



Tip Sheet 2015

Destination Transportation

Highlights

- **Driving to Destinations**
Driving and the cost of driving an automobile
- **Alternatives to Driving**
Transportation options for senior passengers often supplement or complement existing transportation services..
- **Destination Continuum**
The continuum describes the broad range of transportation services that senior passengers often want and need.
- **Destination Priorities**
While a wide range of destinations are identified and discussed, the priority destinations to which transportation services take senior passengers are life sustaining destinations
- **Types of Destinations**
Seniors use transportation options to get where they need to go which can include multiple destinations.

(This tip sheet was modified from a 2013 Beverly Foundation Legacy publication)

The usual purpose of transportation is to get people where they need to go. Many older adults have driven their own vehicle for forty, fifty, or even sixty years, and driving often made getting to destinations simple. All they had to do was get into their car and drive to their destination. Data provided by the Automobile Association of America (AAA) suggests that the personal automobile as a destination transportation service can be quite expensive (e.g. between \$4,826 for a small car and \$9,685 for a large car). Of course those costs may depend to a large extent on miles driven. The example below illustrates a costs of automobile ownership.

Automobile Ownership Cost

Capital investment	
(\$35,000 @ 10 years)	\$3,500
Cost of insurance	\$1,200
Cost of maintenance	\$1,000
Cost of license	\$ 100
Cost of fuel (\$150 x 12 months)	\$1,800
Annual Cost	\$7,600

Automobile ownership amounts to \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year, could support the costs of using a community transportation service two or three times a week to get to destinations such as the grocery store, the post office, the beauty shop, and the volunteer activity. However, a car is about more than destinations. Owning and driving a car is a symbol of freedom, independence, and control. While the symbolic purpose and related costs of owning an automobile may be considerable, the price of giving up the car (the loss of freedom, independence, and control) may be greater. In fact, for many older adults, not being able to drive is likened to the worst thing that can ever happen in life.

Alternatives To Driving

tion options for them to use when they no longer want to, or are unable to drive.

Many older adults are familiar with private and specialized transportation services. However, they may not see themselves as public transportation users because they haven't ridden a bus since grade school or it hasn't been necessary for them to make advance reservations since the last time they reserved an airline ticket. And, while they might enjoy "other" options such as a bicycle and walking they may not

view them as their preferred method of getting to destinations. The specialized and senior transportation options (which can include volunteer driver programs) are often referred to as STPs or Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors.

While driving an automobile may be the preferred mode of transportation for older adults, many communities offer a host of transporta-

Transportation Options

Automobile

Public Transit (buses, light rail, trains, subways)

Paratransit-Demand Response (ADA transit, Dial-A-Ride programs, and community transit services)

Private Transit (taxis, limousines, chauffeur services)

Specialized Transit (shuttles and other vehicles serving businesses, senior centers, retirement communities, adult day centers, churches, and hospitals)

Senior Transit (paid and volunteer driver programs providing transportation to senior passengers and some- times people with disabilities)

Other Options (bicycles, small cart vehicles, walking)

Destination Continuum

Whatever the destination, it takes some type of transportation to get there. When older adults no longer drive, the transportation method may be a bus, a van, a shuttle, a taxi, a private service, an automobile, a golf cart, and sometimes even one's feet. Whatever the method, without some kind of transportation resource, destinations and the things they offer will not be available to or accessible by older adults. Perhaps the best place to begin the destination discussion is to identify the destinations to which older adults travel. The continuum below offers a simple way of identifying types of destinations where they (and we) go.

Life-Sustaining	Life-Maintaining	Life-Enriching
Doctors' Offices	Banks	Volunteer Centers
Nutrition Sites	Shopping Centers	Friends' Homes
Grocery Stores	Social Services	Beauty Shops

Passengers riding community-based transportation services are no different than people who drive automobiles. They want or need to get to life sustaining, life maintaining and/or life enriching destinations. Whether it is the doctor's office or clinic, the grocery store or bank, or the beauty shop or shopping center, if they no longer drive, they may depend on community

Life Sustaining Destinations At the left end of the continuum are what some call “quantity of life”, “food and water” or “needs” destinations because they keep older adults alive. These are the most frequently identified destinations to which transportation services take their older adult passengers. For example, of the top three destinations selected by survey respondents, non-emergency medical services (doctors offices, dialysis centers, physical rehabilitation centers) had a 97% response rate. It is not clear if the medical nature of the destinations was the first choice of the transportation services, their funding sources, or the senior passengers they serve.*

