



# Chapter Handbook

This Chapter Handbook is designed to serve as a resource for members serving and/or interested in serving as volunteer leaders of their local chapter. The role of Chapter Leader is central to the success of the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), and the ACT Board of Directors extends its thanks and appreciation for your engagement and service. As a volunteer run organization, your chapter plays an important role in providing opportunities for ACT members to get involved in the organization, meet and network with other members, grow professionally, and advance our shared goals of improving the quality of life of people, the livability of communities, and economic growth of businesses.

This handbook aims to provide you with a complete overview of the chapter's role, responsibilities of chapter leadership, and its relation to the association. This is meant to be a living document. If you have questions that are not answered or need additional information, please contact Elizabeth Denton at [edenton@actweb.org](mailto:edenton@actweb.org) or 202-792-5801. We will continue to update this handbook as needed.

### **Critical Documents**

These are documents that are critical to the smooth operation of your chapter that you will want to be able to access at a moment's notice and pass on to new leaders. A Google Drive folder was created for each chapter, which should be used to house critical chapter documents. Documents such as workplans, meeting minutes, and similar should also be shared with chapter members on the chapter's *Connect* community.

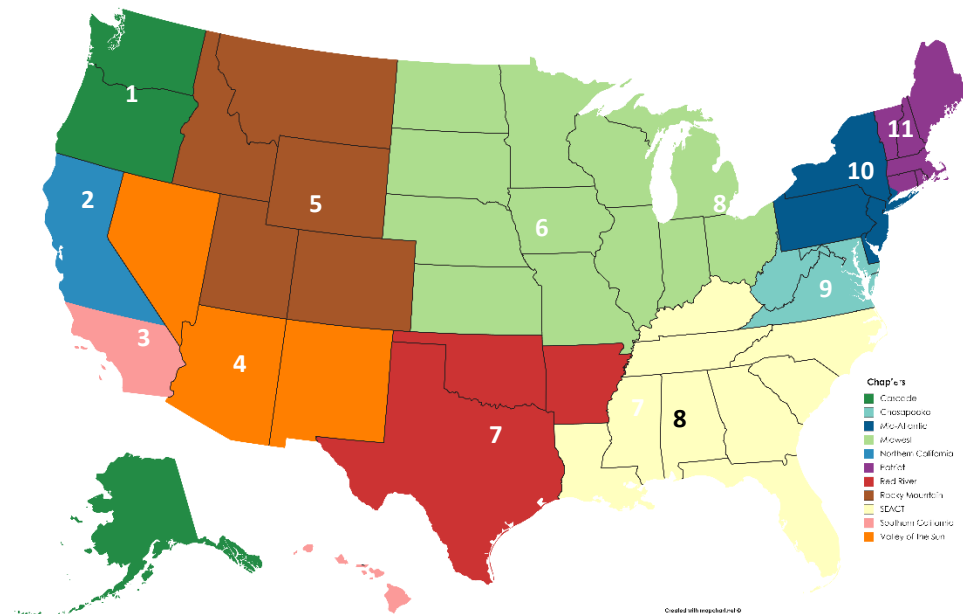
Examples of critical documents would be:

- Bylaws
- A list of current chapter officers
- Your current work plan
- Your budget and financial reports
- Bank account information
- Logins and passwords for chapter accounts
- Past meeting minutes

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## ACT Chapters



- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Cascade Chapter             | 7. Midwest Chapter              |
| 2. Northern California Chapter | 8. SEACT (Southeastern Chapter) |
| 3. Southern California Chapter | 9. Chesapeake Chapter           |
| 4. Valley of the Sun Chapter   | 10. Mid-Atlantic Chapter        |
| 5. Rocky Mountain Chapter      | 11. Patriot Chapter             |
| 6. Red River Chapter           |                                 |

# ACT Mission, Vision, and Goals

## Mission Statement

The Association for Commuter Transportation is the premier transportation demand management (TDM) organizations for professionals in the field and their employers. ACT strives to get the most out of our transportation system while improving the lives of commuters, increasing the livability of communities, and supporting the economic growth of businesses.

## Vision

A Better Journey for Everyone

## Goals

1. Create a Strong Community of TDM Professionals
2. Become a Center for Learning & Professional Development
3. Establish ACT as an Originator of Research and Compiler/Disseminator of Information
4. Advance TDM Policy and Support Member Advocacy
5. Develop a Vibrant & Growing Organization

## Diversity Statement

As an organization, ACT celebrates our differences, seeks and continues to improve equity, and supports a culture of respect. ACT is committed to a better journey for everyone in our communities, as we strive to improve the quality of life for all people.

## ACT Staff

For the most up-to-date list of ACT staff, please visit the [Staff page](#) on the ACT website.

## Board of Directors

For the most up-to-date list of ACT's Board of Directors, please visit the [Board of Directors page](#) on the ACT website.

## **SECTION I: NATIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR CHAPTERS**

### **Function of the Chapter**

1. While serving a variety of purposes, the primary function of a chapter is to meet the needs and concerns of its members on a regional or local basis.
2. Chapters provide opportunities for members of the association to gather and network locally.
3. Chapters must function as an extension of the national organization and, therefore, are subject to many of the same guidelines for operating as the association.
4. The mission and goals of a chapter must be compatible with those of ACT.

### **Chapter Formation**

1. The formation of a chapter begins with a stated goal, purpose, or mission to which at least 20 members in good standing who operate within the boundaries of the chapter agree. If such a formation would result in an existing chapter having less than 20 members, the ACT Vice President and Executive Director, prior to moving the issue to the Board for a decision, shall facilitate a chapter meeting to determine the issues leading to such a request and allowing for the Vice President to make a recommendation to the Board regarding this petition for new formation.
2. This, along with other information concerning the chapter, should be submitted in writing to ACT in a formal request to form a chapter.
3. Such information should include the following:
  - a. Names and contact information of all proposed chapter members.
  - b. Proposed chapter bylaws that include proposed chapter boundaries and name of chapter.
  - c. Signed copy of Chapter Agreement Form with ACT.
  - d. List of Officers and Directors.
4. The chapter in which the proposed chapter would be formed from shall be solicited to respond with their concurrence or objections in writing to the ACT Board.
5. Any request to form a chapter must be approved by the ACT Board of Directors upon review of all materials submitted by the proposed chapter.

