



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0271, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

TJCOG Livability Assessment Pilot Program

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is for the Board to consider directing staff to apply for, and if chosen, participate in the TJCOG Livability Assessment Pilot Program.

DEPARTMENT: Manager's Office

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INFORMATION: Board members have expressed interest in ensuring Carrboro is a livable community for people of all ages, income levels, and abilities. This interest has brought about a discussion on understanding Carrboro's current livability status. This report provides a description of one tool that Carrboro could use to measure, understand, and improve upon its current livability status.

A multi-disciplinary team at TJCOG has developed a self-assessment tool and toolkit for municipalities to measure and improve the livability of their community, especially for older adults and persons with disabilities. The assessment is based on a "best practice" report from Stanford Center for Longevity and MetLife Mature Market Foundation, entitled *Livable Community Indicators for Sustainable Aging in Place*. The tool is meant for informing elected officials, planners, advocates and others about the overall livability status of their respective communities.

The self-assessment is a Microsoft Excel Macro-Enabled Workbook that consists of digital assessment worksheets and an accompanying guidebook. It is designed to:

- Utilize existing and universally available data sources (secondary data) to determine livability.
- Be easy to implement without requiring a lot of special expertise to interpret results and determine potential use.
- Require a minimum amount of time, money or other resources in order to implement.
- Present results in a visual or "dashboard" format.
- Serve as a starting point for community discussion and planning.

The self-assessment contains:

- Eight focus areas: Demographics, Housing, Transportation, Safety, Health Care, Supportive Services, Retail Services and Social Integration, with approximately 30 questions total.
- Instructions, suggested data sources, and links to online databases.
- Scores reported using 3 progressive levels of achievement, "Meaningful Investment", "Significant Investment" or "Substantial Investment".
- Visual displays of section scores and totals.

The assessment tool is now ready for pilot testing. TJCOG is looking to their members to help troubleshoot the assessment by participating in the pilot program. The pilot is scheduled to take place during October, 2014. The application to participate in the pilot program must be turned in by 5:00pm on Thursday, September 18th.

TJCOG is expecting 5-6 regional municipalities to participate in the pilot test. Several have expressed interest in participating, so there is no guarantee Carrboro will be selected. However, all TJCOG member governments will all have the opportunity to use the assessment tool and toolkit after the pilot program is finalized, which they expect will be by the end of the fiscal year.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: If Carrboro participates in the pilot program, staff would:

- Complete the self-assessment tool and conduct a preliminary review of the accompanying guidebook, noting the time and effort required, as well as any usability issues.
- Participate in an interview of about one hour to answer questions about the experience.
- Be willing to provide feedback on how the self-assessment results are distributed or used.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Board consider directing staff to apply for, and if chosen, participate in the TJCOG Livability Assessment Pilot Program.