

# Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR): Application for Transportation Planning

(STRIDE Cost-Share Project, *Transportation Mobility Assessment and Recommendations for Smart City Planning*, BDV31-977-115, sponsored by Florida Department of Transportation)

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

It is through the community's transportation network that residents experience their city as they travel to work, stores, medical services, and recreational spots. Every community has unique transportation infrastructure characteristics and shortcomings. Understanding the experiences of residents at a neighborhood-level can help inform transportation planning efforts.

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methodology is commonly employed by researchers and professionals in the health and medical science fields, but there are very few applications in the transportation field. This project developed and evaluated a transportation focused CBPR methodology that was implemented in two communities in Gainesville, Florida. Researchers developed guidelines for applying this methodology in other communities.

## GOAL

The objective of this project was to develop and evaluate a transportation focused Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methodology.

## FINDINGS

The CBPR methodology was tested and refined in two Gainesville, Florida neighborhoods with contrasting demographics and transit usage characteristics. Participants from both neighborhoods desired more alternative transportation options and had concerns about the quality of transportation infrastructure. However, one neighborhood emphasized challenges for the medically disadvantaged, concerns about safety, and limited service times and routes of public transportation. In contrast, the other neighborhood focused on the use of personal vehicles and the fixed-route bus to access their community. It was concluded that facilitating the participation of people belonging to all income levels and from different demographics is crucial to ensure future transportation investment decisions are equitable and comprehensive.

## PRODUCT

### Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Methodology

The methodology engages community members in all stages of the project to inform future transportation mobility plans.

## EQUITY IMPACT

The CBPR approach provides opportunities for community members to meaningfully contribute to the transportation planning process ensuring future transportation investments are more equitable.

## WHO BENEFITS?

- Transit Agencies
- Municipalities
- Planners

## RESEARCHERS

### Lily Elefteriadou, Ph.D. (Lead PI)

University of Florida  
elefter@ce.ufl.edu

**Ilir Bejleri, Ph.D., Sherrilene Classen, Ph.D., Pruthvi Manjunatha, Ph.D., Mehri Mohebbi, Ph.D., Siva Srinivasan, Ph.D., Ruth Steiner, Ph.D. and Xiang Yan, Ph.D.**  
University of Florida

# PRODUCT

## Community-Based Participatory Research Methodology

The Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach ensures that people within a community are involved in all project stages of developing transportation outcomes for their community. A CBPR requires iterative interaction between the project staff and community members for serving the project goals.

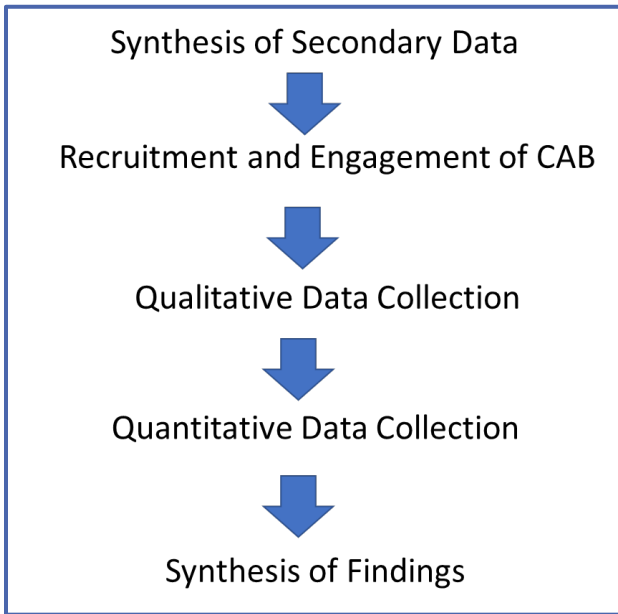


Figure 1: Steps of the CBPR process for transportation planning

The methodology employed public engagement at two scales: a small group of representatives on a community advisory board (CAB) over the entire process and a larger representative subset of community members to provide data and opinions via qualitative methods (focus groups) or quantitative methods (surveys). These persons, unlike the members of the advisory board, were not involved in all stages of the CBPR (for example, they do not contribute to designing surveys).

The project team used the Five A's identified by the Beverly Foundation and National Volunteer Transportation Center (NVTC) as mobility indicators (availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, and adaptability). This framework addresses needs, opportunities, and constraints in shaping the travel outcomes. Further, this framework can be extended to consider new and emerging modes (shared mobility, micro-mobility, autonomous vehicles, etc.).

Implementing the CBPR at the neighborhood level provided a better understanding of community travel needs and empowered community members to become leaders in the process.

This STRIDE cost-share project *Transportation Mobility Assessment and Recommendations for Smart City Planning*, BDV31-977-115, was sponsored by Florida Department of Transportation.

## About STRIDE

The Southeastern Transportation Research, Innovation, Development & Education Center (STRIDE) is the 2016 Region 4 (Southeast) U.S. Department of Transportation University Transportation Center headquartered at the University of Florida Transportation Institute (UFTI).

