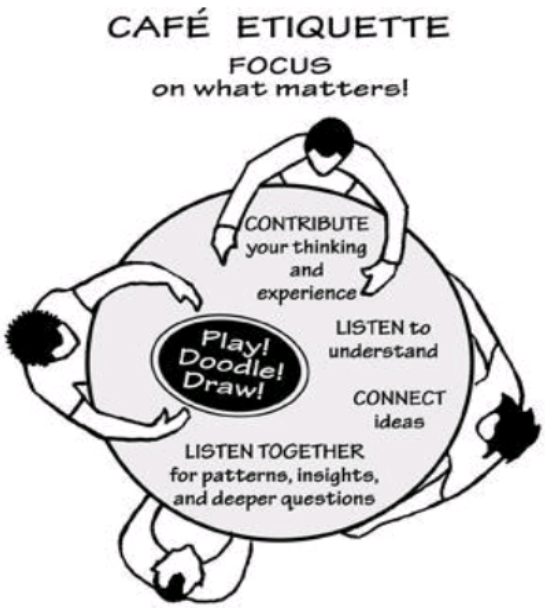
2:45 p.m. – Whole Group Harvest

3:15 p.m. – Evaluation and Next Steps

3:25 p.m. – Resource Fair

Please join us in the hallway and talk with representatives from different transportation service and information providers!

King County MOBILITY COALITION

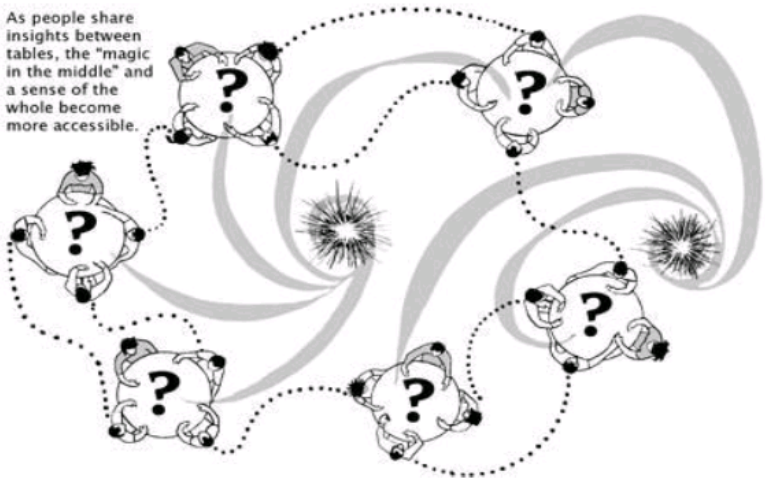


I'm a Table Host, what do I do?

Remind people at your table to jot down key connections, ideas, discoveries, and deeper questions as they emerge.

Remain at the table when others leave and welcome fellow travelers from other tables.

Briefly share key insights from the prior conversation so others can link and build using ideas from their respective tables.



Keep it Simple and

The Challenge

Vision

- 6.4% of non-institutionalized U.S. residents age 65+ report a visual disability (blind or serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses).
- 25.66% of U.S. residents age 80+ report visual impairment.

Hearing

- Approximately 15% of American adults (37.5 million) aged 18 and over report some trouble hearing.
- About one-third of adults over age 60 experience some hearing loss.
- About 28.8 million U.S. adults could benefit from using hearing aids.
- Among adults age 70+ with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, only 30% have ever used them.

Chronic Conditions

- As many as 80% of older Americans have at least one chronic health condition.
- The likelihood of developing memory loss increases with age.
- Many people process information more slowly as they age.

Language Barriers

- Almost 15% of U.S. residents age 60 or older speak a language other than English in their homes.

Health Literacy

- Health literacy is affected by far more than reading literacy and numeracy. Consider the effects of stress, fatigue, depression, medication, and nutrition.
- Writing and speaking in plain language boosts understanding for people with health literacy problems.
- The health literacy "onus" is on health and human services professionals to convey information in a way that patients and clients can process and understand it, and the services needed, and make appropriate health decisions.

