

Environmental and Health Services
Department
Senior Services



Senior Transportation Service
(Pilot Program)

Presented
to the
Transportation and Environment Committee
October 23, 2006

Overview

- Quality transportation services are fundamental to supporting, independent, healthy and engaged lives for seniors citizens.
- Better transportation services result when various transportation programs are successfully coordinated.

Purpose

- To demonstrate the need for increased transportation services for senior citizens through the development of a coordinated overarching network to help achieve maximum mobility and independence for seniors in Dallas.

Justification

- Dallas has 135,604 adults 60+ years old.
- There is now an enormous gap in available transportation services.
- Because of lack of transportation, many risk becoming isolated and immobile if they are unable to drive.

Justification (cont'd)

- This proposed program offers consideration for those who cannot afford to pay for transportation.
 - Texas ranks among states with highest poverty rates for older adults, (14.4% - the national average is 10.2%)
 - In Dallas, 13.1% of residents over age 65 live below the poverty level.

Survey Results

The National Household Transportation Survey, conducted in 2001, indicated that Texas, along with Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma, ranked number two as the worst census division in this country for isolation of non-drivers 65 years old and over.

Challenges Associated with Enhancing Mobility of Older Americans

- ❑ Inadequate investment in transportation options for older adults.
- ❑ Lack of community planning and decision-making
- ❑ Lack of coordination among various transportation providers, public and private
- ❑ Lack of familiarity with available services and prospective new options.

Driving: A Key Concern In Aging

- ❑ Program will help address growing problem of aging drivers.
- ❑ Many older adults drive well past their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle – they have no alternative.
- ❑ Insurance companies are encouraging alternative forms of transportation.
- ❑ Fifty percent of non-drivers age 65 and older stay at home each day, partially because they lack transportation options.
- ❑ African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans, rural residents, and households without cars are more affected.

Reasons Seniors Do Not Use Public Transportation

- ❑ Concerns about safety
- ❑ Inability to pay the cost
- ❑ Unaware of existing options
- ❑ Not able to walk to transportation line
- ❑ Difficulty getting into the vehicle
- ❑ Not able to travel alone
- ❑ Fearful of getting lost
- ❑ Not senior friendly
- ❑ Does not go where they want or need to go.

Program Description

This program addresses the City-wide problem of:

1. Transportation for older adults who have no means of mobility at all
2. Increased access to “door-to-door” service for individuals requiring such service.
3. Funds for seniors who cannot afford to pay for transportation

Program Partners

Dallas Area Agency on Aging/Community Council of Greater Dallas

- ❑ Service intake procedures already in place
- ❑ Aging Information Office & 211 Call Center presently act as entry point for seniors seeking services

North Central Texas Council of Governments

- ❑ System Based – focus on developing seamless system
- ❑ Client-Based – focus on individual needs

Transportation Providers

- Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Paratransit (purchased transit passes)
- Network of community provided vehicles
- Existing City of Dallas vehicles and drivers (MLK and West Dallas Community Centers)

Process

- ❑ Senior Citizen contacts program with specific needs
- ❑ Intake workers determine eligibility
- ❑ Case Coordinators make recommendation for appropriate transportation services
- ❑ Transportation is scheduled

Time Line

- Establish a comprehensive network of providers and coordinated transportation resources. By: December 1, 2006
- Ensure that transportation providers meet federal, state, and local qualifications for the safe operation of vehicles, including criminal background checks; By: December 1, 2006
- Contract with transportation providers; By: January 1, 2007
- Establish call center to serve as central point of contact for clients; By: December 1, 2006
- Develop eligibility criteria; i.e. Medicaid eligibility, medical necessity and the need for transportation assistance; By: November 1, 2006
- Inform citizens of available transportation and how to access it; By: January, 2007
- Launch transportation program: schedule and assign trips by the least costly and most appropriate mode; By: January, 2007
- Finalize the development of the comprehensive network of providers and coordinated transportation resources to include churches, volunteers and community organizations; By: May 1, 2007
- Monitor the overall system to assure uniform, high-quality service; By: On going
- Track costs and services to provide accountability to the contracting agency. By: On going

Performance Measures

- **Output: (\$75,000 Funding)**

2,161 round trips or 4650 single trips (at industry average \$15.50 per trip).

Efficiency: Cost per round trip - \$30.00

Estimated \$5,000 administrative costs

- Effectiveness: 95% on-schedule pickups

- Service Target for FY 2006-07: Maintain or increase in the number of riders each month

- Community Indicator: Customer Satisfaction with transportation services (Citizen Survey)

Summary

A Coordinated Senior Transportation Services System

- ❑ Fills a gap in existing services
- ❑ Not intended to duplicate existing systems
- ❑ Emphasizes true “door-to-door” service
- ❑ Provides mobility, prevents isolation
- ❑ Encourages partnerships and a coordinated transportation network