
**Alternate Transportation for Seniors: A Review of the Literature,
Survey of Service Providers in Edmonton and Surrounding Area, and
Development of an On-Line, Searchable Resource**

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Mobility is central to independence, quality of life, and well-being. Although the majority of seniors meet their transportation needs primarily through reliance on a private automobile, a significant percentage of the older population depends on alternate transportation. Transportation for seniors has been identified as an unmet need by many jurisdictions in North America, and Edmonton is no exception. The current study was commissioned by the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council and conducted in response to two *Roundtables on Seniors Transportation* held in Edmonton in 2006 and 2007. The Roundtables brought together representatives from senior centres, senior's groups and organizations, service providers, senior-serving agencies, the health sector, public transportation, the Alberta Motor Association, city and provincial government departments, the University of Alberta, and others.

Key objectives of this project were to: 1) conduct a literature review on *models* of alternate transportation provision for seniors nationally and internationally; 2) survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation provision, and 3) assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

Results

A summary of the results, by objective, is presented below.

Objective 1: To conduct a literature review on models of alternate transportation service provision for seniors nationally and internationally.

Despite the well recognized demand for alternate transportation for seniors, there is a paucity of research in the area, with an even greater paucity of literature on models of alternate transportation service provision. Two primary sources of information on models of alternate transportation service provision for seniors identified were from the Beverly Foundation and ITNAmerica®. Five factors identified as critical to transportation for seniors are availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability. These five factors, which have become known as 'the five A's of senior-friendly transportation' (The Beverly Foundation, 2001), serve as a useful and standardized heuristic for measuring the responsiveness of alternate transportation for seniors within and across jurisdictions.

Objective 2: To survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation service provision.

Thirty-three community-based, alternate transportation service providers for seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities were identified and interviewed, using a standardized questionnaire. From the interviews, it was evident that the service providers are dedicated and often work tirelessly to provide alternate transportation services to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities. They also play an important role in advocating for and championing the need for improvements in alternate transportation for seniors. However, despite the commitment, dedication, and efforts of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities, the demand is much higher than available resources, resulting in unmet needs in this area.

For an overwhelming number of respondents, funding is an almost constant concern and the recruitment of volunteer drivers is a growing concern. Many service providers indicated that they would like to reach out to more seniors by expanding their service area, adding evening and weekend service, adding vehicles to increase the quality of their service, providing better training for their volunteers in addressing seniors' concerns and issues, running more client-responsive routes, conducting more vehicle inspections, decreasing client wait times, and opening up lines of communication with community stakeholders. However, the overwhelming majority are constrained from doing so by their preoccupation with funding.

Due to limitations imposed by the shortage of funding and the difficulty of recruiting more volunteers, scores on measures of availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability and affordability (e.g., the 5 A's of Seniors Transportation) for Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers were relatively low. The average scores, out of a possible 25 points as measured by a Senior Friendliness Calculator developed by the U.S. based Beverly Foundation, were 11.48 and 10.13 for Edmonton service providers and Area Municipality service providers, respectively.

In addition to the traditional non-for-profit model of alternate transportation service for seniors, a new model of service provision in this area is the not-for-profit social entrepreneurship model. The Independent Transportation Network (ITNAmerica®) is based on this model. In 2007, Katherine Freund, the founder of the Independent Transportation Network (ITNAmerica®), attended the Edmonton Senior Coordinating Council's Transportation Roundtable and presented information about her not-for-profit social entrepreneurial model. The presentation

was enthusiastically received by Roundtable participants as a potential addition to the range of services in Edmonton and area that are attempting to address the ever increasing needs of seniors. Measured by the Senior Friendliness Calculator, two ITNAmerica® affiliates in the U.S. (there are no affiliates as yet in Canada) averaged a score of 23 out of 25.

Results from our survey of Edmonton and Area Municipalities indicate that there are many challenges to meeting the transportation needs of seniors today. These challenges, combined with the projected increases in demand in the near future, suggest that current models of alternate transportation lack the capacity and sustainability to meet current and future transportation needs of the senior population in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.