### **Corporate Status and Reporting**

1. Chapters are eligible to be included in the ACT group exemption. In order acknowledged as a Chapter to be processed under the group exemption, chapters must maintain the following with ACT:
  - a. A copy of the chapter bylaws

- b. Chapter mission statement
  - c. Year-end financial statement for the previous year
  - d. Current financial statement
  - e. Proposed operating budget
  - f. List of Officers and Directors
  - g. Chapter goals and activities statement for the year
2. Any chapter with annual revenue exceeding \$50,000 must be incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(6) organization.
  3. The group filing application is only done once a year by ACT. Chapters must be included in the filing and must submit all required documents to ACT on a designated date. Additional requirements imposed by the IRS or other applicable authority may apply as well. The Executive Director will communicate with chapters regarding those requirements and necessary filing deadlines as needed.
  4. Each chapter that is included in the group exemption is required to file a Form 990 with the IRS by May 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. A copy of the return or submission confirmation must be sent to ACT.
  5. Each chapter is responsible for filing any local or state tax and corporation fees by the designated deadline and sending a copy of the forms to the National Headquarters.
  6. Each chapter shall maintain an elected Board of Directors and/or Officers in accordance with the chapter bylaws. At a minimum, the officers shall include designations for a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Chapter directors and officers shall be held to the same standards of conduct, including signed conflict of interest statements, as the Board of Directors.
  7. The default point of contact for chapter correspondence shall be the chapter president. Should a chapter wish to have a different point of contact, they must send that request to the Executive Director and ACT President, along with an explanation of their rationale for this change.
  8. ACT shall maintain a current professional liability policy for its national and chapter officers and directors, consistent with industry and policy guidelines. ACT cannot maintain professional liability policies for chapters that are separately incorporated. Should a chapter that is separately incorporated wish to provide for this coverage, it must do so out of chapter revenues.
  9. ACT shall be responsible for the payment of fees in order to maintain liability insurance for the chapter. ACT shall not be responsible for event liability for any chapter events, unless such liability coverage is contained in policies held by ACT for national events.

### **Financial Responsibilities**

1. All chapters must establish a bank account for the chapter with a financial institution or alternatively designate that its finances are to be held by ACT for their use.
2. Each chapter shall maintain accurate financial records of the organization that should include a cash receipts and disbursements journal, accounts receivable and payable, and monthly bank statements. Copies of bank statements shall be provided to ACT on a quarterly basis.
3. Any dues payments, or any portion of dues payments, received directly from members of the Association shall not be deposited in the chapter's account but shall be forwarded immediately to ACT.

4. Each chapter is responsible for preparing an annual operating budget and shall submit a copy of the budget to ACT in November for approval at the December Board of Directors meeting.
5. All financial information is subject to examination by ACT, including submission of bank statements and standard financial report forms.
6. In the planning of programs and activities, all chapters should plan to realize a surplus of funds as a result of sponsoring and administering such activity.
7. Chapters are required to submit quarterly financial statements to ACT. These reports are due within thirty days after the end of the quarter (i.e., January - March statements are due at ACT by April 30th, etc.) or as otherwise requested. Chapters who do not comply with the reporting requirements may have chapter dues withheld until they come into compliance. Chapters who do not come into compliance for a 12-month period are subject to a Board decision to dissolve a Chapter for lack of activity.
8. All chapters shall maintain a minimum balance of at least \$500 at all times.
9. Any chapter may, at its discretion, request assistance from ACT with respect to financial operations.

#### **Chapter Dues and Chapter Dues Share**

1. The Board may, at its discretion, determine the component of overall association revenues that are to be provided to chapters. The Board may choose, but is not required, to base this amount upon membership in a chapter. The Board shall provide sufficient funds to each chapter to enable required Board-approved work plan activities to occur.
2. Chapter dues share will be calculated annually in October. The calculation will be based on dues payments received between October 1 and September 30.
3. ACT will provide a draft estimate of chapter dues share to each chapter by October 15.
4. Each chapter will have until October 31 to review and approve the estimated chapter dues share and/or submit questions or corrections.
5. Failure to approve or submit questions to ACT by October 31, will mean that the chapter approves of the chapter dues share estimate.
6. ACT will distribute chapter dues share checks by December 15.
7. Retiree and Student member dues do not count towards annual chapter share calculations.

#### **Chapter Board of Directors Meetings**

1. The Chapter Board of Directors shall hold a minimum of four Board of Directors meetings annually.
2. An agenda for each board meeting shall be prepared by the Chapter President which shall include as a minimum:
  - a. Roll Call/Call to Order

- b. Reading of the minutes from the last Board of Directors meeting
    - i. Vote to approve by the membership
  - c. Membership Report
  - d. Financial Report
    - i. Vote to approve by the membership
  - e. Committee Reports
  - f. Chapter Programs
  - g. Date and location of next meeting
  - h. Adjournment
3. Minutes from each meeting shall be prepared by the chapter secretary or in the absence of such person, another officer of the organization.
  4. Minutes shall be prepared and sent to all members of the chapter Board of Directors within 45 days of the meeting, and a copy sent to ACT. The minutes should be uploaded to the chapter's Connect library so that they are easily accessible to all chapter members.

### **Chapter Membership Meetings**

1. Meetings of the chapter membership shall be held at least quarterly and may be conducted in person or virtually. Chapters are provided a meeting room and a time at the International Conference to meet in person.
2. Meetings shall be held at such times and locations so as to provide easy access to all chapter members.

### **Chapter Newsletter or E-Update**

1. A chapter newsletter or e-update shall be prepared and sent to all chapter members on a quarterly basis at minimum.
2. The newsletter or e-update should contain information about chapter programs and activities, news about chapter members, as well as regional and national news.
3. Copies of the newsletter should be sent to ACT staff and the Board of Directors and may be shared with other chapter leaders.

### **Chapter Membership**

1. Each chapter will receive a list of chapter members on a monthly basis. Any members' changes known by the Chapter should be communicated to ACT's Membership staff as soon as possible.
2. All chapters must enforce ACT policy concerning paid and unpaid members.
3. Upon notice from ACT that members will be dropped for non-payment of dues, the chapter will be asked to make additional efforts to reach out to non-renewing members to solicit their renewal or reasons for not renewing.
4. The chapter shall make every effort to recruit new members and to encourage membership renewals.