Keep It Simple!

- AVOID ALL CAPS, ESPECIALLY IN LONG LINES OF TEXT
- **Avoid boldface, especially in long lines of text**
- *Avoid italics, especially in long lines of text*
- Avoid underlining, especially in long lines of text
- Avoid reverse type, especially in long lines of text
- Use subheadings, bulleted lists, and sidebar boxes to break up long blocks of text.
- Leave ample white space to reduce eye fatigue (e.g., wider margins, space around images, and 1.5 spacing, when possible).
- Maintain high contrast (e.g., black or dark gray type on white).
- If you "break the rules," it helps to increase leading (space between lines).

Type Size & Font Choice



18 Point
24 Point
30 Point
36 Point
48 Point
60 Point
72 Point

Anything smaller than 12-point type is nearly impossible for older eyes to read.

Use 14-point sized fonts for presenting online text to older readers. 14-point fonts are more legible, promote faster reading, and are preferred to 12-point fonts.

A compromise must be made in deciding which font type to use. At 14-point, serif fonts support faster reading; however, sans serif fonts are generally preferred. If speed of reading is paramount, then serif fonts are recommended. If font preference is important, then sans serif fonts are recommended.

—Determining the Best Online Font for Older Adults (Michael Bernard, Corrina Liao, & Melissa Mills, 2001)

Plain Language

Plain language is clear, succinct writing designed to ensure the reader understands as quickly and completely as possible. Plain language strives to be easy to read, understand, translate (if necessary), and use. It avoids verbose, convoluted language and jargon. For more information, visit **www.PlainLanguage.gov**.

Respectful Language

Use "person first" language that recognizes a person before his or her age, disability, or condition:



- "Person with a disability"
- "Visitor who uses a wheelchair"



- "Disabled person"
- "Wheelchair user"

Make it Accessible

Make It Accessible!

Websites are required to be accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Let your webmaster know that ...

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA
http://bit.ly/2blKahy

... is the Department of Justice's standard for ensuring that online information is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust for all readers.

Many web designers are simply unaware that the standards exist and don't know that easy reference tools are available. WCAG strategies include:

- Use styles (e.g., Heading1, Heading2) for meaningful sequence
- Use "alt-text" to describe photos and graphics
- Provide user options such as text size and high-contrast adjustment
- Create accessible Word docs, PDFs, PowerPoint slidedecks, and more

These strategies make web content accessible by screen readers (assistive technology) as well as emerging voice-activated technologies.

Digital communications that meet ADA requirements for individuals with disabilities are easier for all people to read and understand.

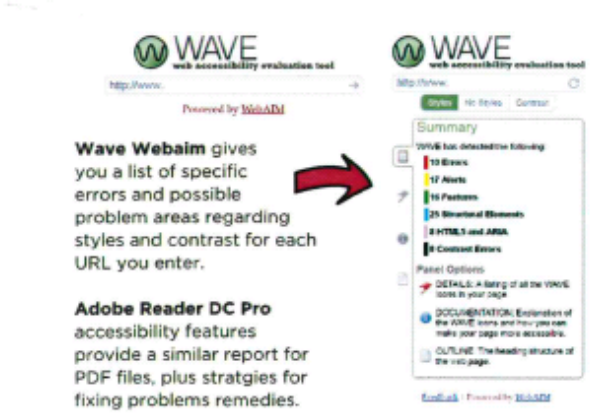
Captions

CC

All videos should have captioning for people with hearing loss.
Tip: While far from perfect, videos uploaded to YouTube are auto-captioned.

Test Your Website

There are lots of services that can check your website for you but you can also check it yourself using a free online app. One example is the WAVE web accessibility evaluation tool (**wave.webaim.org**):



Wave Webaim gives you a list of specific errors and possible problem areas regarding styles and contrast for each URL you enter.

Adobe Reader DC Pro accessibility features provide a similar report for PDF files, plus stratgies for fixing problems remedies.