Objective 3: To assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

To begin to better address the transportation needs of seniors, and to streamline the process by which they can access transportation services, the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council has used the results from this survey as the basis for developing an on-line searchable database. The goal of the online searchable database is to provide seniors (or their caregivers) with a resource that allows a search for service providers, using specific ride requirements, that are most closely aligned with their needs. Seniors can access the database by going to <http://www.seniorscouncil.net> and clicking on Find a ride.

This resource is merely a step in the evolving process of supporting existing service providers by encouraging them to address their issues and concerns co-operatively and collaboratively. A Seniors Transportation Steering Committee has been established in Edmonton to assist service providers in examining issues, to support their efforts to bring about solutions, and to look for ways to deal with gaps by both strengthening existing services and augmenting them with additional services. Both are seen as key initiatives in addressing the unmet alternate transportation needs of an ever increasing number of seniors in Edmonton and area.

Summary of the Results of the Survey

An Identified Need:

- Due to the ageing of the baby boomers, the senior population is the fastest growing segment of our society.
- The percentage of seniors in Alberta is projected to double by 2026, from a base rate of 10% of the population in 2000 to 20% by 2026.
- The absolute number of seniors in Alberta will more than double in that same time period, from 302,500 (2000) to more than 720,000 (2026).
- Within the *senior* population itself, the fastest growing segment consists of those who are 85 years of age and older.
- Mobility is essential for meeting one's basic needs and is an important contributor to higher order needs of quality of life and well-being.
- In general, the 85+ segment of the older population has greater needs for social supports and health care than do younger seniors but is least likely to drive.
- Both public transit and taxis are used infrequently by the older population even when they lack other options.
- Transportation for seniors has been identified as an unmet need by many jurisdictions in North America, and Edmonton is no exception.
- The aging of the population and the need for alternate forms of transportation underscore the need for alternate transportation that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of the senior population.

Objectives of this Project:

The three key objectives of this project were:

- To conduct a literature review on *models* of alternate transportation provision for seniors nationally and internationally.
- To survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation provision.
- To assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

The Results:

Objective 1: To conduct a literature review on models of alternate transportation service provision for seniors nationally and internationally.

Despite the well recognized demand for alternate transportation for seniors, there is a paucity of research in the area.

- Literature on models of alternate transportation service provision is scarce.
- The lack of an organizational framework, as well as an absence of operational definitions for commonly used terms, makes comparisons of service providers in this area difficult.
- Four supplemental service provision models have been identified by the Beverly Foundation (Pasadena, California): sole-service providers; multi-service providers; contract programs; and coordinating programs. The vast majority of service providers within each of these models are based on the not-for-profit approach.
- Many alternate service providers in North America are providing transportation to seniors based on one of these models, with strengths and limitations to each.
- A new model of alternate transportation service provision, ITNAmerica®, is based on an entrepreneurial approach that “makes efficient and effective use of public sector resources, and leverages those resources through collaboration with the private and nonprofit sectors”.
 - ITNPortland®, operational since June of 1995¹, has approximately 850 members and provides approximately 16,000 rides per year (Freund, personal communication).
- Unlike most other models of alternate transportation service provision for seniors, the ITNAmerica® model is not dependent on government funding for sustainability.
- 5 A's of alternate seniors transportation have been identified: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability (The Beverly Foundation, 2001).
- The 5 A's of alternate seniors transportation provide a standardized heuristic for measuring alternate transportation for seniors within and across jurisdictions.

Objective 2: To survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation service provision.

- Thirty-three alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities were identified and administered a standardized questionnaire;

¹ The population of greater Portland, Maine is 230,000: the population of the city is 64,000 [<http://www.ci.portland.me.us/>] (2009 Statistics).