5. The chapter may conduct prospective membership mailings or programs on its own or in connection with ACT. The chapter should contact ACT for specific details concerning each program.
6. Whenever possible, names of prospective members should be sent to ACT.
7. Every effort should be made to encourage membership participation in chapter programs and activities.

### **Chapter Committees and Councils**

1. Chapters have the option to appoint both standing and ad-hoc committees.
2. Programs and activities undertaken by chapter committees shall be communicated with ACT to ensure no conflicts exist for event dates and activities.
3. Chapter programs (meetings, socials, in-person events) must be organized through ACT in order to have them posted on chapter pages and the ACT calendar. Use the [Meeting Request form](#) on the ACT website to provide the required information.

### **Chapter and National Agreements**

1. All chapters shall abide by all contracts and agreements with ACT.
2. Any chapter wishing to enter a contract (hotel, food and beverage, consultant, etc.) valued at over \$1,000, must provide a copy of the contract to ACT for review before signing.
3. All chapters shall adopt and follow all prescribed forms and guidelines for reporting information to ACT.
4. A chapter may, at its discretion, negotiate special terms and conditions regarding its relationship with ACT through a memo of understanding.

### **National Chapter Leadership Meetings**

1. The Vice President of the Board of Directors will schedule and host regular Chapter Leader Meetings.
2. Chapter Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Secretaries are asked to participate in all Chapter Leadership Meetings.
3. All chapter members who serve in leadership positions are encouraged to participate in Chapter Leadership Calls.
4. An in-person Chapter Leadership Meeting is held during the International Conference; participation is encouraged and highly recommended.

### **ACT Board of Directors Meetings**

1. Chapter leaders are invited to attend all meetings of ACT's National Board. There are virtual meetings as well as in-person meetings on the day before ACT's major conferences and events, including the International Conference, TDM Forum, and Spring Summit; along with a meeting held in January/February at a location to be determined.

## Chapter Programs

1. Chapters shall conduct at least two chapter programs annually, which may be held in conjunction with membership meetings. These programs can be conducted in person, via web, or by some other means. Web or other learning opportunities provided by ACT that are hosted by the chapter count towards meeting this requirement.
2. At any chapter function requiring registration fees, there shall be a member and non-member cost. Chapters may host free events as well.
3. Chapters may co-sponsor an event with ACT in which case all duties and responsibilities of each party shall be clearly defined during the planning process.

## **SECTION II: CHAPTER LEADERSHIP & POSITIONS**

The following information provides you with a brief overview of each of the required leadership positions for ACT's chapters, including key responsibilities; and aims to smooth the transition between leaders to help ensure a head start to success. Please note that ACT staff is available to assist you at any time to answer questions or provide additional guidance and can be reached at [edenton@actweb.org](mailto:edenton@actweb.org) or 202-792-5801.

### **Chapter President**

The President shall be the principal executive officer of the chapter and, subject to the authority of the National Board of Directors, shall supervise and control all business and affairs of the chapter. The President shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board. The President shall abide by and follow the responsibilities of the position outlined within the chapter's bylaws.

### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Lead all general, business, and executive board meetings of the chapter.
2. Submit, or cause to be submitted, the annual work plan for the chapter to ACT no later than the deadline established by the National Board.
3. Set the meeting dates for all chapter board and membership meetings.
4. Provide coordination and oversight of chapter events and activities.
5. Serve as the primary liaison between the chapter and ACT.
6. Ensure all quarterly work plan updates and financial reports are submitted by the chapter to ACT no later than the deadline established by the National Board.
7. Serve as a point of contact for all members and prospective members within the chapter's territory.

### **Passing the Torch**

To ensure a smooth transition for the chapter and the incoming President, please consider the following actions.

1. The outgoing president should meet with the incoming president to share information on the responsibilities of the position, status of current work plan and/or the development of new work plan, budget, and financial positions.
2. Ensure all reports due to ACT have been submitted.
3. Gather all chapter records.

4. Compile all information for any accounts/services owned or used by the chapter: email services, phone lines, PO boxes, etc. (incoming president should change passwords)
5. Ensure all governing documents (bylaws, policies & procedures, etc.) are in order.
6. Meet with outgoing/incoming treasurer to review budget and chapter financial positions.

### **Chapter Vice President**

The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, fulfill the role and tasks of the President. The Vice President shall abide by and follow the responsibilities of the position outlined within the chapter's bylaws.

#### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Lead all general, business, and executive board meetings of the chapter.
2. Submit, or cause to be submitted, the annual work plan for the chapter to ACT no later than the deadline established by the National Board.
3. Set the meeting dates for all chapter board and membership meetings.
4. Provide coordination and oversight of chapter events and activities.
5. Serve as the primary liaison between the chapter and ACT.
6. Ensure all quarterly work plan updates and financial reports are submitted by the chapter to ACT no later than the deadline established by the National Board.
7. Serve as a point of contact for all members and prospective members within the chapter's territory.

#### **Passing the Torch**

To ensure a smooth transition for the chapter and the incoming President, please consider the following actions.

1. The outgoing vice-president should meet with the incoming vice-president to share information on the responsibilities of the position, status of current work plan and/or the development of new work plan, budget, and financial positions.
2. Meet with outgoing/incoming president to ensure a smooth transition.

### **Chapter Secretary**

The role of secretary is essential for good governance and management of the chapter.

#### **Key Responsibilities**

1. Attend all general, business, and executive board meetings of the chapter.
2. Take minutes of all business meetings of the chapter, recording all votes of chapter members and officers.
3. Making available meeting minutes to all chapter members by posting in the chapter's *Connect* library.
4. Assist president with the development of meeting agendas to ensure any items discussed in previous meetings requiring further action are included.
5. Keep and maintain records of the chapter.

#### **Passing the Torch**

To ensure a smooth transition for the chapter and the incoming Secretary, please consider the following actions.

1. The outgoing secretary should meet with the incoming secretary to share information on the responsibilities of the position.
2. Gather and provide copies of all records and back-up documentation.

## **Chapter Treasurer**

The role of treasurer is a significant one within any chapter's leadership, serving as the chief financial officer of the chapter.