More Resources

ADA Requirements: Effective Communication, U.S. DOJ
(http://bit.ly/1Pu56w6)

CDC Health Literacy
(http://bit.ly/233ugl0)

Quick Guide to Health Literacy and Older Adults, U.S. DHHS
(http://bit.ly/2mG7W90)

Tips for Making Print More Readable, AFB (http://bit.ly/2c2NwrA)

University of Washington Accessibility Website
www.washington.edu/accessibility/

Commitment

Aging and Disability Services (ADS) strives to provide information and access to services to all visitors, including those with disabilities.

Aging and Disability Services
www.agingkingcounty.org

AgeWise King County
www.agewisekingcounty.org

We welcome your feedback regarding accessibility and age-friendly content:

AgingInfo@seattle.gov

ads *Aging and Disability Services*
Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County
City of Seattle King County

Aging and Disability Services—the Area Agency on Aging for King County, WA—plans, coordinates, and advocates for a comprehensive service delivery system for older adults, family caregivers and people with disabilities in King County.

Aging and Disability Services is hosted by the City of Seattle, an Age-Friendly City.

www.agingkingcounty.org

Sound System Check List

HLAA
GET IN THE HEARING LOOP

Assistive Listening System Checklist

ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM

Do you have a working assistive listening system?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Which assistive listening system do you have?

- ☐ Hearing loop
- ☐ FM
- ☐ Infrared

Do the hearing loop, FM, and infrared systems have headphones?

Note: *receivers are required to be hearing-aid-compatible–earbuds are not acceptable.*

- ☐ Yes
  If yes, how many? _____
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Do the FM and infrared systems have neckloops?

Note: *hearing loops don't need neckloops*

- ☐ Yes
  If yes, how many? _____
- ☐ No

Are the receivers charged, sanitized, and working properly?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS

Do you have a working PA system?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have the audio volumes for the PA and the ALS been balanced?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is there at least one microphone for Q & A?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200 • Bethesda, MD 20814 • 301.657.2248 • hearingloss.org • GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org

MICROPHONE USE

Correct microphone use with assistive listening systems is crucial. The microphone needs to be held closer to the mouth than if one were using a PA alone. A rule of thumb: at chin level, but not blocking the view of the lips.

Have presenters been instructed in how to use a microphone?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you have a handout to distribute to presenters about microphone usage?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do staff, presenters, and performers use the microphone every time?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

BATTERIES

Were the batteries for the wireless microphones checked prior to the event?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Were the batteries for the receivers checked prior to the event?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

SIGNAGE

Do you have signage that announces the assistive listening system?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is the signage easy to find and read?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Is it clearly visible by doorways, kiosks, and information desks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

ADVERTISING

Do you advertise your hearing accessibility?

On marketing materials?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ flyers
  - ☐ playbills
  - ☐ invitations
  - ☐ newsletters
  - ☐ house of worship bulletin

On your website?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

On social media?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you provide event or venue alternative telephone contact information, email?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you offer ticketing by phone; do your operators know how to handle communication access inquiries?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do you regularly announce your hearing accessibility at the beginning of events and explain how to use it?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

STAFF TRAINING

Are staff trained about:

Type of equipment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Where to find it?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How to use it?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Knowledgeable about neckloops and telecoils?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Able to demonstrate and test equipment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How to check out equipment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How to maintain equipment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Can they troubleshoot problems?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

MAINTENANCE

Is there a protocol for managing equipment that's checked out–charging, replacing batteries, testing, repairing, sanitizing?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you test your assistive listening system regularly?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do staff know whom to call for repairs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



This is the International Symbol for Hearing Access. The image with a T signifies a hearing loop. Post this symbol on your website, email marketing and advertising materials, along with a sentence about the type of hearing access you offer.

Contact for additional information:
GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org

Meeting Coordination Applications

About this list

There are innumerable meeting coordination applications and platforms, so it's vitally important to test your platform for accessibility performance. Below we have listed some of the best-known applications along with notes on their accessibility.