At the right end of the continuum are what some call “quality of life”, “productive ” or “wants” destinations because they may not be viewed as giving life, but rather as giving meaning to everyday life. For some, such destinations are related to family life or education. For others, they promote socialization. For others they enhance worship and spirituality. For still others the reward is a connection with community. It isn’t that food, clothing, and activities cannot be enjoyed in the home but rather that isolation often results in depression. In other words, life-enhancing and enriching destinations help ensure that more is at stake than mere survival.

Life Maintaining Destinations Maintaining every day life by going to a bank, to a shopping center, or to a social service program may be important, but for most older adults these are not the types of destinations that mean the difference between life and death, nor are they generally thought of as destinations that enhance the quality of life. One person mentioned that these are related to the wise saying, “*When the going gets tough, the tough go.....*”

Destination Priorities

It is often said that the losses experienced the course of the aging process eliminate many of the things that give meaning. Losing the ability to drive is a good example. However, the loss may be exacerbated when one is no longer able to get to family, friends, activities, or events that promote social health and well-being. The Some providers say that transportation services that recognize the value of both physical and social health make major contribution to the older adults who use their services. For example, going to the doctor may result in improved physical health, a trip to the beauty shop may contribute to social health. It is not about prioritizing wants and needs with physical health winning the war. It is about appreciating the importance of both quality of life destinations and quantity of life destinations. In other words, it is important for transportation services to consider their destination policies carefully. The following comment from a woman in California best describes the paradox of single destination services.

“When I have a doctor’s appointment on Monday, I always go to the beauty shop on Friday, because, if I hear bad news, I want to look my best.”

Types of Destinations

Although socialization is an important features of most senior transportation programs, getting people where they need to go is the ultimate purpose of any transportation service. While the majority of trips are to life sustaining destinations (e.g. visits to the doctor, pharmacy, or grocery store), many programs say life-enriching destinations (e.g. to an exercise program, a volunteer activity, or the hair dresser) are just as important. A sample of recent destinations of a senior transportation service in the southwest suggest that although many trips are for medical and health care “life sustaining” appointments, numerous destinations are for life-enriching and non health related life-maintaining activities as well.

Senior Passenger Destinations

- 97% Non Emergency Medical Services**
- 79% Shopping**
- 22% Social Activities**
- 21% Social Services**
- 13% Beauty Shops**

In truth, survey data indicates that the majority of trips made by senior transportation services and provided to senior passengers are to life sustaining destinations, they also indicate that seniors (and transportation services) place a high value on life enriching trips, and even life maintaining trips. The accompanying chart identifies the top six selections by 113 respondents to a destination question on the Beverly Foundation’s 2011 STAR Search application. The inquiry asked applicants to select the top three destinations of senior passengers in 2010. Destinations that were underrepresented were recreational activities (4%), volunteer activities (3%), religious activities (2%), and paid employment (1%). Other destinations

Imaging Center	Fitness Center	Oral Surgery
Pain Clinic	Computer Store	Dialysis Clinic
Medical Center	Shopping Center	Eye Specialist
Neurological Center	Public Library	Chiropractic Clinic
Spine & Rehab Clinic	Animal Hospital	Arboretum
Cardiovascular Specialist	Community Center	Shoe Store
Hearing & Balance Center	Nursing Home	Bank
Neurology Center	Hair Dresser	Restaurant

identified by applicants included trips to the bank, post office, library, dry cleaners, assisted living facilities, special events, the outlet mall,

community band concerts, holiday sightseeing, movie matinees, the VA hospital, dialysis, dental appointments, grocery shopping and fitness centers. Although the list suggests that services provide many trips, the emphasis appears to be on the necessities of life. As one applicant commented, “While we do transportation for social services, beauty/hair, religious activities, social activities, and recreation, these are estimated as less than 5% of our transportation miles.

Data and information for this fact sheet are from of the Beverly Foundation’s 2011 STAR Search/STAR Awards applications. The application process attracted 281 respondents, located in 47 states, serving 300,000 senior passengers and providing 5,000, 000 rides to senior passengers.