### **Key Responsibilities**

6. Attend all general, business, and executive board meetings of the chapter.
7. Establish and/or maintain a checking account in which the treasurer and at least one other board member— but preferably two—may sign checks. Chapters may submit a request to open savings/cds/money market accounts.
8. Keep accurate financial books while paying all bills and making all deposits in a timely manner.
9. Keep records of all account information including online account passwords. All passwords should be provided to ACT for back up.
10. Establish and enforce chapter policies and procedures for financial management (i.e., reimbursement procedures, expense approvals, check requests, etc.)
11. Prepare a brief report to be read at each chapter board of directors meeting on receipts, expenditures, and latest balance.
12. Prepare quarterly reports to be submitted to ACT Board of Directors including copies of bank statements. Template for quarterly report is provided by ACT.
13. Work with the Chapter Board to develop an annual budget for the chapter. Template for annual budget is provided by ACT.
14. Submit annual 990-N report to IRS by May 15<sup>th</sup>.
15. Maintain financial files and pass them on to the next chapter treasurer.
16. If necessary or required by law, make available all financial records for review by an independent party on annual basis.

### **Passing the Torch**

To ensure a smooth transition for the chapter and the incoming Treasurer, please consider the following actions.

1. The outgoing treasurer should meet with the incoming treasurer to share information on the responsibilities of the position.
3. Ensure all transactions are recorded and bank reconciliation is up to date.
4. Gather all financial records and back-up documentation.
5. Compile all login information for online account access – have new treasurer change passwords.
6. Ensure all banking supplies are accounted for (checks, debit/credit cards, deposit slips, etc.).
7. Review with incoming treasurer process for submitting 990-N form in May (ACT will host a separate training on this activity in April).
8. Review budget to explain any non-obvious items.

### **SECTION III: COMMON CHAPTER COMMITTEES**

A chapter may wish to establish committees to assist with the implementation of the chapter's work plan. Committees are also a great way of providing leadership opportunities for members, increasing the number of individuals invested in the success of the chapter. The number and type of committees may vary from chapter to chapter, but typical committees may include the following. Chairs of each committee are considered board members and participate in chapter planning and leadership processes.

**Elections/Nominations Committee:** Oversees the election process and ensures compliance with the bylaws.

**Events/Program Committee:** Leads the efforts of the chapter in developing and hosting chapter events identified within the annual work plan.

**Marketing/Communications Committee:** Oversees production of newsletters, promotional materials for events, and other communications.

**Membership Committee:** Coordinates membership recruitment and retention campaigns for the chapter. Receives monthly membership report from ACT identifying new/expired members. Receives notices of new members and welcomes new members to the chapter. The chapter's Membership Committee Chair, while not a member of the ACT Membership Committee, may coordinate activities and collaborate with the National Membership Committee from time to time.

**Policy Committee:** Oversees the chapter involvement in local TDM and transportation related policy initiatives to educate chapter members and the public about the role of policy. Bring local issues to the attention of ACT. Propose or seek approval from ACT's Public Policy Committee on official ACT positions.

## **SECTION IV: CHAPTER WORK PLANS**

Annual work plans allow chapters to review past successes, develop a shared set of values as a group, plan activities for the upcoming year, and discuss ways to improve any challenges the chapter may be facing. Achieving goals, planning events and recruiting members to volunteer will be easier if you take some time to outline your expectations and objectives in advance, and establish a plan to accomplish them. A little planning can go a long way to help your chapter stay strong and be successful!

If you recently elected a new chapter board, this is also a good time to discuss everyone's interests in serving on the board. Here are some questions to help guide your discussion and the development of your work plan.

- Why did you become a board member?
- What have been the chapter's biggest successes? What are the biggest challenges?
- What could be done to improve the chapter and overcome these challenges?
- For each project or activity, what is the purpose of the activity? What resources (time/money/people) will the activity require?

ACT provides a template for all chapters to use in the development of their annual work plan. This ensures that all chapters are advancing the shared objectives of the association and provide opportunities for each chapter to develop programming unique to their needs and situations.

The work plan outlines four primary goals for work plan tasks to fall under. Several tasks are required for all chapters to include in their work plan. The outline below lays out potential tasks for your work plan. Required items are marked with an asterisk (\*). This list is just a sample of ideas and is not exhaustive of the possibilities for your chapter.

### **1. Increase Member Value in ACT through Chapter Activities**

- a. Publish a chapter newsletter or e-update
- b. Host in-person meeting for membership\*
- c. Host teleconference/webinar meeting for membership\*
- d. Host networking social
- e. Host annual awards event to promote and recognize local TDM initiatives
- f. Host Coffee with Colleagues event
- g. Host holiday/end of year social

### **2. Promote & Grow Membership**

- a. Participate in ACT membership committee calls/meetings\*
- b. Develop a list of XXX prospects to share with National\*
- c. Conduct outreach to XXX prospects\*
- d. Conduct outreach to expired members
- e. Provide XX scholarships for membership in ACT

### **3. Support ACT activities, programs, and advocacy**

- a. Provide scholarship to International Conference\*
- b. Provide scholarship to TDM Forum
- c. Provide scholarship to ImpACT! Leadership
- d. Provide updates to National for chapter web page
- e. Promote participation in professional development opportunities
- f. Write XX articles for inclusion in Connections Newsletter\*

- g. Coordinate and host a meeting with employers in XXXXXXXX to inform them of the benefits of supporting commuter benefits programs

**4. Create a Healthy & Robust Chapter**

- a. Host XXX chapter leadership meetings\*
- b. Submit annual 990N report to IRS\*
- c. Submit quarterly reports to ACT\*
- d. Develop annual work plan & budget\*
- e. Conduct chapter elections\*

## **SECTION V: CHAPTER EVENTS**

A primary objective for the chapter is to provide opportunities for member engagement with the association, especially for members that are unable to travel to ACT's national conferences and meetings. Chapters are expected to plan and host local events. Chapter board members do not have to attend in-person events. These events can be free or with a cost to members and non-members. Chapters are also encouraged to look at sponsorship as a way of covering event costs or providing revenue to the chapter.

