



POLICY GUIDE

Improving access to public transportation

Public transportation systems reduce the need for single occupancy vehicle trips, reduce automobile emissions, increase physical activity, and provide necessary transport access for people with physical, economic or other limitations that impede access to or use of personal vehicles.¹

Opportunities to Increase Access to Public Transportation:

- » Accommodate older adults and people with disabilities.
- » Connect intercity and multimodal transportation options.
- » Increase access to rural transit.
- » Provide route maps, schedules and integrated fare systems.
- » Create bicycle carriers on public transportation.
- » Encourage complete streets strategies.
- » Create and maintain bicycle, transit and pedestrian amenities like benches, curb ramps and landscaping.

Consideration: Rural Communities

The USDA's Economic Research Service found that public transportation service exists in 60 percent of rural communities, but service is limited; about two-thirds operate in a single county or town.⁵

Consideration: Persons with Disabilities

- » Adults with disabilities are twice as likely as those without disabilities to have inadequate transportation.²
- » Almost 15 million people in the US have difficulties getting the transportation they need. Of these, about 40 percent are people with disabilities.³
- » Approximately 560,000 disabled people report that they never leave home because of transportation difficulties.³
- » 1.4 million older non-drivers rely heavily on public transportation.⁴

Turn for more »



Some Benefits of Increased Access to Public Transportation Include:

- Increased mobility and social capital for older adults and persons with disabilities.
- Expanded personal opportunities and options
- Increased revenue for communities.
- Livable communities.
- Personal savings.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "CDC Recommendations for Improving Health through Transportation Policy." Available at www.cdc.gov/transportation/docs/final-cdc-transportation-recommendations-4-28-2010.pdf.

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Promoting the Health of People with Disabilities." Available at www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/AboutDHProgram508.pdf.

3. U.S. Department of Transportation; Bureau of Transportation Statistics. "Transportation Difficulties Keep Over Half a Million Disabled at Home." Available at www.bts.gov/publications/special_reports_and_issue_briefs/issue_briefs/number_03/pdf/entire.pdf.

4. American Association of Retired Persons. "How the Travel Patterns of Older Adults Are Changing: Highlights from the 2009 National Household Travel Survey." Available at www.aarp.org/home-garden/transportation/info-04-2011/fs218-transportation.html.

5. Brown, DM. "Public Transportation on the Move in Rural America." 2008. Available at www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/publictrans.htm.

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