FOODLANDS Cooperative of BC

Laying the Foundation

Purpose

Create a warm, pressure-free space for people to share feelings, ideas, and hopes about aging in place. This isn't about making big decisions or solving every problem yet—it's about building understanding and connection.

When is it the right time to use this tool?

Use this Tool When:

A core team is established and the community is ready to start talking about Aging in Place

Skip it for now if:

There is an urgent need to support a changed life situation for one of the community members. Use the Emergency Response Tool instead.

Skip it for now if:

There is a strong need in the community to “problem solve” or get to concrete actions. Use the Making a Plan Tool instead.

Prerequisites

You've established a Core Team (if not, see Getting Started)

Red flags

There is a strong tendency in groups to jump past relationship building into proposal making and problem solving which can derail these conversations. Disciplined facilitation is necessary to keep these conversations on track.

How to use this tool

Based on the results of your initial explorations, it's time to engage your community in the conversation, thinking thru the best format and process as well as taking care of logistical considerations.

Step 1

Plan the Process

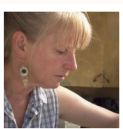
Based on the results of Getting Started, decide on the best format for these conversations:

Format:

- A one-time gathering, or a series of shorter chats?
- Circle process, open forum, or casual potluck?

Logistics:

- Where will you meet?
- What is the best date / time / schedule for the conversation?
- Will you offer food or childcare to make it easier for people to join?



Recording:

- Who will take lightweight notes and how will you capture them so key themes aren't lost?
- Will you use Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, etc., for recording and generating transcripts or summaries?
- How and who will take care of that?

Establish the Discussion Format

- See "Sample Discussion Guide" for ideas

Step 2

Invite the Community to the Conversation

- Give people plenty of heads-up
- Let them know clearly what to expect (and that no major decisions are being forced!).
- Send a reminder as the date gets close.
- Decide if you want RSVPs

Step 3

Host the Conversation(s)

Identify the roles as necessary

- Who will (Co)Facilitate?
- Who will be your Scribe?
- Who will be responsible for hospitality?
- What other roles/responsibilities will you need?

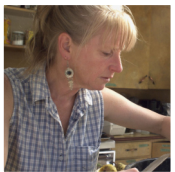
Keep the conversation focused on listening and sharing. Keep the focus on personal experiences, hopes, and worries first.

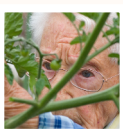
Watch out for the natural urge to jump straight into problem-solving or debating costs.

Step 4

Follow-up on Conversation(s)

- Send out a simple summary of what was shared so everyone feels heard.
- If there's genuine interest and energy, host additional conversations or move on to Making a Plan.





Step 5

Next Steps

Ideally, this foundation conversation will lead seamlessly to Making a Plan Tool