

## Meeting Notes

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Marian Anderson, Chuck Frayer, Amy Gross, Pat Janik, Temple Lentz, and Donna Roberge

**Members Absent:** Ali Caley, Linda O'Leary, and Marjorie Ledell

**1. Welcome and Call to Order:** Marian Anderson opened the meeting.

**Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was unanimously approved by the commission with one correction: the Clark County Human Services Transportation meeting is scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup> instead of March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Approval of January 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** The January 16, 2018 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**2. Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AADSWA) update:** Pat Janik provided an updated on Senior Lobby Day in Olympia. The group was smaller than usual due to the weather. The group visited with legislators from Clark and Cowlitz counties. All legislators expressed support for senior issues and funding.

**3. Public Health Advisory Committee Update:** Amy Gross provided an update. She is the new liaison between the Commission on Aging and the Public Health Advisory Committee. The committee is excited to collaborate with the commission on public health topics, such as mental health issues. Commission members look forward to broadening their connection to other groups.

**4. Commission on Aging Openings:** The commission is still accepting applications for open positions.

**5. Presentation: Framing the Transportation Issues for Aging in Place**

Alan DeLaTorre, Ph.D., Portland State University Institute on Aging, kicked off the 2018 transportation series. DeLaTorre discussed issues pertaining to transportation options, safety, community planning, and emerging technology for the growing number of older residents in the community. An outline of his presentation follows:

### **Finding from 2007 Age-friendly Study**

- "One of the things I do is I give every new person [in my building] a ticket, tell them to get on the bus and ride the entire route, to see what they could do, where they could get off...it is a very convenient bus." - Older adult
- Several municipalities have latched onto the above idea to encourage residents to use their public transit.

## What is Good Transportation?

Good transportation:

- Connects people to places
- Is efficient
- Is reliable
- Is comfortable
- Is flexible
- Is affordable
- Is safe
- Is equitable

## Definition of Mobility:

- Simple definition: the ability to move or be moved freely and easily
- Complex framework: Theoretic Framework of Mobility for Older Adults (7 life-space locations).
  - This theory illustrates a connection between multiple mobility determinants related to cognitive, psychosocial, physical, environmental, financial, gender, culture, and biographical influences.
  - The theory relates these factors to the distance from where one sleeps, illustrating interconnectedness and impact of mobility at different scales, from a room, to a home, neighborhood, and the broader region.
  - The speaker hypothesizes that a modification that lets you enter or exit your home could have a large impact on an individual's life.
  - This theory is also underlying projects trying to answer questions such as what kind of wayfinding would be helpful for someone with cognitive challenges?

## Mobility Options for Older Adults

- **Auto-based System**
  - Auto-based system: Includes single- and high-occupancy vehicles, taxis, shared-economy services, etc.
  - 65+ population represents 16% of all licensed drivers (NHTSA 2012). About 14-15% of US are 65 and older.
  - Older adults are more vulnerable in motor vehicle crashes due to fragility (Kent et al. 2009).
  - Older drivers in their mid-to-late-80s have lower crash rates/mile driven than those in early 20s (AAFTS 2012). Misconception that older drivers are bad drivers. Around age of 75, start to see age and disability have an impact.
  - Cessation of driving can contribute to social isolation, depression and other health-related issues (Marottoli et al. 1997, 2000).
- **Pedestrian/Multi-use Facilities**
  - The use of pedestrian and multi-use facilities includes sidewalks, trails, bikeways, multi-use paths, etc.
  - Walking is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important travel mode for older people (approx. 9% of all trips).
  - Among older adults who do not drive, walking accounts for 1 of 4 trips; its importance increases with age.
  - Pedestrian/multi-use challenges include: lack of sidewalks or no system of connected sidewalks, unsafe intersection crossings, cyclists on the sidewalk,

obstructed sidewalks, uneven pavements, failure to remove leaves, ice, snow, weeds, and roots.