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- 18 of the 33 alternate transportation service providers are based in Edmonton; 15 in Area Municipalities;
 - 25 of the 33 alternate transportation service providers are located in an urban area (located in centres with a population of 10,000 or greater), with the remaining eight located in a rural area (located in centres with a population less than 10,000);
 - 30 of the 33 alternate transportation service providers are not-for-profit organizations. The remaining three are for-profit.
 - The average number of years in operation, overall, is 14.69 years with a range of 1 to 34 years.
 - The average number of clients served, overall, is 93.52, with a range of 1 to 350.
 - Only four organizations are serving 100 or more clients.
 - Based on self-report, Edmonton and Area service providers collectively provide approximately 4,383 rides per year.
 - Differences exist between not-for-profit and for-profit service providers in Edmonton and area across the 5 A's of alternate transportation for seniors.
 - The number of clients served by not-for profit organizations on average is 96, with an average of 74 for the for-profit organizations.
 - For-profit alternate transportation providers are able to provide more responsive transportation service (greater availability, acceptability, accessibility, and adaptability), but costs of that service may be beyond the reach of many seniors.
 - The majority of not-for-profit service providers rely on government funding for their operations, with funding a constant concern for service providers.
 - For the not-for-profit service providers, lack of funding, understaffing, and reliance on volunteer drivers are major barriers to meeting the current demands for alternate transportation for seniors in Edmonton and area.
 - Based on current levels of service provision (33 organizations serving an average of 94 clients), approximately 3,100 seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities have access to 'formalized' alternate transportation service provision.
 - Extrapolating from the data, based on 2006 census data and on a conservative estimate of the current population of seniors in Edmonton and area in need of alternate transportation service provision, there are an estimated 9,200 seniors with unmet transportation needs.

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- To meet current demands, using existing models of transportation service provision would require a three fold increase in service providers (from 33 to 99), with a six fold increase in service providers (from 33 to 198) needed to meet the projected increases in the senior population over the next two decades.
 - With current models, this means all of the resources of the current service providers would need to be expanded from the current 33 to the future 198 providers. Some of the resources are monetary, but many are not (e.g., volunteers).
 - Differences also exist between urban and rural transportation service providers in Edmonton and area across the 5 A's of alternate transportation for seniors.
 - The number of clients served by alternate transportation service providers in urban areas ($\geq 10,000$ population) is four times greater than providers in rural areas ($< 10,000$ population).
 - Alternate transportation in rural areas, when available, is generally more responsive in terms of availability for day and night time rides and weekday and weekend rides, but is more limited in routing (fixed only vs. client demand).
 - The availability of alternate transportation for medical needs is significantly lower in rural areas compared to urban areas. On the other hand, provision of alternate transportation is greater for social and religious transportation needs in rural areas compared to urban areas.
 - When available, alternate transportation for seniors in rural areas is similar or exceeds that of its urban counterparts in terms of some aspects of acceptability (advance scheduling, no wait lists) and affordability.
 - Service providers in rural areas, however, appear limited in their ability to provide acceptable (driver training on seniors issues), accessible (door-through-door), and adaptable (multiple stops, escorted services) alternate transportation service for seniors.
 - There were statistically significant differences in 'Senior Friendliness Scores' for alternate transportation provision for seniors between Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers and service providers using the ITNAmerica model of alternate transportation.
 - The average 'Senior Friendliness Score' for Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers was 11.15 (out of a possible 25), with an average score of 23 out of 25 for ITNAmerica service providers.

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- The average 'Senior Friendliness Score' for Edmonton and Area Municipality Not-for-Profit and For-Profit service providers was 11.07 and 12.00, respectively, with an average score of 23 for ITNAmerica service providers.
 - The average 'Senior Friendliness Score' for Edmonton, Edmonton Area Municipality, and ITNAmerica providers was 10.78, 11.60, and 23, respectively.
 - The average 'Senior Friendliness Score' for urban, rural, and ITNAmerica service providers was 11.48, 10.13, and 12.00, respectively.
 - In summary,
 - There are significant number of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.
 - It is evident that those service providers are dedicated and often work tirelessly to provide alternate transportation services to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.
 - It also is evident that Edmonton and Area Municipalities play an important role in advocating for and championing the need for improvements in alternate transportation for seniors.
 - Despite the commitment, dedication, and efforts of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities, the demand is much higher than available resources, resulting in unmet needs in this area.
 - Common barriers to responsive alternate service provision service include lack of funding, understaffing, and a heavy reliance on volunteer drivers, barriers that are unlikely to change within the current models of alternate transportation service provision.
 - Identified areas by service providers for improvement in service included enhanced communication and collaboration among service providers to meet unmet transportation needs.
 - The challenges of meeting the transportation needs of seniors today, combined with the projected increases in demand in the near future, suggest that current models of alternate transportation lack the capacity and sustainability to meet current and future transportation needs of the senior population in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.

