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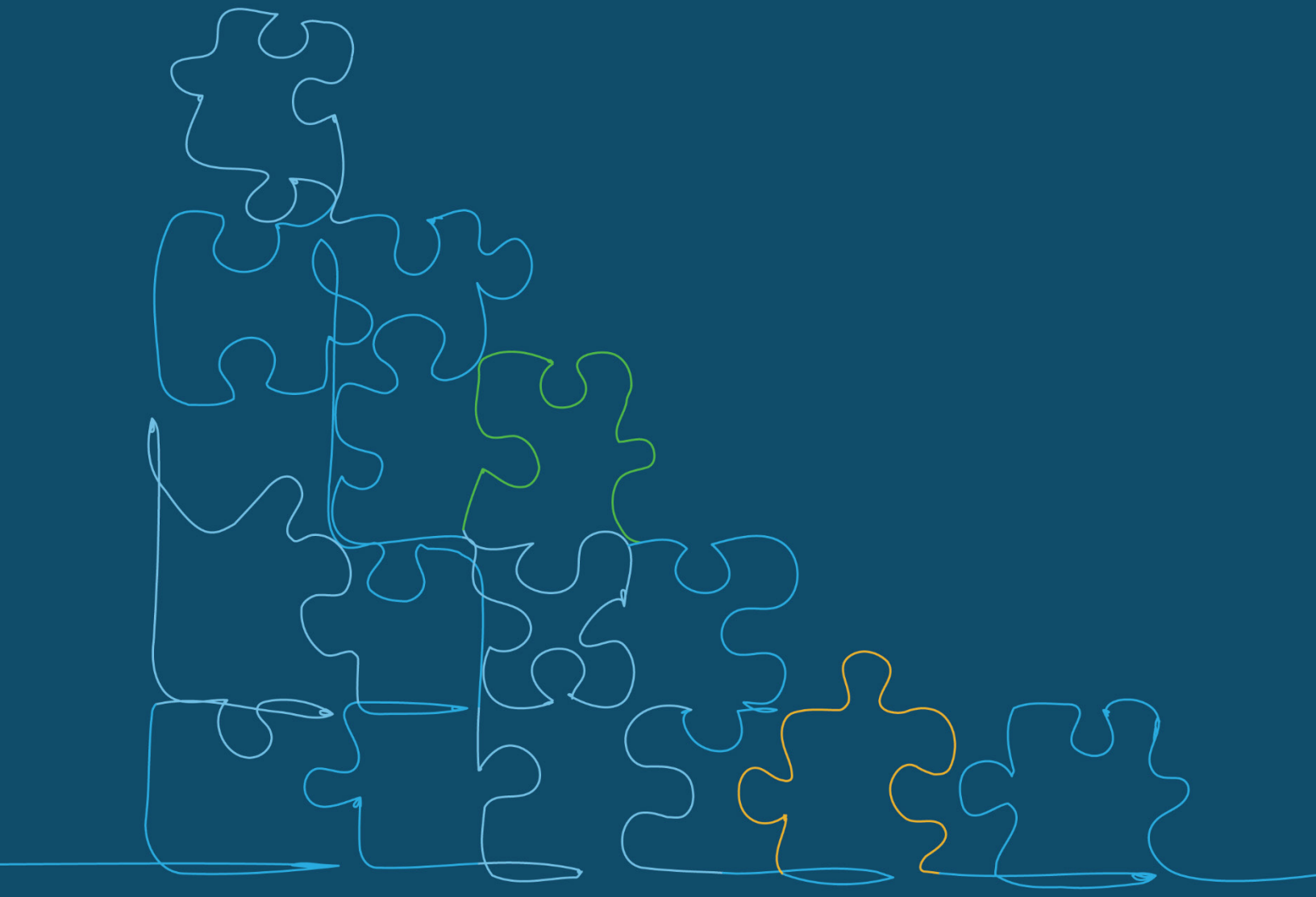

BOOSTING UPWARD MOBILITY

A PLANNING GUIDE FOR LOCAL ACTION

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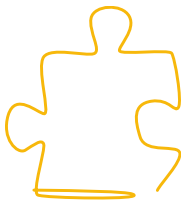

STEP NINE

Finalize and Release Your Mobility Action Plan

Congratulations! If you've made it this far, your Mobility Coalition has agreed on where you want your community to be in the future and you have a strong set of strategic actions that will get you there.

Hopefully, you've had someone taking careful notes throughout this process and saving the final versions of your Summary of Upward Mobility Findings, Theory of Change, Logic Model, and Measurement Plans so you can pull together your full Mobility Action Plan.

Step 9.1 Determine the Format of Your Final MAP

What your MAP looks like is ultimately up to your Mobility Coalition. You might bring in a designer who can help you think of how to present the MAP to your audience in an accessible way. You might also consider whether to produce two different products—one that is more technical for policymaker and practitioner audiences and one that is for a general audience. Whatever you decide, your Mobility Action Plan should include at least the following:

How we got here: A description of the steps you took to learn about mobility conditions in your community, including why you decided to pursue the work and who has been involved.