- **Public Transit**
  - Public transit includes buses, light rail, heavy rail, aerial trams, and ferries.
  - Riding public transit is older adults' 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequent mode of transportation choice (1<sup>st</sup>: autos, 2<sup>nd</sup>: walking).
  - Research has shown that in order to increase older adults' transit ridership, providers must:
    - Increase safety and security in all parts of the system
    - Provide better information both before and during travel
    - Expand the hours of service and provide additional routes
    - Make service more reliable
    - Enhance driver training
- **ADA Paratransit Services**
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit services are disability-based, demand-responsive services complementary to fixed-route services.
  - The ADA requires public transit operators receiving federal financial assistance to provide special demand-responsive services to people with serious disabilities.
  - Eligibility for ADA complementary paratransit services is based on disability and not age.
  - National data show that fewer than 8 % of older adults with disabilities report ever using these services.
  - \*Note: based on a Dec. 2016 Columbian article, the cost of fixed route vs. C-Van ride was \$5.99 vs \$44.06.
  - See CTRAN Options below for more details on CTRAN services
- **Community Transit Services**
  - Community transit services are non-governmental special demand-responsive "paratransit" services.
  - Services provided by non-transportation governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, and advocates for older adults.
  - Most providers limit their services to a small number of agency clients or affiliated riders rather than providing for the general public or older people.
  - Less than 3% of older adults with disabilities report ever using the services of community transportation providers.

### **CTRAN Options**

- **C-Van Service Area:** there are currently gaps in the C-VAN service area, as it does not serve the whole county.
- **C-TRAN Educational Programs**
  - Travel Training program is designed to help older adults and people with disabilities learn to use the fixed-route bus system. Riders can meet with a travel trainer to learn how to:
    - Plan your trip
    - Pay your fare
    - Read and understand schedules
    - Recognize bus numbers, stops and landmarks
    - Transfer to another bus or transit system

- **Travel Ambassadors program:** allows riders to give back to the community and help grow public transportation in the region by assisting C-TRAN with public outreach, community events, and helping others learn to use the fixed-route bus system.

### Transportation Issues to Consider

- **Rural & Remote Communities**
  - The demand for rural transit is substantial and growing.
  - Approx. 40% of all rural residents live in a county that offer no public transportation services.
  - The scale of the transportation challenges presented by the aging population requires a national response, given the fiscal constraints facing local communities.
  - As medical needs met, increase in recreational requests
  - 56% of Americans age 65 and older live in suburban areas
- **Suburban Communities**
  - A 2003 study found that 79% of older adults aged 65+ live in car-dependent suburban and rural communities.
  - The population of older Americans is growing now in suburban and rural areas due to the tendency to age where one already resides.
  - Aging in place in suburban communities “will exacerbate an already problematic mismatch between future demand for transportation options and existing transit services.” Higher densities allow for more transportation options.
  - Cul-de-sac: considered dangerous because of reversing that happens as people turn around. And used recreationally more than other streets.
- **Designing Communities**
  - Walkable communities reduce the risk of chronic disease and improve public health and quality of life.
  - Universal design can create inclusive environments, products, and services that are: safer, accessible, attractive, and desirable for everyone; easily repurposed; capable of reducing falls and related health-expenses; and minimal in cost in new construction.
  - Retrofitting a community is hard, universal design can help with new developments.
- **Neighborhood features play a role in healthy aging in place**
  - Walkable
  - Accessible
  - Compact
  - Safe
  - Plentiful resources
  - Healthy air
  - More details in report: [www.prb.org/Multimedia/Infographics/2017/neighborhood-features-aging](http://www.prb.org/Multimedia/Infographics/2017/neighborhood-features-aging)
- **Proximity to Services**
  - The American Planning Association has called for communities to create housing options that are affordable, accessible, close to services (including transit), and located within existing communities.
  - The metric most commonly utilized to quantify close proximity is a quarter-mile distance (0.25 mi.), as it is assumed to be adequate distance for planning for access to services by frailer individuals or people with disabilities (Maroko et al., 2009; Ulmer et al., 2003). Walk-score uses a .25 mi metric.

- **Housing + Transportation (H + T)**
  - The H+T Index sets a combined housing + transportation costs benchmark at no more than 45% of household income.
  - People in the U.S. who live in transit-friendly communities pay less for transportation (9% of household budget) compared with those in car-dependent settings (25%) (Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2010).
  - Vancouver came in at 46% of Cost % of Income. Some areas under this number, others are over.
- **Walk Score and AARP Livability Index:** two tools that provide walkability and livability scores, respectively. Scores vary across the county.
- **Complete Streets**
  - Complete streets are streets for everyone, no matter who they are or how they travel.
  - Policies ensure that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained to provide safe access for all users.
  - Complete Streets = better design for older folks driving and walking; staying active, independent, and involved in communities.
  - There were 32,367 traffic fatalities in the U.S. in 2011; of these, 22,448 were people in cars, 4,432 were people on foot, 677 were people on bicycles (NHTSA, 2014).
  - Vision 0 striving for 0 traffic fatalities
- **Safety and Driving:** Potential challenges for older drivers:
  - Stiff joints and muscles
  - Vision changes
  - Hearing changes
  - Cognitive impairment
  - Slower reaction time and reflexes
  - Medications
- **Families and Older Drivers**
  - Families must assess many issues regarding older drivers: personality, driving record, availability of transportation resources, geographic proximity, long-term family relationships.
  - How to prepare:
    - Get the facts
    - Observe the driver
    - Discuss concerns with a doctor
    - Investigate alternatives
    - Be supportive
  - A Few of the Driving Behavior Warning Signs
    - Decrease in confidence while driving.
    - Difficulty turning to see when backing up.
    - Riding the brake.
    - Easily distracted while driving.
    - Other drivers often honk horns.
    - Incorrect signaling.
    - Parking inappropriately.
    - Hitting curbs.
    - Scrapes or dents on the car, mailbox or garage.
    - Increased agitation or irritation when driving