### **TIPS & ADVICE**

- The type and number of events will vary from chapter to chapter depending on the size of the chapter and the interest of members. Events are defined as in-person gatherings or hosted virtually through webinars or conference calls. There is no cap on the number of events but chapters must host at minimum 3 events per year.
- Chapters should notify ACT staff on upcoming events by submitting a meeting request through the Meeting Request form on the [Volunteer Leaders Resources](#) page of the website. Be sure to review the [ACT calendar](#) to ensure that it does not conflict with any other ACT meeting or event. ACT staff will add the specific details to the chapter's web page as well as the calendar.
- ACT members represent a wide range of organizations and TDM approaches (government, private employers, vendors, etc.). Chapters should keep this in mind and plan a diverse calendar of events that will appeal to the varied interests of members. Remember, it is always hard to have one event appeal to all members.
- Survey your members to find out what types of events appeal to them.
- Select event dates well in advance and start promoting the event early and often.
- Be mindful of out-of-pocket costs for attendees. A high-priced event may discourage attendance and participation.
- Focus on networking and ensure events provide plenty of opportunity for chapter members to interact and get to know each other. Using events to strengthen relationships between members will pay dividends when looking for new volunteers.
- When appropriate, a chapter may find it beneficial to partner with like-minded organizations to co-host an event, but when doing so, be sure to take an active role in planning the event to ensure the chapter and ACT goals are aligned. Chapter should seek local vendors or ACT sponsors who may be interested in partnering on the event. Offering to host by supplying the event space could be a great way to gain exposure.
- For chapters with expansive geographic territory, rotate event locations so all chapter members can participate in chapter activities; or provide funds to chapter members interested in hosting an event in their location. Individual members are encouraged to propose their own events to the chapter board for approval. Chapter board members do not have to be in attendance.

### **EVENT IDEAS**

- **Networking Socials:** After work socials are perhaps the easiest events to organize. Typically, the social is planned by 1-2 members and held at a bar or restaurant after work. Many bars/restaurants will even section off a portion of the facility (at no additional fee or food & beverage minimum) for your use if you plan in advance. Rather than keeping it a generic mixer, select a TDM theme or topic for the event to provoke discussion, knowledge transfer and actionable steps. Networking socials can



also be in the morning before or during work hours in the form of coffee meet ups (template for **Coffee with Colleagues** provided below)

- **Expanded ACT Webinars:** ACT hosts monthly webinar series. Chapters can schedule a meeting in coordination with a webinar to bring members together to watch and follow up the webinar with a discussion or a guest speaker that can continue the theme of the webinar.
- **Member Celebration and Chapter Awards:** Host a member celebration with annual awards program to recognize exemplary programs, organizations, and individuals within your chapter. Award programs can be fit into breakfast or lunch programs and include opportunities for networking. Agenda items can include 1) Introduction of chapter board, welcome message and state of the chapter 2) Guest speakers such as ACT Board of Director 3) Success stories panel 4) Member recognition for milestone years of membership and 5) Awards presentation. Selecting award winners also allows the chapter to target organizations that may not yet be members of ACT as a way of recruiting them to join. In addition, chapter award winners may make good nominees for the ACT Awards. Award categories can mirror that of the ACT Awards.
- **Lunch & Learns:** These events are typically 30-45 minute trainings or presentations led by 1-2 people on a specific topic. Lunch and learns are a great way to invite members to get engaged in the chapter by showcasing their organizations, programs, or services.
- **Group Rides:** Chapter could organize a group bus, train or bike ride to explore local transit or multimodal connectivity. This is a great way to explore together and discuss TDM challenges and opportunities.
- **Chapter Conference:** A half-day or 1-day conference can be a great way of providing professional development and networking opportunities for members. However, conference planning requires significant volunteer involvement to pull off a successful event. Planning a conference requires 6-8 months of planning and all chapter conferences should avoid being scheduled within 1-month of an ACT conference.
- **New Member Social:** A great way to introduce new members to the rest of the chapter. Invite new members to present and introduce themselves and their programs and focus the rest of the time on networking.
- **Chapter Volunteer Day:** Find a local or regional cause that could draw members together to take part in a worthy cause but would also allow for some great networking. (i.e., clean up a run-down section of street/town, prepare community garden beds, etc.).
- **ACT Event Meetup:** Chapter can arrange an event or meetup at the three national conferences - Spring Summit, International Conference and TDM Forum. Events could be dinner or group outing like a comedy club or theater. Chapters can also host a meetup at a table during breakfast and lunch networking time.
- **Site Visits/Tours:** Is there a member of the chapter with a great work site or a construction project of interest? Schedule an opportunity for members to visit and learn more.

## KEYS TO EVENT PLANNING

### Event Selection

- What is the objective of the event? Is it social, networking, learning?
- Who is the target audience? Existing members? Prospects? Both? Create a list of how many people might attend and figure about 50% will show if free and 90% if there is a cost.
- Has this type of event worked in the past? Are there parts of the event that need to be improved?

- Make sure to develop a budget in advance that identifies all costs and potential revenues. Double check and make sure these costs are allocated within the chapter budget.
- Be sure to check the ACT calendar to make sure the event does not overlap with any existing Council meetings, webinars, or national events unless you plan to incorporate that event into your program like a webinar watch party.

### Choosing a location

- If your chapter is large, be sure to think about the accessibility of the location. Will all members be able to easily get to the location? Will the start time be realistic if members are traveling during rush hour or long distances?
- How much time will the event require participants to be away from the office? If a 1-hour lunch and learn requires members to miss half a day because of travel, people may not be able to attend.
- Choose unique locations that will help draw people to your event. Check with chapter members and local vendors as well as ACT sponsors that may have unique campuses or worksites that others might be interested in seeing.
- If hosting at a bar or restaurant, be sure to make a reservation far enough in advance as not all facilities can handle large groups. Many bars/restaurants may have separate rooms or portions of the facility that can be roped off for your event.

### Event Logistics

- What are the costs the chapter will need to cover to host the event? Gather information on all room/facility rental fees, catering, AV, travel, speaker fees, onsite signage, etc.
- Will there be a fee for members/non-members to attend? Will this fee cover all costs or just a portion?
- Are there members that might be able to sponsor or cover some of the costs?
- Chapters are encouraged to submit their events using the [Chapter Meeting and Event Form](#) in the Chapter Resources section of the ACT website. ACT staff will set up registration, create a virtual meeting link if needed, and promote the event on the ACT calendar, in newsletters, and elsewhere.

