



Counselor Facilitation Guide

Considering Transportation in Decisions

LINK Houston advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity.

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This facilitation guide will help you assist your clients to consider transportation in their housing decision.

Why You Should Help Clients Consider Transportation

People need quality housing they can afford. They also need to access schools, jobs, healthcare, groceries, a park, etc. Ideally, they could find quality housing they can afford near everything they need. The reality is that they likely will not live near everything and so will need quality transportation they can also afford.

Many transportation options are much less expensive than relying on a car, such as public transit (METRO bus or rail), carpooling, vanpooling, walking or biking. If your clients can find housing that also affords them access to quality, affordable transportation then they will be better able to get to the places they need to go regardless of what happens in their future - such as when someone else needs the family car, the car breaks down, or is flooded.

Access to affordable transportation will also help your clients save money in the long run.

A Template for Your Dialogue with Clients about Transportation – What you say

Let’s first talk about your goals for housing and life in general.

When you move, how do you want life to be better?

Prompt: What are the person/family’s broad goals? Why are they moving? How do they aspire for their life to be better?

Transportation is a major household expense. How much you may have to spend on transportation and the travel options available to you vary greatly between neighborhoods in Houston and the region.

How is transportation part of how you want life to be better?

Prompt: This will help me to help you find housing that also fits your goals and preferences for transportation.

Let’s begin by listing the important places you go regularly.

How do I use this guide?

Your role and expertise are counseling people about housing or self-sufficiency. You do not need to be an expert on transportation too. We hope the dialogue guide below assists you to instill hope in your clients and to empower them to make decisions in their own best interest. The questions are open-ended to help people explore their own priorities and goals.

The Individual Workbook: Considering Transportation in Your Housing Decision provides additional information for people to take away and use on their own time.

What are the important places you go regularly?

Prompt: These could be general types of places, like a grocery store, or they can be specific places, like a church, school, or work location. Aside from work, common destinations include schools (elementary, middle, high), higher education institutions, parks, childcare/daycares, fresh food grocers, the pharmacy, healthcare, community centers, libraries, churches, etc.

How do you, and your family members, travel to each of those places now?

Prompt: Let’s write-in how you travel to each place, so we can think about that again in a few minutes.

After you move, what specific places do you really want to be able to continue to get to?

Prompt: We want to make sure we help you find housing near transportation that can connect you to those places...if that is something you are interested in.

Thank you for helping me understand your goals for your move, places you go that are important to you and how you get there now...[if applicable] I also appreciate knowing about your goal to find housing near transportation that can still get you to those important, specific places you mentioned.

The less you spend on transportation, the more money you have for housing, food, healthcare, and other expenses. Your goal should be to spend less than 15% of your income on transportation. I understand that it can be challenging in Houston. However, finding housing in a location that also meets your transportation goals will improve your quality of life – likely reducing how much time or money you will spend going places you need to go in the future.

How do you feel about how you travel now?

In other words, how would you like to be able to get to some of those places you listed previously?

Prompt: What are your thoughts about changing how you get around, such as to save money for other expenses?

Here is a workbook to help you, it is yours to keep. It will help you...to calculate how much you spend on transpor-

tation now...to identify your goals for transportation... and finally to find questions to help you decide between housing options by thinking about transportation.

If you want, I am happy to take a few minutes to help you begin.

Do you want to take a few minutes to get started together?

Prompt if “NO”

Okay. Well I understand we have a lot to accomplish and there is a lot for you to consider. Please take some time at home to go through the workbook. I think you would find...

- Step 1’s expenses worksheet helpful OR
- Step 2’s transportation goals helpful OR
- Step 3’s questions about finding housing that fits your transportation needs helpful.

Prompt if “YES”

Okay. Great. Open up your workbook to Step 1. We will start there. We can discuss each step, briefly, so you are comfortable finishing at home.



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Harris County Transit	On The Road Lending	Wells Fargo
HOME Coalition	The Rev. Linda Davis	West Houston Association
Houston Area Urban League	Rowhouse CDC	Westchase District

LINK Houston

LINK Houston is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity. We envision a world in which all people in Houston can easily access not only jobs, but also educational experiences, medical appointments, grocery stores, greenspace, and other important destinations, regardless of their mode of transportation. To make that vision a reality, we support transformative and inclusive policies, systems, initiatives, and infrastructure development that connect people to opportunity by transit, walking, and biking. We move ideas into action through community engagement, research, and shaping public policy.

Please direct any questions to LINK Houston by visiting www.linkhouston.org or emailing info@linkhouston.org.