- **Emerging Technologies**

- The interest in the technology is increasing among older adults, including phone apps, using the internet of things, and comfort with emerging technologies.
- According to Veciana-Suarez (2016), 25% of Americans aged 55+ are providers in the sharing economy; Uber reported 1 in 4 drivers are aged 50+.
- In a 2015 study (Olshevski), 70% Boomers said they would be willing to test drive an autonomous vehicle, 31% noted a willingness to purchase a self-driving car, and 38% said that if their health prevented them from driving they would consider purchasing one.

**Questions and comments from COA members with speaker's responses:**

**With our large developments (400-500 units) we are often adding a lot more cars to a transportation system not designed to handle them.** The parking issue is contentious. In areas with dense development there is a trend to provide fewer parking options to encourage transit use. This has led to push-back from existing neighborhoods. At the same time, there is a greater need for improved mobility options for older adults. These are the kind of trade-offs each municipality has to address. With autonomous vehicles, we will see different parking and vehicular flow patterns. It will become more about a waiting area/queue area instead of a parking spot.

**Maybe more parking lots to help get to transit or redevelopment of suburban areas to let autonomous vehicles move through could be helpful. Complete streets also feels like an important component as ADA is built into that system.**

**In regards to family and older drivers, I have personally experienced that and it is one of the toughest things I have had to do.** There is a Pacific Northwest nature of rugged individualism which makes stopping driving particularly difficult.

**In regards to community design, how much interplay is there between academia and developers? Are you able to impact and interface?** The academy does not always value the interface. Community members should be involved in designing their communities. The speaker has found it is better for him not to advocate, but instead for the people around table to advocate for themselves. There are public processes for community design, and challenges with getting feedback at the right time in that process. It is important to think about how to involve people.

**Are any car manufacturers testing or looking at ways to make it easier for the aging population to drive safer and get a break on their insurance if their vehicle is adapted to meet their needs?** Lane-assist technology, 360-degree cameras, accessible vans, etc. are some of the technologies currently in use. There is some promise in autonomous vehicles. It is important not to say autonomous vehicles will help older people meet their needs. Rather, there is an opportunity with a growing natural resource, connecting aging people to the rest of the community where they can contribute.

**There are areas without good, or any, access to transportation and this requires national attention. Is it getting it?** National non-profits and funders are looking at it, but not necessarily the federal agencies. Rural areas are overwhelmed with issues because of the increased likelihood of isolation and fewer services. It's hard to find neighbors to check on older people. There has been some police officer training to help them know what to look for, but overall, the speaker has not seen much movement.

The City of Vancouver has an app in which you can send in a note about areas that need repair. It seems like local government is the place to get improvements.

AARP driving course for seniors: commission member has taken the course and recommends it as a learning opportunity and to receive a reduction on your car insurance.

**Questions/Comments from the audience with speaker's responses:**

**What are your thoughts on having the government or licensing department requiring testing for older drivers?** This is an interesting challenge. Australia has a model requiring a higher frequency of screening based on medical fitness to drive, not age.

**Walkability was an important factor when looking at buying a home in Clark County. We had trouble finding walkable neighborhoods because new developments were not near or connected to services or there were no sidewalks. What are next steps to make that a requirement/part of the conversation?** *Response from commission members:* One of the reasons we are having this discussion this year is to address the county's transportation/walkability challenges. There are very few sidewalks in old neighborhoods and design issues with new neighborhoods. Planning staff, and other commissions can also receive your feedback.

**6. New Business, Updates and Announcements:** March 20: Clark County Human Services Transportation Plan Community Meeting, Public Service Center, 6<sup>th</sup> floor Hearing Room, 4:30-6:00pm.

**7. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 5:47 pm

***The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.***