



SNAPSHOT

SUPPLEMENTAL

TRANSPORTATION

PROGRAMS for

SENIORS

Prepared by the Beverly Foundation

TRANSPORTATION INNOVATIONS FOR SENIORS Public & Community Transit Services Respond to Special Needs

BACKGROUND

In 2003, a partnership of the Beverly Foundation and the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) undertook a national survey of innovations for seniors in public and community transit. The purpose of the study was to identify, document, celebrate and disseminate information regarding innovations in public and community transit.

INNOVATIONS: CONCEPT AND PRACTICES

An innovation is generally defined as a change from the norm or standard way of doing things. It typically is viewed as legitimate, conventional and within the normative consensus of a community and its leaders. Innovation as a concept can be difficult to embrace, for while it often is seen as contextual for all organizations or communities, in fact it is specific to its organization or community. Survey respondents were asked to identify innovations for improving services to seniors in the context of the challenges of problem solving. What follows are innovative solutions to some of these challenges.

C	difficulty scheduling rides
H	inability to get into vehicles
A	lack of available funds to hire drivers
L	limited availability of services
L	lack of flexibility in fixed routes
E	demand for expanded service
N	paying for costs of transportation
G	lack of information about service
E	communication with drivers

I	client designates volunteer (trained) driver and uses program vehicles
N	a portable step mounted on chassis
N	volunteer driver for community van
O	sharing community resources through brokering among services
V	expand fixed route system to stop at multiple senior "hang outs"
A	call-a-ride program weekends & nights rural circuit routes with 1-day per week service per town
T	no-cost transportation to health and enrichment activities
I	travel training to teach seniors about costs, routes, schedules
N	use of mobile data computer for real time exchange of information

INNOVATIONS OF EXCELLENCE

An expert panel was convened to identify three programs with Innovations of Excellence. In addition to receiving a cash reward, the programs also were asked to present information about their program and innovations at national conferences. The award winners are listed below.

AWARD WINNERS

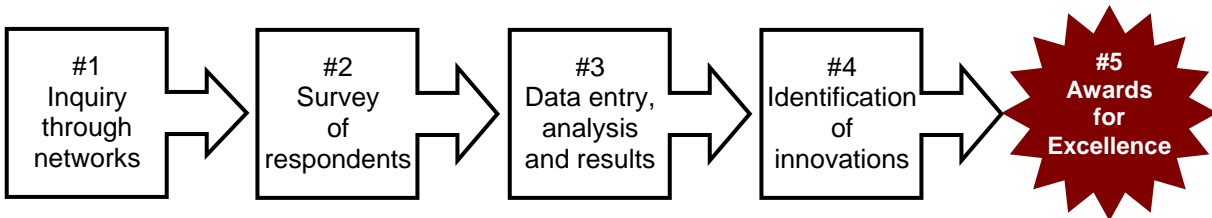
Council on Aging and Human Services (COAST) Colfax, WA

Community Association for Rural Transportation, Inc. (CART) Harrisonburg, VA

Seniors' Resource Center Denver, CO

METHOD

An inquiry and survey were conveyed to public and community transit via the CTAA website and email system. Out of 167 inquires, 96 surveys were received, which represents 33 states. The study methodology, profile of respondents and a sample of the data follow.



PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Trip Purpose
 73% medical
 38% shopping
 22% nutrition
 12% personal activities

Service Area
 6% single community
 33% multiple communities
 34% county
 15% other
 10% mix

Service Schedule
 90% weekdays
 42% weekend
 46% evenings

Service Pickup/Delivery
 73% door-to-door
 34% curb-to-curb
 25% door-thru-door

Drivers
 57% paid 25% paid/vol.

Scheduling
 57% same day
 70% 24-hours advance
 43% subscription
 37% 2 days advance

Vehicles
 64% bus
 77% van
 26% taxi
 35% auto
 20% others

SAMPLE OF THE DATA

Of those responding to the survey, 48% are located in rural areas, 22% in urban areas, 14% in suburban areas and 9% are in a mix of areas. While providers are in the majority (59%), almost one third are a mix of providers and broker/managers or coordinators and the like. Forty-eight percent describe themselves as hybrid, in that they provide a mix of services, 22% are demand response and 26% are ADA/paratransit. Only 4% are fixed route/traditional.

From a list of 10 problems seniors encounter in accessing transportation, providers identified time of travel, not understanding how the service works and waiting for the vehicle. 67% of the respondents say that seniors have special transportation needs and those age 85 and older have the greatest needs. Respondents also identified barriers to access and the need for modifications as important to providing services. Major modifications include: driver training (for physical assistance and sensitivity to seniors), going to the door, and schedule and/or route changes. Other modifications include going through the door, volunteers ride along and provide escorts. The majority say that their modifications improve the transportation services for everyone.

This study has recognized the importance of innovations for seniors in public and community transit. To obtain additional information from the study, please visit our website to download the "Innovations for Seniors" brochure or contact us to receive a copy. **Community Transportation Association of America**, 1341 G Street NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20005, Tel: (202) 628-1480; Fax: (202) 737-9197 www.ctaa.org

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