Our accessibility findings come from the Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE), developed by the nonprofit WebAIM, which reflects up-to-date Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The author rated the tools based on the number of errors found; there are other metrics in the tool that we decided not to focus on. Much of our exploration was also based on rudimentary use of Microsoft's Narrator screen reader.

Tool availability and features were checked in October 2026. Several of these tools have redesigned their interfaces since our original accessibility testing, so entries note where findings should be retested. Please independently evaluate any tool with a screen reader, WAVE, or other accessibility tools before adopting it.

Doodle (Web)

Summary: Doodle polls can be created with or without a paid account using the web platform. Polls are simple checklists of dates and times, with breakouts that show each person's available times. The free plan is limited to one live group poll, one booking page, and one 1:1 link at a time.

Upside:

- Can link to external calendars so you can check your availability from this platform.
- The five steps for creating an event and sending out a link are easy to navigate with a simple screen reader.
- Connects with Slack through Zapier, a third-party automation tool.

Downside:

- The website doesn't function perfectly with simple screen reader use.
- The free version shows many advertisements and non-functional elements to screen reader users on the final sign-up list.

Calendly (Web)

Summary: Calendly lets you share your availability so others can book time with you. Group and collective meeting types require a paid plan.

Upside:

- The interface for guests to "Select a Date & Time" is simple and navigable. It works very well when the person sharing their calendar is not using a screen reader and the guest is.
- One of the best meeting scheduler apps for letting others schedule meetings with you.

Downside:

- The back-end admin pages have accessibility issues that would frustrate a person with a disability using the interface as an admin rather than as a guest.
- Admin pages have clean-looking drop-down menus, but with poor accessibility.

Rallly (Web)

Summary: An open-source poll tool in the same format as Doodle: create a poll, propose dates and times, share a link, and participants vote. Free basic polls are available, with a paid Pro tier, and organizations can host it on their own servers.

Accessibility note: Our original testing found more errors and less functionality than Doodle. Rallly has been actively developed since then, so these findings should be retested.

Website: rallly.co

Vyte (iOS, Web)

Summary: An all-in-one scheduling tool. On the web, Vyte focuses on booking pages that let people book a meeting with you without creating an account, plus team scheduling and video-conferencing integrations (Zoom, Teams, Google Meet). The iPhone app lets users suggest times, lets invitees vote on them without signing up, and lets invitees converse with the event creator.

Upside:

- More unique functionality than many of the other options.
- Sends a very nice summary email to invited participants, with very readable text.

Downside:

- The selectable event options have poor text color contrast. Because the date text is readable but the time text is not, a screen reader can tell users what day an option is, but not what time.
- The iPhone app may not be actively maintained; its App Store listing shows a 2021 copyright.

Boomerang for Gmail (browser extension)

Summary: The former Boomerang Calendar plug-in is now part of Boomerang for Gmail, installed as a Chrome or Edge extension. Its scheduling tools sit in the Gmail compose window:

- **Suggest Times:** propose times for a one-off meeting in a single email.
- **Bookable Schedule:** a reusable schedule of available times.
- **Share Free/Busy:** share your availability while keeping meeting details private.
- **Meeting Poll:** invite a group to vote on the best time.

Boomerang also offers an Outlook version, but Meeting Poll is currently available only in Gmail.

Upside:

- Protects privacy by showing other, unrelated meetings only as "Busy."
- Works inside the email inbox, so recipients don't need a separate login.

Accessibility note: Our original testing was done on the older Boomerang Calendar interface. At that time, screen reader users could not tab to the "Click to Confirm" buttons in the invitation, so recipients could not choose a time without a mouse. Senders also could not set up options without a mouse, and the meeting selection view had a high number of errors. Installation required changing browser cookie permissions, a barrier to access. The interface has since been redesigned, so these findings should be retested.

Retired tools

MeetingBird, included in earlier versions of this list, was retired in 2020 after its acquisition by Front and is no longer available.

