

Maricopa Association of Governments  
Municipal Aging Services Project  
Focus Group Facilitator Guide  
Revised July 25, 2011

*Instructions are in (). Please contact Amy St. Peter, MAG, at [astpeter@azmaq.gov](mailto:astpeter@azmaq.gov) with any questions and to submit notes from the focus groups. Thank you!*

*Prior to the focus group, please make sure someone is taking detailed notes about the responses received. An ideal size for focus groups is eight to 15 people. Larger groups may be accommodated by providing additional opportunities for people to give feedback, such as in writing. Generally one to two hours is considered an adequate length of time. Please ensure all people in the focus group have an opportunity to offer feedback and that no one person dominates the discussion.*

*Supplies needed for the focus groups are copies of the questionnaire, a flip chart, easel, markers, large post-it notes, an area for the parking lot, a sign in sheet, and pens. If you need supplies, please contact Rachel Brito at [rbrito@azmaq.gov](mailto:rbrito@azmaq.gov).*

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. (Begin within five minutes of scheduled start time.)
  - b. (Have each person state their name and affiliation, if any.)
  - c. (Remind people to sign in.)
  - d. (People may have questions or comments they would like addressed but that do not fit within the agenda. Invite them to record their questions or comments on the large post-it notes and to put them in the parking lot area. These will be addressed at the end of the focus group or afterward by MAG staff.)
  
2. Overview of Purpose and Format
  - a. The purpose of today's discussion is to gather your thoughts about services for people age 65 plus. (Examples of services include transportation, senior centers, volunteering.)
  - b. Please feel free to share your thoughts and to ask questions throughout the meeting.
  - c. During the meeting, please respect all thoughts shared and refrain from side conversations. This will ensure we can all hear and appreciate the different perspectives being expressed. We encourage you to offer your ideas- if there are things you would rather express one-on-one, please feel free to contact MAG staff by email or phone after the event.

### 3. Ideal versus Actual Community

- a. Take a moment to imagine that all people age 65 years plus are involved and active within their community. They feel connected to other people and they can get to where they need to go.
- b. Write down a short description or draw what this community would look like.
- c. (Invite each person to share their description. Record their descriptions on the left side of the flip chart.)
- d. (Ask people to describe their community as it currently is. Record their observations on the right side.)

### 4. Questions

(Note differences between the two columns. Inquire what they and local governments can do to make community more like the description on left side.)

- a. What makes you feel connected to other people?
  - i. What obstacles stop you from connecting with other people?
  - ii. What would help you feel more involved?
- b. Are you able to travel where you need to?
  - i. What do you need to move more easily from one place to another?
  - ii. What would be the impact? How would this improve your quality of life?
- c. How can local government help you-
  - i. Feel connected to other people?
  - ii. Improve your access to transportation?
- d. How can you improve your access to other people and to transportation?
- e. What else is important to this discussion?
- f. How do you like to receive information? (Examples include mail, email, website, radio, TV, public hearing, focus group, social media like twitter and face book)
- g. Have you provided input to the Maricopa Association of Governments before?

### 5. Closing and Next Steps

- a. (Read parking lot issues and address as able. Indicate any unresolved issues will be taken up by MAG staff after the focus group.)
- b. Please take a moment to complete the questions at your places. This information will be kept confidential. Your feedback helps us know a bit more about you.
- c. Please feel free to skip any questions you don't want to answer.
- d. If you would like to bring it home with you, please do so and return it to our host so they can send it back to us.
- e. If you have any questions, please contact the MAG office at (602) 254-6300.

- f. Thank you so much for your time today.
- 6. Adjourn on time.
  - a. (Collect questionnaires.)
  - b. (Thank participants as they leave.)