### Event Promotion

- Submit event information to ACT so that it can be added to the [ACT Calendar](#), promoted in Connections Newsletter, and added as an event on ACT Facebook page.
- Add the event to relevant *Connect* communities.
- Remember to sell the event! Make it sound fun and worthwhile to attend (because it is!).
- Send 2-3 emails to promote the event. Depending on the event, initial promotion should start 4-8 weeks prior to the event.
- Encourage members to promote the event to non-members.
- Event communications should include the following:
  - Name of event
  - Description – make clear why someone should attend (value proposition)
  - Date/time of event
  - Location
  - RSVP deadline and instructions
  - Cost, if any

- Event details – meals, activities, agenda
- Transportation information
- Contact information

## SAMPLE EVENT TEMPLATES

### Coffee with Colleagues

An easy opportunity to bring ACT members together for networking and learning. We encourage the chapter to find a member to host the event at their office, providing space for 10-30 people to participate. The host could also sponsor the breakfast, but if not, the chapter can cover the cost of coffee, bagels, etc. The host can also be invited to help kick-off the event with a few minutes to talk about their programs or work.

You can leave the event as an open networking time or you can determine topics for discussion in advance.

The event can also be an opportunity to introduce non-members to ACT and we encourage you to invite prospects to attend. A separate fee can be set up or you can make it free.

Sample email for event:



Date:

Time:

Location:

Jump start your day with this fun and informal networking event at the offices of \_\_\_\_\_. Welcome remarks will be made by \_\_\_\_\_ **from** \_\_\_\_\_.

This is an ideal opportunity to develop or rekindle business relationships while enjoying a light breakfast. Move past business cards and make real connections at Coffee with Colleagues!

Register today to reserve your spot. Open to all Transportation Demand Management industry professionals, **free for ACT members**. Not a member? Join today and take advantage of free event registration and many other benefits. [Learn more](#).

For questions about the event, please contact \_\_\_\_\_

## Webinar Watch Party

Take advantage of ACT's regularly schedule webinars to bring together chapter members and prospects. Webinars are held 6-8 times a year on a wide range of topics. While free for all members to watch from their own desk, these webinars are great opportunities to gather together for networking and even expanded learning. Chapters can find a local member or guest speaker that can add additional information to the content being delivered through the webinar.



Date:

Time:

Location:

Join XXXXXX Chapter and many of your colleagues and friends to watch the next ACT webinar, (insert webinar title).

Following the webinar, we will continue the conversation with a brief discussion.

Register today to reserve your spot. Open to all Transportation Demand Management industry professionals, **free for ACT members**. Not a member? Join today and take advantage of this free event registration and many other benefits. [Learn more](#).

For questions about the event, please contact \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION VII: CHAPTER ACCOUNTING & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### **CHAPTER ACCOUNTING**

#### **Fiscal Period**

ACT operates on a fiscal year which begins January 1<sup>st</sup> and ends December 31<sup>st</sup>. All financial books and records are maintained, and all IRS returns reported, on this fiscal calendar. All ACT chapters must use this same fiscal year.

#### **Chart of Accounts**

To establish a proper accounting system, chapters should organize a chart of accounts listing the various categories of income and expenses for the chapter.

#### Sample Income Accounts:

- Chapter Share (membership dues and/or chapter share of ACT sponsorships for conferences)
- Event Registrations
- Sponsorship
- Interest

#### Sample Expense Accounts:

- Meetings (food, AV, room rentals)
- Special Events (chapter conferences, awards breakfasts)
- Scholarships
- General Supplies
- Marketing & Promotion
- Bank Fees
- Travel
- Insurance
- Postage
- Telecommunications
- Outside Sponsorships/Dues

#### **Required Documentation and Retention**

All books and records, original documentation, and any other pertinent financial information, should be maintained by the chapter for a minimum of 7 years.

#### **Budgeting**

1. The chapter's budget must be well conceived and have been prepared or approved by the board.
2. Financial statements must be prepared for the chapter board and membership on a timely basis throughout the year and a comparison made to the budget on the statements.
3. The board must be prepared to act when there is significant deviation from the budget.

## Checking Accounts

Chapters must maintain a bank account. When opening a checking or savings account, signature cards must be prepared indicating the individuals who have authority to sign checks, deposit, or withdraw funds. This is usually limited to the chapter president and treasurer. The names of the individuals on the signature cards must be provided to ACT.

## Establishing Accounts/Changing Authorized Signers

Banks are strictly following guidelines when setting up a new bank account or changing signers. When you are changing the signers on the bank statement, you should provide:

- All current signers and all new signers to the bank with photo ID
- A copy of your red stamped bylaws
- Minutes of the meeting where the new board was elected or official report of the vote
- You may also take a copy of one the letters below edited with your PTA information

Banks are not trying to hinder your work with these requirements, they are trying to protect the money that is in the account for your membership.

## Investments

Chapters may wish to consider investing chapter funds, in excess of normal checking account and operational requirements, in low-risk investments, like savings accounts, certificates of deposit, or U.S. Treasury Securities. Before making any such investment, the chapter should consult with the ACT Board of Directors.

## Accounting for Interest

Any interest received by a chapter from any investment is considered income and should be recorded on the chapter's regular financial statements.

## **ANNUAL IRS 990N FILING**

All chapter treasurers **MUST** file this form on annual basis. The filing deadline is **May 15**. If it is not filed, you are in danger of losing your tax-exempt status! It is a very simple process – just a few very easy questions – NO MATH!

### How to file

To electronically submit Form 990-N, *Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations Not Required to File Form 990 or Form 990EZ*, use the [Form 990-N Electronic Filing System \(e-Postcard\)](#).

- The Form 990-N electronic-filing system moved from Urban Institute's website to IRS.gov in February. **All filers** must register at IRS.gov prior to filing their next Form 990-N. This is a one-time registration; you won't be asked to register again when filing next year.
- Form 990-N must be completed and filed electronically. **There is no paper form.**
- Form 990-N filers may choose to file a complete Form 990 or Form 990-EZ instead.
- Use the Form 990-N Electronic Filing System (e-Postcard) [User Guide](#) while registering and filing.
- For filing system and website issues, see [How to File: Frequently Asked Questions](#). If site issues are unresolved, call Tax Exempt Customer Accounts Services at 877-829-5500. A representative will file your Form 990-N information.
- Organizations should continue efforts to file, even if late.

**Prior to filing your form, please review the following information:**

### **Who must file**

Most small tax-exempt organizations whose annual [gross receipts](#) are [normally \\$50,000 or less](#) can satisfy their annual reporting requirement by electronically submitting Form 990-N if they choose not to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ instead.

