



SUPPLEMENTAL



TRANSPORTATION



PROGRAMS for



SENIORS

SNAPSHOT

Prepared by the Beverly Foundation

TRANSPORTATION FACT SHEET

Aging in Place

- Seniors show an increasing inclination to “age in place.” More than 90% of Americans retire in place (in the same community and often at the same address they lived at before retirement).
- Compared to the population aged 65 and above thirty years ago, today’s elderly are almost half as likely to move. Consequently, close to two-thirds of the current cohort of older persons live in the suburbs or in rural areas where they moved as younger members of the work force. These low-density areas offer relatively few transportation alternatives to the car.

Chronic Health Conditions

- Only 3% of those 65-74 have chronic conditions that restrict them to traveling within their own neighborhood. While this number climbs to 24% among the 85 plus age group, the majority of very old seniors can continue to travel farther distances.

Public Transit

- Two thirds of US public transportation agencies provide service designed to meet the needs of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.
- Public transportation users are diverse: people age 65 or older represent 7% of all riders.
- According to the 1995 National Personal Transportation Survey, adults age 65 and older use public transit for 3% of their trips.
- Only 5.5% of all public transportation trips are for medical appointments.
- Public transportation is one of the safest modes of travel in the United States Riding a transit bus is 91 times safer than car travel. By train, passengers are 15 times safer.

Public Transit Costs

- In 1999, an adult passenger paid an average of \$1.09 per base fare for public transit.
- In fiscal year 2002, the fifth year of funding under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the federal government invested \$6.7 billion in public transportation.
- The American Society of Civil Engineers reports that improvement to transit bus and rail facilities are not keeping up with the strain placed on systems by increased ridership. ASCE says public transportation spending must increase by 41% just to maintain current conditions.

Specialized Transit

- Many transit systems provide specialized paratransit services and collectively provide more than 70 million trips per year. However, most specialized services are too limited to replace the mobility lost by seniors who stop driving, and area unable to provide the personalized service that many seniors require. On average, not more than 18% of those eligible for services are registered for specialized transportation in mid-sized cities; in large size cities, the corresponding figure is 22%. Moreover, data indicate that riders who use these services rarely make more than 40% of their trips on these systems.

Medicaid Transportation

- Nationally, an estimated 3.4 million recipients (roughly 10% of the covered population) depend on Medicaid transportation to get to doctors and medical appointments. These are people who are either unable to drive or too poor to own and operate their own car and do not have access to affordable public transportation. The types of state-funded transportation assistance vary from modest individual mileage reimbursement and gas vouchers to the support of elaborate networks of medical transportation providers.
- Federal Medicaid regulations require states to “ensure necessary transportation for recipients to and from providers.” Traditionally, most states have met this requirement by enrolling transportation providers, usually taxis and private medical vans, and paying them whenever they transported Medicaid recipients. (Community Transportation Association of America, 2001).
- Slightly less than 1% of the entire Medicaid budget is devoted to nonemergency transportation. This amounts to 1.2 billion dollars.

Cost of Driving

- According to the American Automobile Association, the estimated cost of driving a single-occupant vehicle is between \$4,826 (for a small car) and \$9,685 (for a large car), depending upon mileage. By contrast, the annual average cost for public transportation for one adult ranges from \$200 to \$2000, depending upon mileage, time of day, type of vehicle or service.

Pedestrians

- Older American are three times more likely to walk to their destinations than to use public transit. According to the 1995 National Personal Transportation Survey, adults age 65 and older walk for 9% of their trips (as compared to using public transit for 3% of their trips). The average length of a walking trip is less than one-third of a mile.

The STPs Mobilizer Project is a partnership initiative of the Beverly Foundation and the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a 501(c)(3) public charity located in Washington, DC that is dedicated to research and education about the causes of traffic crashes. It is funded by donations from AAA Clubs, AAA members, and other organizations associated with the American Automobile Association. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1440 New York Avenue NW, Suite 201, Washington, DC 20005 Tel (202) 638-5994; Fax (202) 638-5943 <http://www.aaafoundation.org>

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