For older Americans, independent living and aging in place are growing goals that envision greater personal freedom. Older people want to enjoy extended lifespans, support economic vitality in their communities, reduce financial and emotional stress on family members, and reduce cost to society for elder care and related services.

From Vision to Goal

AAARF, as well as advocates for aging Americans, recognizes that the need to be addressed. As a result, the Administration and the U.S. Congress have begun to take actions to address the issues described above. The emphasis is on ensuring that Americans 50+ are able to sustain their independence and, ultimately, to enjoy personally fulfilling lives and their contributions to our communities.

Today’s Action Agenda

Older Americans and their advocates across the country have united around the need for separated mobility options for all Americans. A new generation of coordinated efforts at state and local levels must be launched to address significant funding needs in new areas, while making a long-term commitment to ensuring that Americans are able to sustain mobility for life.

For Support and Information, please visit www.publictransportation.org.

The Benefits of Public Transportation

Expanding the Transportation Options in an Aging Society

Over the next two decades America’s older generation will bring unprecedented demands and needs to the table. Major metropolitan regions and rural communities around the country are realizing expanded mobility options for older Americans. But a greater, sustained effort is needed, requiring a heightened commitment and concern level at the federal level.

Aging- America"s Growing Part of the U.S. Transportation Market

Number of People Age 65+ and 85+, 1900-2000 and Projected, 2000-2050

The Dimensions of this shift have been widely discussed. Yet America remains ill-prepared to provide for the mobility needs of—or to capitalize on the incredible potential represented by—fully independent, active and mobile older Americans.

The Administration and the U.S. Congress, therefore, are bringing together leaders from the public and private sectors to develop a National Action Agenda that will sustain and expand options, including more public transportation services.

The National Action Agenda

will make this happen. The National Action Agenda is a five year effort that will accelerate the pace of deployment; build partnerships of many diverse interests; enhance investment in and delivery of training and related technologies that can make all transportation services safe and accessible; and reduce cost to society for elder care and related services.

The Administration and the U.S. Congress have targeted the following strategies, among others, to expand mobility for Americans 50+ and older:

- Increased investment in and deployment of information and related technologies that can make all transportation services safe and accessible.
- Enhanced mobility options for seniors will only become a reality when the long-standing transportation funding shortfall for transit is worked out.
- What remains to be seen is whether attitudinal and legal regulations, new funding and new flexibility emerging from the federal层面 approaches and their efforts will be meaningful in state and local budgets.

Mark Jobs White

www.apta.com/easyrider/workfiles/documents/gettingstarted.doc

1. U.S. Transportation Market - A National Action Agenda


The Increased Cost of Neglect

When we fail to act or are not adequately prepared for our older family members, neighbors and friends, the future of older Americans will most certainly reflect negative social and economic consequences.

- Weighted safety risks. Continuing to drive in life dramatically increases safety risks.
- Limited options. Mobility has never been more important as older Americans move through the end stages of life, when most of American households do not have access to adequate transportation services.
- Critical to the economy. Older Americans are more likely to participate in the workforce and more dependent on the workforce. Their purchases and consumption contribute to the overall economy.

Mobility and independence. There are 50 million non-drivers aged 60 and older who are on any given day either unable or unwilling to drive a vehicle. These non-drivers are likely to be socially isolated and limited to the suburban and rural areas. African-Americans, Latinas and Asian Americans, and households with no cars are more likely to be non-drivers.

- Diminished quality of life and health. Older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy. Compared with older drivers, non-drivers make:
  - 15% fewer trips to the doctor
  - 35% fewer shopping trips and restaurant visits
  - 65% fewer trips for social, family, and religious activities.

The baby boom generation spans a 25-year age range, in the midst of a century of profound changes in lifestyles, the values and patterns that further reinforce the importance of mobility.

Public Transportation Agencies Respond

Across the nation, public transportation systems are working hard to improve mobility for seniors and reduce their barriers to mobility. Many of the practices described in this publication include vehicles that are more user friendly, more attractive vehicles, and more convenient access to information and assistance for older riders. However, as is often the case, more work needs to be done to address the needs of older riders.

- New service design and fare structures
- Application of new technologies
- Transit user and travel outreach programs
- Strategies for engaging all users
- Execution of local communications activities
- Strategies for engaging the media on behalf of mobility for seniors

In 2005 APTA launched the Easy Rider program: a collection of successful stories that have been developed by transit agencies in communities across the United States. The agency is pleased to have a greater mobility for older Americans’ age group brought to the fore in these examples.

1. New service design and fare structures
2. Application of new technologies
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