Summary of upward mobility findings: A summary of the key findings from your exploratory research. The summary should be written in a narrative format that interweaves the quantitative data with the qualitative data and tells a story about how your current mobility conditions (both good and bad) were created and are sustained, who they impact most, and what outcomes they're leading to.

Theory of change and/or logic model: A theory of change articulates how a group believes change happens in their community or organization. It reflects a set of assumptions that connects preconditions (what you need for change to happen) to expected outcomes (the improvements you want to see in your city or county). A logic model is a tool that displays a project's inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes in a brief visual format.

Measurement plan: A table that includes a list of the inputs, outputs, and outcomes from your logic model with agreed-upon indicators for how you will track success and a list of sources from where you will gather this information and that assigns responsibility for who will track progress.

Sustainability considerations: A short section that shares how you plan to steward and sustain the actions described in the MAP, including responsible actors and the resources needed.

You may also decide to include other components in your MAP, including

- a continuous learning and improvement plan (see Step 8 for additional guidance);
- a description of how historical inequities in your community came to be (some counties in our cohort merged these insights into the Summary of Upward Mobility Findings Section or the How We Got Here section, but you may decide to have a separate section for these); and
- appendices with data tables, your intervention inventory, or links to relevant materials from your community.

Examples of county MAPs from the inaugural Boosting Upward Mobility cohort can be found at https://upward-mobility.urban.org/mobility-action-plans.

Step 9.2 Make a Plan for Releasing Your MAP Publicly

As you prepare to finalize and release the MAP publicly, consider the following:

- **MAP authorship**: Will members of the Mobility Coalition be attributed as coauthors of the MAP, will they be signatories, or will they write letters of support that can be attached to the document?
- **Branding**: How can you indicate in the MAP's branding that this is meant to be an evergreen plan? Should you label it as being developed by the current mayoral or county executive leadership or as the city or county's plan (discouraging the next administration from discarding it)?

- **Key terms**: Is there a list of key terms and definitions for the terms that should be included at beginning of the MAP? This is especially helpful for terms like "equity," "inclusive," and "systems change" that are often used differently by different groups.
- **MAP web page**: Where will the MAP live online? Are there other documents that should accompany the MAP when it is published, such as an FAQ, sample talking points, notes about how it was developed, a list of partner organizations, or contact information for other groups who want to get involved? Will the webpage host a dashboard or some other reporting mechanism to share updates on the progress of implementation and changes to the community's **Mobility Metrics**?
- **Dissemination**: Should the city or county host a press conference, press release, or social media campaign to share the MAP? What other communications platforms or strategies could be useful for sharing the MAP publicly?

Community engagement: How might you share the final MAP with community members who participated in and contributed to the MAP's development? Could you host a special release event just for them? How might you keep them updated on the MAP's implementation progress? Are there community members who have been engaged throughout the MAP's development who could be "MAP ambassadors" and help share information about the plan with their own networks?

- **Adoption**: Should the City or County Council adopt the MAP through legislative action? Is a related budgetary appropriation needed for the strategies included in it?
- **Celebrating partnership**: Could you plan a publication celebration for the Mobility Coalition members to celebrate their partnership and accomplishments and thank them for their commitment?

Step 9.3 Ensure Your Messaging Is Engaging and Appropriate

Media, political, and academic language around government, policy, and program performance can be saturated with a focus on shortcomings, failures, incompetence, and disappointment. Although these sentiments stem from real frustrations—many of which you are working to address by embarking on systems change—baseline limitations in messaging and public communication can prevent a given community from seeing, understanding, and learning from important examples of public policy work.

Framing challenges in what some social scientists call a "deficit model" preemptively assigns blame and responsibility to the deficiencies of individuals (or specific populations) rather than to the failures or limitations of the socioeconomic system within which they live and operate (Song and Pyon 2008). Deficit framing has a history of oversimplifying complex issues and falsely ascribing blame to ableist or racist beliefs that already exist in society. Remember that the ways we look at, talk about, and evaluate public work can serve to validate, question, or oppose biases that undermine equitable work. When reporting

successes, failures, or milestones for the MAP, make sure to emphasize the root causes and systemic context informing each outcome.

Step 9.4 Release Your MAP!

You've done the work, now you get to put your MAP out into the world! By this point, you've done so much community and stakeholder engagement that you have an eager audience awaiting the outcome. You may wish to hold a special release event, where you invite those who have participated along the way to join in the celebration.

The next step, Step 10, is the final step in the Mobility Action Planning process. It focuses on how the Mobility Coalition can sustain momentum following the release of the MAP.

STEP 9 REVIEW CHECKLIST

- ☐ The Mobility Coalition has determined the final format of the MAP.
- ☐ The Mobility Coalition has planned for releasing the MAP.
- ☐ The Mobility Coalition has ensured its messaging is appropriate and engaging.
- ☐ The Mobility Coalition has released the MAP!