Exceptions to this requirement include:

- Organizations that are included in a group return,
- [Churches](#), their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches, and
- Organizations [required to file a different return](#)

### **Failure to File**

While there is no penalty assessment for filing Form 990-N late, organizations that fail to file required Forms 990, 990-EZ or 990-N for three consecutive years will [automatically lose their tax-exempt status](#). Revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will happen on the filing due date of the third consecutively-missed year. Watch this IRS [YouTube presentation](#) for more information.

### **Information you will need when filing Form 990-N**

Form 990-N is easy to complete. You'll need only [eight items of basic information](#) about your organization.

### **Additional information**

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) - Form 990-N
- [User Guide](#) for Form 990-N Electronic Filing System (e-Postcard)
- [Form 990 Overview course](#) at StayExempt.IRS.gov
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) - Automatic revocation for not filing annual return or notice
- [Educational tools](#) - Help spread the word – Help small tax-exempt organizations stay exempt!
- [EO Select Check](#) - Search for organizations that have filed Form 990-N and view their filings
- [EO Update](#) - Subscribe to the IRS Exempt Organizations email newsletter that highlights new information



## **SECTION VIII: MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

Membership recruitment and retention is one of the chapter's primary activities. To assist in these efforts, we have developed the following resources for you to use. There is no one best course of action in leading recruitment and retention, so we recommend that you use multiple strategies and develop your own unique ways to reach out and promote membership.

### **Tips for Membership Prospecting**

1. Identify who should be a part of ACT but is currently not
2. Separate the categories (examples listed below)
  - a. Private companies
  - b. Public agencies
  - c. Vendors
  - d. Higher Education Institutions
  - e. Hospitals
  - f. TMAs
  - g. Government agencies (city, county, etc.)
3. Questions to help qualify the prospect
  - a. Do they have a TDM program already at that location?
  - b. Is there a trip reduction ordinance in place?
  - c. Do they have employees that commute?
  - d. Has an individual from the organization attended an ACT event?
4. Identify chapter lead
  - a. Does someone in the chapter know or work with the organization?
  - b. Is there a chapter member that works at a similar organization?
5. Call/email/target prospect to join (see scripts/templates below)
6. Overcoming common objections
  1. *We don't get value from ACT: ACT is changing!* ACT is launching new events and programs to increase opportunities for TDM professionals to network, learn, and grow professionally. This includes:
    - a. TDM Forum: a 2-day mid-size event focused on providing attendees with more focused session on TDM research and case studies.
    - b. ImpACT! Leadership: an emerging leaders program focused on increasing the knowledge of TDM and ACT, while helping young professionals grow into future leaders of their programs and organizations.
    - c. 40 Under 40 Program: recognizing the leadership of young professionals
    - d. TDM Excellence Awards: Board level recognition of exemplary organizations across the United States
    - e. TDM Certification: Recently launched, TDM Professional Certification creates a new baseline of professional standards for the TDM industry
    - f. *Connect*: ACT's online community platform, where each chapter has its own community for chapter members
  2. *My TMA represents me*: TMAs are very important in bringing TDM programs and services to commuters along with general education and advocacy on the local level. Membership in ACT is complimentary to membership in a TMA and will provide you with opportunities to connect with

employers across the country through ACT's Employer Council and get firsthand knowledge on issues of importance to you and your company. If your company has locations across the country, membership in ACT will help you build relationships and connect with people in those regions.

### Sample phone pitch

- Hello, this is XXXXXX from the XXXX chapter of the Association for Commute Transportation.
- Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about potential involvement in ACT.
- For background, I am currently the XXXXX chapter's XXXXXXXX.
- In my day job, I serve as.... (provide a brief overview of your professional role so they might be able to relate to the work you do).
- ACT is the nation's leading association for TDM professionals like you and me. I have actually been a member for XXXX years and I wanted to see if you might have an interest in joining and to see if I can answer any questions you may have.
- ACT's primary goal is to build a strong community of TDM professionals, hosting events locally and nationally for us to come together and learn best practices, network, and know that we are not alone in our efforts to improve commuting options.
- Can you tell me more about the work you do?
- --- Listen and ask questions about their work---
- It sounds like you would benefit a lot from membership in ACT as the work you do is directly related to that of our members.
- Can I send you a link with information about membership?

### Common questions while on the phone:

- *How much is membership?* Organizational membership is \$675 and provides benefits for up to two people. Additional employees can be added for additional cost.
- *How many members are in ACT?* We currently have almost 1,400 members representing public sector agencies, private employers, universities, transit agencies, TMAs, MPOs, and service providers. The who's who of TDM is involved.
- *How often do you meet?* The local chapter meets 3-4 times a year and ACT hosts three national conferences along with a regular webinar series.

### Sample member pitch letter

Dear XXXXXX,

I would like to introduce you to the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), the premier professional association and advocate for Transportation Demand Management (TDM), promoting sustainable and efficient commuting options.

ACT's 1,400 members represent the full spectrum of organizations involved in TDM. These include Fortune 500 companies, major universities, hospitals, city and state DOTs, MPOs, RTAs, TMAs, consultants, and mobility service providers. Membership in ACT helps employers maximize their ability to recruit and retain their workforce; assists cities and regions enhance their livability; and provides all members with access to best practices for implementing effective TDM and shared-use mobility policies and programs.

From networking and educational events to professional development and government relations, ACT offers opportunities to learn how to better advance the effectiveness of our transportation systems, improve the quality of life for commuters, and strengthen the economic growth of businesses.

Additional membership benefits include:

- **ACT Annual International Conference registration discounts**
- **TDM Forum registration discounts**
- **Spring Summit registration discounts**
- **Local chapter membership**
- **Issues-based councils**
- **Advocacy & Public Policy**
- **Legislative Alerts**
- **ACT *Connections* newsletter and Public Policy newsletter**
- **Members-only Virtual Discussions**
- ***Connect*, ACT's online community platform**

We're excited to get to know you better and learn about your needs. We invite you to join ACT so you can access all the benefits of membership and expand your professional network. You can learn more and join online at: <https://www.actweb.org/membership-benefits>

For further information or answers to any questions, please contact XXXXXXXX at XXX-XXX-XXXX or (enter email). We look forward to welcoming you to our Association!

### **Welcome Note**

Welcome to the Association for Commuter Transportation! You and your organization are now members of the nation's largest trade association and leading advocate for commuter transportation, transportation demand management strategies, and shared-use mobility aimed at improving the lives of commuters and economic competitiveness of cities, regions, and employers.