Sources

- Boomerang: scheduling features
- Boomerang Meeting Poll announcement (Business Wire, 2025)
- Boomerang: MeetingBird alternative
- Vyte Calendar on the App Store
- Vyte Scheduling on the Zoom Marketplace
- Toolradar: Doodle poll alternatives (2026)
- Dupple: Doodle alternatives (2026)
- Zapier: Doodle and Slack integration

Example Feedback Log

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	**Event/Source Name**	**Input Process**	**Audience**	**Responsible Part**	**Date**	**Geography (if any)**
2	Access to Healthcare Committee	Meeting	Healthcare	KCMC	4/4/2018	King County
3	HERO House Bellevue (Matt Valdespino)	1:1 interview	People with mental illnesses	Metro	8/30/2018	King County
4	Jewish Family Service (Alan Wittenberg)	1:1 call	Older adults; JFS clients	KCMC	9/4/2018	King County
5	Jewish Family Service (Alan Wittenberg)	1:1 call	Older adults; JFS clients	Unknown	9/4/2018	King County
13	Old Friends Club (Karen Koenig)	1:1 interview	Older adults; Individuals with dementia;	Multiple Transit Agencies	10/2/2018	East Side
14	Old Friends Club (Karen Koenig)	1:1 interview	Older adults; Individuals with dementia; caregivers	Metro	10/2/2018	East Side
15	Old Friends Club (Karen Koenig)	1:1 interview	Individuals with dementia;	Metro	10/2/2018	East Side
26	Mobility For All Summit	World Café		Multiple Transit Agencies	10/23/2018	Seattle

G	H	I	J
Theme (if any)	**Sub Theme (if any)**	**Need or Solution**	**Input / Ideas**
One-Call/One-Click		Solution	>Include Feature: Metro's Trip Planner currently has the option to chose "wh important to you" which allows riders to prioritize trip types by affordability, minimal walking, minimal transfers, etc.
One-Call/One-Click	Metro Access	Solution	>Metro Access sign-up should make it clearer that there is an option to receiv calls when their driver has arrived
One-Call/One-Click		Need	>clients need help making phone calls; case managers help with that
One-Call/One-Click		Need	>home care agency facilites to help people get to appointments
One-Call/One-Click	Metro Access	Need	>Service windows way to big; people sometimes end up unaccompanied for l of time
One-Call/One-Click	Metro Access	Need	>Drivers should make a bigger effort to inform riders when they have arrived don't always know where to wait
One-Call/One-Click	Metro Access	Need	>initial client evaluation process is onerous, often times this is a barrier for pe may be eligible from accessing the service
One-Call/One-Click		Need	>Transportation providers are not coordinated across agencies

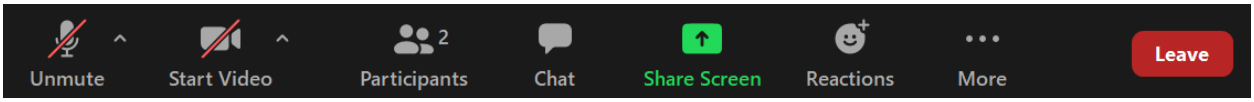
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Hopelink Mobility Zoom Guide

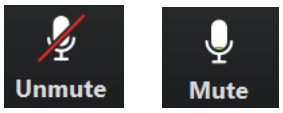
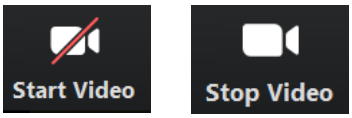
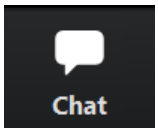
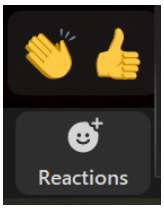
Below are some guidelines Hopelink Mobility uses as best practice:

- We invite you to turn your video on when you are able. This will facilitate a more “in-person” feel and will allow others to connect your face with your voice.
- Include your pronouns in your Zoom name.
- Identify yourself by restating your name before speaking.
- If you are not speaking, keep yourself on mute until you are ready to speak.

Basic Zoom Functions



The following icons and functions can be found in the tools panel at the bottom of your Zoom window. This panel may disappear throughout the meeting; to make it reappear, hover your mouse over the bottom of the screen or view the keyboard shortcuts covered below.