Objective 3: To assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

- An online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors was identified as an important modality that could potentially result in the enhancement of service provision.
- The goal of the online searchable database is to allow seniors (or their caregivers) to search for service providers, using specific ride requirements, that most closely fit their needs.
- Seniors can access the database by going to <http://www.seniorscouncil.net> and clicking on Find a ride.

I. INTRODUCTION

Transportation for seniors has been identified as an unmet need in many jurisdictions in North America (FitzSimons, Reid, & Fraser, 1987; United States Government Accountability Office, 2004), and Edmonton is no exception. In the city of Edmonton, transportation has been identified as a key service for seniors for well over two decades (Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, 2007). The majority of seniors in Canada, as in other developed countries, meet their transportation needs primarily through reliance on a private automobile. However, although the majority of seniors drive, a significant percentage of the older population depends on alternate transportation. Notably, research indicates that both public transit and taxis are used infrequently by the older population even when they lack other options (Harris Interactive, 2005; National Advisory Council on Aging, 2006). Reasons for the underutilization of public transportation are many and include individual (cost, physical/mental impairments), system (accessibility, scheduling, infrequent service, concerns about personal security), and environmental (waits in bad weather) barriers.

The senior population is one of the fastest growing segments of our society (Statistics Canada, 2007), due in large part to the aging of the baby boomer population. As the baby boomers move through their senior years over the next two to three decades, the number and percentage of seniors in Alberta will continue to increase. As shown in Figure 1, the percentage of seniors in Alberta is projected to double, from a base rate of 10% of the population in 2000 to 20% by 2026. In the same time period, the absolute number of seniors in this province will more than double from 302,500 (2000) to more than 720,000 (2026).

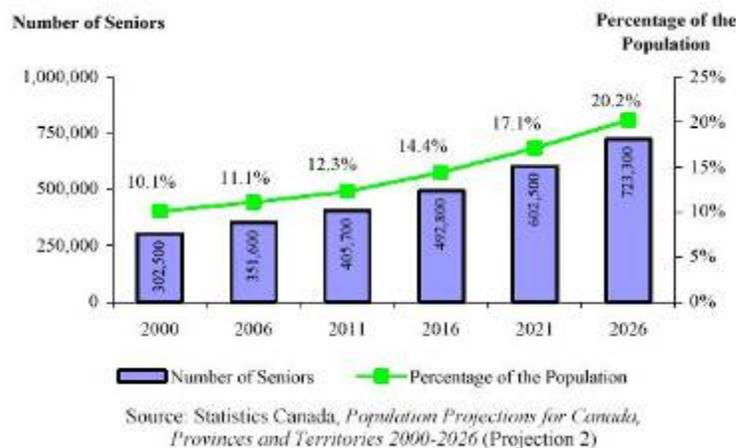


Figure 1. Projected population (projection 2) by age group (65+ years) for Alberta (2000-2026).

Within the *senior* population itself, those who are 85 years of age and older represent the fastest growing segment (Statistics Canada, 2007). This segment of the population, in general, has greater needs for social supports and health care than do younger seniors (City of Edmonton Community Services, 2006), but are least likely to drive (Bess, 1999). The aging of our population, combined with the awareness of the unmet transportation needs of seniors, was the impetus for two Roundtables on Seniors Transportation in Edmonton (Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council and Alberta Motor Association, 2007; 2006). A consistent theme from those Roundtables was the need to address the unmet transportation needs of seniors in Edmonton and surrounding area.

Recently, based in part on feedback from the 2007 Roundtable, the Edmonton Seniors Transportation Steering Committee (2007) recommended that material on seniors transportation be collected and synthesized, and that a central clearinghouse of information on seniors' transportation in Edmonton and Area be developed to foster collaboration and coordination of "information, joint planning, and design" of alternate service provision to seniors (Edmonton Seniors Transportation Steering Committee Recommendations Report, July, 2007, p. 5). The current project was designed, in part, to address those recommendations.

II. PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

There were three primary objectives of this project:

1. To conduct a literature review on *models* of alternate transportation provision for seniors nationally and internationally.
2. To survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation service provision.
3. To assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

A. Objective 1: To conduct a literature review on *models* of alternate transportation provision for seniors nationally and internationally.

i. Purpose

The need to gather existing research/best practices on seniors' transportation was one of the seven priorities identified in the Edmonton Seniors Transportation Steering Committee Recommendations Report (Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, 2007). The review of the literature on models of alternate transportation service provision to seniors addresses that priority. Note that in this report, the focus is on alternate transportation provided by community based agencies outside of the public transportation system. As indicated in previous literature, there are three broad modalities of alternate transportation. These involve public transit systems (e.g., buses, taxi service), community-based systems (e.g., non-profit alternate transportation providers), and informal systems (e.g., family or friends) (Howard County Commission on Aging, 2008). For the purpose of this report, public transit systems and informal modes of alternate transportation will not be discussed. Thus, the focus of the report is on pre-existing models of alternate transportation provided by community based programs or systems.

ii. Methods

In an effort to better understand the different community-based models of alternate transportation for seniors, a comprehensive review of the literature was conducted. Initially, a search of the scientific literature was completed, with the following databases searched: PsycINFO, MEDLINE, Ageline, Scopus, and TRIS. Keywords, and combinations thereof, included seniors, elderly, transportation, alternate transportation, transportation options, transportation service providers, service providers, models, mobility, aging drivers, and seniors resources. Second, a search of the grey literature (e.g., government/municipal reports, reports from community based organizations, newspaper articles) was completed, followed by a search of the World Wide Web. This search included, but was not limited to, an examination of known organizations providing senior's transportation locally, nationally, and internationally. In all instances, the focus was on reviewing the literature on *models* of alternate transportation service provision to seniors.

In our review of the literature, it quickly became apparent that many of the commonly used terms (e.g., alternate transportation, senior's transportation, availability,

accessibility, door-to-door service, etc.), although prevalent, often were not operationally defined. To promote a consistent understanding and to assist in the development of a framework for classification of community based seniors' alternate transportation providers, we compiled and/or developed basic operational definitions of common terms used in this area. A listing of the terms is provided in Appendix A and includes terms related to types of transportation available (e.g., alternate transportation, disabled transportation, public transportation [Table A-1]); characteristics of service provision (e.g., accessible, available [Table A-2]); and types of funding (e.g., for-profit, not-for-profit [Table A-3]). A 'Miscellaneous' category also was created to capture terms falling outside of the three primary categories identified above (Table A-4).

iii. Results

A total of 58 articles/reports were retrieved as a result of the searches described above. Specifically, 43 articles/reports were retrieved from the search of the scientific databases and 15 from the grey literature. The majority of articles/reports had as the focus 'senior's transportation' in general. Results from our review of the literature indicated that few, if any, articles appeared on *models* of existing transportation service provision for seniors. Those that are available emanate primarily from the work of the Beverly Foundation² (The Beverly Foundation, 2001; 2005) and from ITNAmerica®, a model of alternative transportation for seniors with its origins in Portland, Maine (Freund, 2008). Those models are described below.

The Beverly Foundation has as its focus "grassroots and community-based informal transportation services for seniors" (The Beverly Foundation, 2001, p. 5). Based on results from a national survey of supplemental transportation programs in the United States, The Beverly Foundation (2001) identified four supplemental transportation program service models:

1. Sole-service programs – provide only transportation;
2. Multi-service programs – provide a menu of services, including transportation;
3. Contract programs – contract with outside service providers; and
4. Coordinating programs – coordinate transportation for several organizations.

² The Beverly Foundation headquarters are, as of January 2009, located in New Mexico.

As noted in the results of their survey of 236 respondents associated with supplemental transportation programs for seniors across the United States of America, the vast majority of programs are based on the not-for-profit approach, with only 2% of the providers categorized as for-profit.