As a member of ACT, you are automatically a member of the XXXXXXXXXXXX Chapter. During the year, we focus our efforts on building a strong community of TDM professionals, hosting meetings and networking events throughout the year and I look forward to meeting you at our next event.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me at [XXXXXXXXXXXX@XXX.XXX](mailto:XXXXXXXXXXXX@XXX.XXX) or give me a call at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

## **SECTION IX: CHAPTER OPERATIONS**

### **Chapter Elections**

The process for electing chapter officers should be detailed within your chapter's bylaws. Please refer to this document for specific information regarding election timeline, nomination process, and other related information.

Chapter leaders should proactively encourage members to run for positions on the chapter board to bring in new ideas and increase opportunities for involvement.

Chapter Board nomination forms should be sent to all chapter members in a timely fashion, providing at least 2-3 weeks for responses.

Many chapters use one of two methods to conduct their actual voting. These are:

- **Web Ballot:** A ballot is created using a web-based form (i.e., SurveyMonkey or ElectionRunner) and an email is sent out to all members eligible to vote with instructions on how to vote online. ACT has accounts with both SurveyMonkey and ElectionRunner and can make these systems available to chapters. SurveyMonkey is free for chapters to use, as ACT pays an annual subscription fee. ElectionRunner would require a fee for the chapter to use the system based on the number of eligible voters.

### **Chapter Election Dates**

Please inform ACT if your listed information is incorrect.

| <b>Chapter</b>    | <b>Next Election Year</b> | <b>Election Month</b> | <b>Term Length</b> | <b>Term Start Date</b> |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cascade           | 2021                      | May                   | 2 years            | July                   |
| Chesapeake        | 2022                      | September             | 2 years            |                        |
| Mid-Atlantic      | 2022                      | July/Aug              | 2 years            | Aug/Sept               |
| Northern CA       | 2021                      | November              | 2 years            | January                |
| Red River         | 2021                      | October               | 2 years            | January                |
| Rocky Mountain    | 2022                      | Nov/Dec               | 2 years            | January                |
| SEACT             | 2021                      | August                | 2 years            | January                |
| Southern CA       | 2021                      | Nov/Dec               | 2 years            |                        |
| Midwest           | 2021                      | December              | 2 years            | January                |
| Patriot           | 2021                      | Oct/Nov               | 2 years            | January                |
| Valley of the Sun | 2021                      |                       |                    |                        |

### **Virtual Meetings and Events**

ACT will set up your meeting and event registration. To start the process, submit the [Chapter Webinar Form](#) to request registration for your meetings and events. For webinars and virtual chapter member meetings, ACT staff will create a Zoom event and registration through the ACT website. Registration through the ACT website makes it easier to track member engagement; identify prospects; and help identify other potential chapter leaders.

### **Chapter Website**

ACT maintains a page for each chapter on the [www.actweb.org](http://www.actweb.org) website. To ensure the look and feel of each chapter page is similar, ACT maintains these pages and has established the following structure for all chapter pages and the information that they contain. Chapters may choose to establish their own independent page outside of ACT's website. If this is desired, each chapter's URL must contain "act" in the name, i.e.: [www.socalact.org](http://www.socalact.org) and [www.redriveract.org](http://www.redriveract.org).

**Chapter Goals:** List out your top 3-5 goals in bullet format.

**Meeting Schedule:** Specific dates if known. If not, please note if the Chapter meets monthly, quarterly, etc.

**Special Events:** Information regarding special events or activities that the Chapter is hosting.

**Chapter Resources:** These may include: annual work plan, reports, fact sheets, etc.

#### **Chapter Leadership:**

- President: (Name, Company)
- Vice President: (Name, Company)
- Secretary: (Name, Company)
- Treasurer: (Name, Company)
- Other Positions (membership chair, communications chair, etc.): (Name, Company)

### **ACT Calendar Event/Meeting Listing**

The events calendar on the National website is one of the most used resources by site visitors. ACT staff will add your events to the calendar. Please fill out the [Chapter Webinar Form](#) as soon as any event information is available to ensure it is added to the calendar in a timely fashion. Please remember to inform ACT if an event has been cancelled or rescheduled.

# ACT Committees

## Accreditation Committee

The Accreditation Committee oversees the management, standards, structure, and processes related to the development and implementation of a of the Association for Commuter Transportation's (ACT) Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Organization Accreditation Program. On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Committee shall work with staff, volunteers, and Association leadership to establish program goals, eligibility standards, application and maintenance processes, marketing, annual budget, and other related considerations.

## Events Oversight Committee

The Committee is charged with organization's events to ensure they are meeting established goals and objectives. The Committee will provide recommendations to the Board on the use of events to achieve the organization's strategic mission. The Committee will be tasked with looking at how the organization's events may need to evolve to achieve long-term goals. The Committee will develop and oversee a strategy for guiding chapters and councils with events that align with ACT's goals.

## Finance Committee

The Committee is charged with providing insight and recommendations to the Board to assure that the Association is financially sound. The Committee is encouraged to work with staff and the Association's accountants, auditors, and other financial professionals to review the Association's financial processes and make recommendations to the Board regarding the Association's long term financial goals, annual budget, and other financial considerations.

## Governance Committee

The Committee is charged with reviewing and enhancing the effectiveness of the ACT Board of Directors, facilitating the Board's continued development, and adherence to the bylaws of the Association.

## Membership Committee

The Committee is charged with recruitment and retention of ACT members, ensuring sustained growth in all sectors of Transportation Demand Management industry. The Committee will assist with regular assessments of membership satisfaction and involvement in chapter and council activities. The Committee will identify and develop membership benefits.

## Professional Development Committee

To assist in identifying the training, education, and mentoring needs of the membership with a goal of advancing member knowledge of TDM and personal professional growth. The Committee will consider the needs of all members from new TDM professionals to retirees, along with all phases of a Member's career, including challenges facing discreet populations of our Membership. The Committee will help facilitate the exchange of knowledge from experienced TDM professionals to new TDM professionals.

## Public Policy Committee

On behalf of the Board and in partnership with staff and consultants, the Public Policy Committee is charged with helping set the content of ACT's public policy agenda. The Committee will create a venue for hearing, discussing, and formulating recommendations on policy positions for the association and advise the Board through persuasive policy related briefs. The Committee will work to inform and engage ACT members on the advancement of ACT's policy agenda.