

**S****T****P****S****SNAPSHOT**

SUPPLEMENTAL

TRANSPORTATION

PROGRAMS for

SENIORS

Prepared by the Beverly Foundation

## Volunteer Friends Adaptation

On January 29, 2004 Congressman Howard L. Berman (D-California – 28<sup>th</sup> District) announced that Congress has approved his request to allocate \$50,000 for a pilot *Volunteer Friends Senior Transportation Program* in Southern California's San Fernando Valley.

### Volunteer Friends Model

The primary features of the *Volunteer Friends* model include a sponsor, partners, riders, volunteer drivers, documentation and reimbursement.

The **key elements** include:

Leadership: an organization that can act as sponsor

Riders: referral by aging-related service organizations

Drivers: volunteers recruited by riders

Escorts: drivers who can provide extra support

Vehicles: automobiles owned by volunteer drivers

Rides: to essential & quality of life activities

Availability: agreement between rider and driver

Reservations: rider makes plans with volunteer drivers

Service: door- to (and through)-door

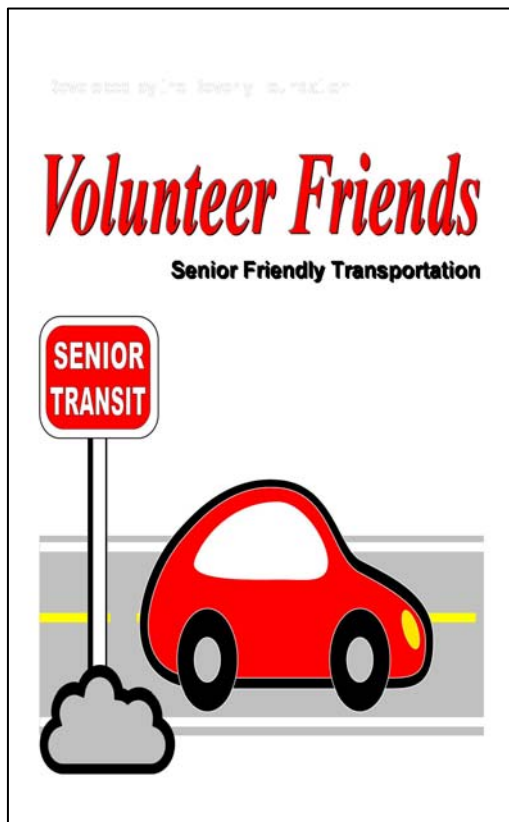
Fees: no rider fees

Reimbursement: given to the rider to give to the driver

Budget: \$32,000 (not including planning costs)

Driver Screening: copies of driver license, auto registration, auto liability insurance

Marketing: partnerships with referring service providers and wide distribution of materials

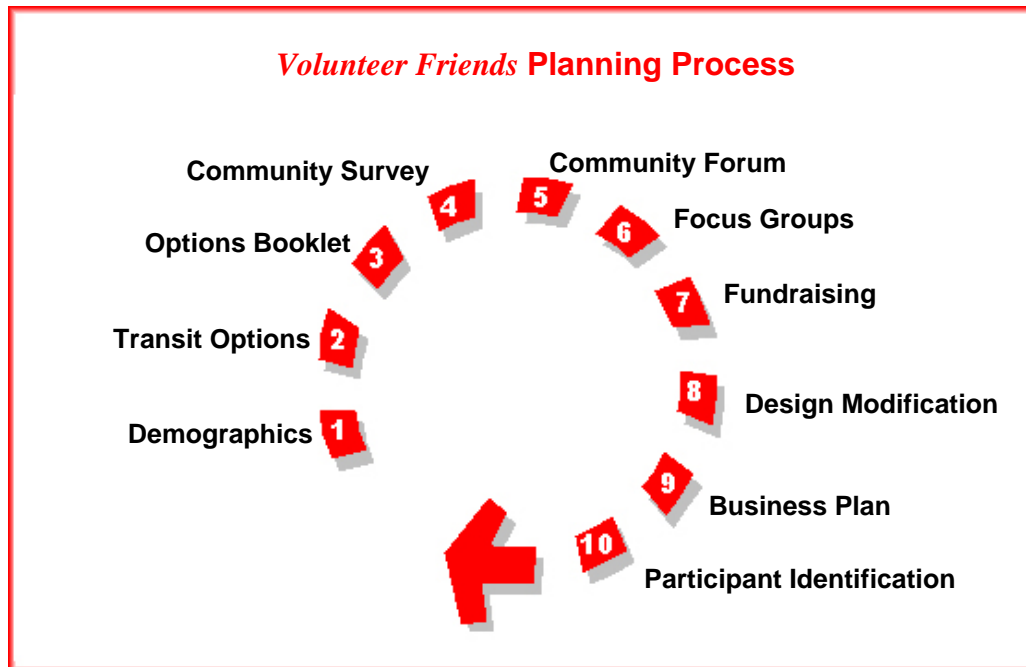


### The Volunteer Friends Adaptation

The Congressional allocation will establish a pilot project to assist North Hollywood seniors who are no longer able to drive. In its capacity as project advisor, the Beverly Foundation provides technical assistance in planning and monitoring the adaptation of the pilot. In order to ensure coordination, planning activities are linked closely with the East Valley Senior Center (the pilot sponsor), Congressman Berman's office, aging and transportation policy makers, planners and service providers in the City and County of Los Angeles.

## A 10-STEP Planning Process

The illustration below summarizes the pilot's 6-month planning that began in April of 2004.



### Planning Activities

The **Steps 1 & 2** include the collection of additional demographic data on the target population and information about transportation options in the community that are available to seniors. **Step 3** is the preparation of a transportation options booklet for use by senior service providers and seniors themselves. **Step 4** involves a survey of seniors in the Van Nuys area to identify transportation concerns of seniors. These concerns can be included in the **Step 5** activity of holding community forums. **Step 6** organizes a series of focus groups (with a companion survey) for gathering opinions of seniors and volunteer drivers about the transportation options in general and the *Volunteer Friends* model in specific. The opinions are used for **Step 7**, modifying the *Volunteer Friends* design. **Step 8** develops a fundraising plan and **Step 9** develops a business plan. **Step 10** includes the initial start up activity of identifying, recruiting and training of riders for the pilot.

### Next Steps

The 12-month implementation phase is expected to begin in early 2006. It emphasizes design and implementation as a means of getting *Volunteer Friends* program up and running quickly so that seniors will be able to get transportation services on a timely basis. During the demonstration, The Beverly Foundation Volunteer Driver TurnKey Kit that includes technical materials related to the planning, implementation and evaluation process and related tools and forms will be tapped as a resource and as a means of encouraging adaptation of the *Volunteer Friends* model in other communities.

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