Unlike the majority of alternate transportation service providers for seniors which are based on the not-for-profit approach, the *ITNAmerica*® model of senior's transportation is based on a social entrepreneurial approach in that it "makes efficient and effective use of public sector resources, and leverages those resources through collaboration with the private and nonprofit sectors" (Wolk, 2008, p. 1). Within the *ITNAmerica* model, members open Personal Transportation Accounts®, into "which resources flow from many sources and many forms, and from which resources are debited to pay for rides (Freund, 2008, p. 13). An *ITNAmerica* affiliate (e.g., *ITNOrlando*®, *ITNSan Diego*®) is connected to the parent organization (*ITNAmerica*®) and to other affiliates, and each affiliate operates within the social entrepreneurial model. *ITNPortland*®, the 'home' affiliate is located in Portland, Maine. The population of greater Portland is 230,000 (2009 statistics), with a population of 64,000 for the city itself. *ITNPortland*, operational since June of 1995, has approximately 850 members and provides approximately 16,000 rides per year (Freund, personal communication).

As is evident from the discussion above, source of funding is central to the discussion of alternate transportation for seniors. As noted by Rippon (2002), the feature that "best differentiates non-profit organizations from each other, as well as from profit-making organisations, is their source of income" (p. 2-29). To promote a common understanding of the funding orientations, formal definitions of the different approaches are provided below (see also Appendix A, Table A-3).

1. For-Profit Approach

The for-profit approach depends on revenue generated from the sale of goods and services to customers or clients. The source of income typically is from a customer who purchases and utilizes the product/service, and pays for the product/service upon receipt. With the for-profit approach, the organization most often receives revenue after or on completion of providing a product/service for the customer or client (Rippon, 2002). Within the for-profit approach, there are 1) public-for-profit organizations (e.g., privatization

of governmental organizations); 2) private-for-profit organizations (e.g., businesses dependent on the market economy for generating revenue); and 3) private quasi-public organizations (e.g., public utilities) (Rippon, 2002).

2. Not-For-Profit Approach

The not-for-profit approach is an approach where revenue is generated from a variety of sources including funding from government, philanthropic organizations, and/or membership fees or donations from membership or sponsorship. Not-for-profit organizations typically receive revenues in advance and only later offer benefits to its membership. In some circumstances (e.g., donors), the donor often is not the recipient of the benefit (Rippon, 2002).

3. Mixture of the For-Profit and the Not-for-Profit Approach (The Social Entrepreneurial Approach)

In addition to the two approaches identified above, a mixture of the two approaches can be used to deliver alternative transportation to seniors. An example of this mixture is the social entrepreneurial approach. The social entrepreneurial approach “makes efficient and effective use of public sector resources, and leverage[s] those resources through collaboration with the private and nonprofit sectors” (Wolk, 2008, p. 1).

Three core characteristics of the social entrepreneurial approach are:

- Social Innovation - finding, testing, and honing new and potentially transformative ways of approaching social problems;
- Accountability - measuring results, continuously making improvements based on those results, and sharing performance and outcome data with stakeholders; and
- Sustainability - identifying reliable financial and other types of support by utilizing markets, forming partnerships across sectors, and responding to stakeholder needs to ensure that the solution will be enduring (Wolk, 2008).

iv. Discussion

Despite the well-recognized demand for alternate transportation for seniors, there is, overall, a paucity of literature in this area. Notably, there is a scarcity of literature on different models of alternate service provision to seniors. The two primary sources of information on service model provision are the Beverly Foundation (2001; 2005) and ITNAmerica® (Freund, 2008).

The focus of the work by the Beverly Foundation has resulted in the identification of four supplemental transportation program service models. Two of those models are based on the organization's specificity for service provision (e.g., Sole-service programs that provide transportation services only and Multi-service programs where transportation is but one item on the 'menu' of services). The third model in the Beverly Foundation framework is based on contractual orientation. This model distinguishes between programs that contract with outside service providers versus those that do not. The fourth model is orientated to coordination of services (e.g., distinguishing between programs that coordinate transportation for several organizations versus those that coordinate transportation services for their own organization). The majority of the programs are categorized as not-for-profit. Although the different orientations of the models identified by the Beverly Foundation are appreciated, the variability in the categorization structure makes comparisons of organizations within this conceptualization difficult. For example, there may be two organizations that are sole-service providers but the two organizations differ in orientation of coordination of services.

Unlike the majority of service providers in this area that rely on a 'not-for-profit approach' for service provision, the ITNAmerica® model is a unique model that relies on the social entrepreneurial approach. In this model, "small amounts of public resources are used to create incentives for public solutions" (Freund, 2008, p. 15). That is, "public resources may be used to seed a start up, and the training, technology, marketing, and communications support necessary for long term sustainability resides with ITNAmerica® in the non-profit sector" (Freund, 2008, pp. 15-16).

