

A Toolkit for Developing Local Multisector Plans for Aging in Rural Areas

Older adults are the fastest-growing demographic, especially in rural areas, where age-friendly planning initiatives often lag behind due to resource constraints and the limited applicability of urban and suburban models. To bridge this gap, The SCAN Foundation created a free toolkit to support rural leaders in developing tailored, local Multisector Plans for Aging.

What is a Multisector Plan for Aging (MPA)?

An MPA is a comprehensive strategy designed to address the challenges and opportunities associated with an aging population. MPAs drive cross-sector collaboration to address gaps in infrastructure, increase access to resources, and provide a 10-year strategic vision to build out assets such as health care, transportation, housing, care coordination, and support services. MPAs provide an overarching framework and a set of strategies to create age-friendly environments that promote equity, inclusion, dignity, independence, and physical, emotional, and financial well-being of older adults and caregivers.

Why are MPAs essential in rural communities?

Demographic trends and community needs in rural areas often differ from those in urban areas, but planning efforts typically focus on more populated regions. MPAs are essential to understand and address the trends and unique challenges that many rural communities experience, including:

- An aging population and higher prevalence of disabilities
- Financial insecurity
- Racial and ethnic disparities
- Barriers to health care & behavioral health services
- Lower access to long-term services and supports (LTSS)
- Greater reliance on informal caregivers
- Transportation challenges
- Digital divide
- Greater vulnerabilities to severe weather and climate-related disasters



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[Click here to view the toolkit!](#)

Who is this toolkit designed for?

The Rural MPA Toolkit is for local leaders and organizations who seek to engage in robust age- and disability-friendly community-wide planning. The toolkit is relevant to rural leaders anywhere, including those located in plains, deserts, and mountain areas.

How will this Rural MPA Toolkit support your planning efforts?

The toolkit describes 10 key steps to develop a rural MPA. Throughout each step, the toolkit provides case studies from The SCAN Foundation's 2022-2023 Rural MPA demonstration projects and links to over 125 resources, including sample templates, tools, and resources to build your own MPA!

“The MPA process has increased awareness of not only the diversity of resident needs, but the range of resources and supports currently in existence. Partners have long recognized the importance of collaboration and sharing information and working on the MPA provided a time-bound and structured format in which to have critical discussions and form partnerships.”

- Sharon Brisolara, PhD, Consultant,
North State Local Master Plan for
Aging; Director, Inquiry that Matters

The Rural MPA Toolkit's Ten Steps to Successful MPA Development:

- Step 1:** Identify MPA Leadership & Staffing
- Step 2:** Form a Local Advisory Committee
- Step 3:** Build Public Awareness & Support
- Step 4:** Conduct a Landscape Analysis of Local Data & Aging Services
- Step 5:** Facilitate Inclusive Community Engagement
- Step 6:** Synthesize Findings & Identify Recommendations
- Step 7:** Solicit Additional Input to Solidify MPA Goals
- Step 8:** Build Out the Implementation Plan
- Step 9:** Evaluate MPA Progress
- Step 10:** Ensure Accountability & Sustainability



Get started on your MPA today!

Download the Rural Multisector Plan for Aging Toolkit, with links to all the resources you'll need, by visiting www.thescanfoundation.org/resources-tools/a-toolkit-for-developing-local-multisector-plans-for-aging-in-rural-areas/ or scanning this QR code.