Your **microphone** will be muted upon entry. To unmute yourself and speak, click the mute/unmute icon.	
Your **video** will be turned off up on entry. To turn it on, select the video icon.	
You may use the **chat** feature to send messages to those attending the meeting, send private messages to individuals in the meeting, and send files to attendees. You are also able to save the meeting chat for later.	
You may use the **reactions** feature to signal a thumbs up or clapping response. These responses will fade away after a short period of time. See the nonverbal feedback section below to review more ways of reacting, including the raised hand feature.	

Calling In or Accessing a Zoom Meeting

For Hopelink Mobility Management Zoom meetings, you should be provided a meeting URL, a meeting ID, a passcode, a "one-tap mobile" number, and a dial-in number.
Example:

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5202716557?pwd=SFRINm9tZDVzYnZ2azhVZHlWTUNMUT09
Meeting ID: 520 271 6557
Passcode: 2996
One tap mobile
+12532158782,,5202716557# US (Tacoma)
Dial by your location
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

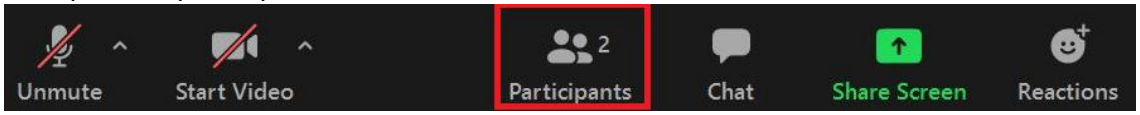
If you use the URL or the "one-tap mobile" number when calling in to enter the meeting, you will not need to make use of the passcode or meeting ID.
If you are calling in using the dial-in number or another method of accessing the meeting, you will need to enter both the meeting ID and passcode to enter.
If calling in, you may use the following shortcuts on your phone to make use of Zoom functions:

- Star (*) 6 to mute / unmute
- Star (*) 9 to raise / lower hand

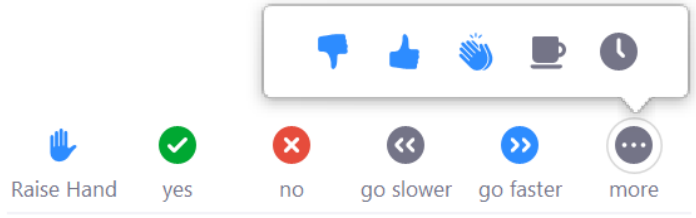
When joining a Hopelink Mobility Management meeting, you will be placed into a waiting room until the meeting host accepts you into the meeting.

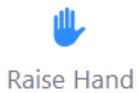
Expanded Zoom Functions

Zoom offers a feature called nonverbal feedback that allows you to communicate a response to the host without speaking. This feedback goes beyond the thumbs up or clapping reaction features. All participants in the meeting will be able to see reactions that you select.
To find the nonverbal feedback icons, click on the **Participants** button on your bottom tools pane to open the participants window.



When you click on Participants, you will see the names of all participants and several icons. When you click on "more", you will see additional icons. You may select these icons to communicate various nonverbal responses to others in the meeting.



Click on **Raise Hand** when you want to speak.	
To signify you will be **away** from the screen, select the clock icon.	
Use the **coffee mug** icon to communicate that you would like to take a break.	
React to questions and provide feedback by selecting **yes** or **no**.	

Zoom has keyboard shortcuts that allow users to make use of basic Zoom controls without using a mouse. Below is a list of some of the most common shortcuts, although a complete list can be found through this link.

- **Ctrl+Alt+Shift**: Move focus to Zoom's meeting controls
- **Alt+V**: Start/stop video
- **Alt+A**: Mute/unmute audio
- **Alt+F**: Enter or exit full screen
- **Alt+H**: Display/hide in-meeting chat panel
- **Alt+U**:Display/hide participants panel
- **Alt+F**: Enter or exit full screen
- **Alt+Y**: Raise/lower hand
- **Ctrl+Alt+Shift+H**: Show/hide floating meeting controls

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