To assist in the categorization of organizations in Edmonton and Area providing alternate transportation to seniors, we developed a classification system for categorization of organizations based on a single attribute (e.g., source of funding).

Using this template, organizations providing alternate transportation for seniors can be classified uniquely, based on the organizations *primary* source of funding. The template, although simple, is a valuable tool for categorizing the diverse operating protocol of a vast number of providers. It also can be used to identify strengths, as well as deficiencies, in alternate service provision to seniors in communities.

B. Objective 2. To survey Edmonton and Area alternate transportation for seniors service providers to identify strengths and gaps in alternate transportation service provision.

i. Purpose

Currently, a number of organizations in Edmonton and Area provide alternate transportation to seniors. However, awareness of the nature and extent of that service provision within and across service providers is fragmented. The purpose of this phase of the project was to address that deficiency by conducting a comprehensive survey of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area, with the additional goal of identifying strengths and gaps in this area. The Beverly Foundation's (2001; 2005) 5 A's of Seniors Transportation served as the conceptual framework for the structured questionnaire (see below).

The information from respondents was used to address the following research questions:

1. What is the current status of alternate transportation service provision to seniors in Edmonton and Area in terms of:
 - a. Number and characteristics of organizations providing this service?
 - b. Is the service that is being provided, overall,
 - i. Available (Services are offered that are available when needed)?
 - ii. Acceptable (Services are satisfactory in terms of scheduling, wait times, vehicle cleanliness, sensitivity to seniors)?
 - iii. Accessible (Services are those that seniors can access because they offer supportive assistance such as door-through-door service; providing rides to where seniors want to go)?
 - iv. Adaptable (Services that can be adapted to seniors needs including scheduling of multiple stops; assistance with wheelchairs)?
 - v. Affordable (Services that are affordable for seniors and for the program)?³

³ See Beverly Foundation (2001; 2005) for a full description of the 5 A's of Seniors Transportation.

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2. Are there differences in alternate transportation service provision to seniors as a function of *funding source of service provider* (not-for-profit vs. for-profit)?
 3. Are there differences in alternate transportation service provision to seniors as a function of *location of service provider* (Urban vs. Rural)?
 4. Are there differences between alternate service provision to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities and other jurisdictions?
 5. How can alternate service provision be improved?
 6. Are Edmonton and Area Municipality alternate service providers aware of other service providers in their community?
 7. What do Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers perceive as the mobility challenges faced by seniors?
 8. Do Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers have suggestions to improve seniors' transportation services in the community?

ii. Methods

Selection of Sample

Our target sample consisted of community based, alternate transportation service providers for seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities. Area Municipalities were defined as those municipalities formally identified by the province in its regionalization plan (Regionalization in Edmonton and Surrounding Municipalities, 2007). A key list of service providers was initially developed with the assistance of the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, with expansion of the list occurring as a result of consultation with stakeholders during the data collection process. To facilitate the process, a database was developed with the name of the organization, address, and contact information (e.g., phone, fax, email, and website). The sole inclusion criterion was that the organization conducted its alternate transportation operation within the City of Edmonton and/or Area Municipalities.

Structured Questionnaire

Based on a review of the literature and an understanding of common issues related to alternate senior transportation provision, a structured questionnaire was developed by the research team (see Appendix B) to be administered in person or over the telephone. The questionnaire contains ten sections, with the first few sections devoted to basic demographic information about the organization, as well as its funding

orientation and general operating hours and protocols. For the next sections, the focus was on availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability of alternate transportation service providers as operationally defined in the results section under Objective 1. The second to last section was devoted to protocols related to drivers, details about vehicle fleet, and how the organization conducts its marketing. The focus in the final section was on perceived limitations of transportation service provision from both an organizational and community perspective.

Prior to administration to our identified sample, the questionnaire was piloted for clarity and ease of administration, with revisions made based on those results. Prior to data collection, the project received approval from the Health Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta.

Survey Protocol

Identified service providers were contacted by telephone and were informed about the purpose of the project. During the initial telephone screen, the organization representative verbally confirmed that her/his organization provided an alternate transportation option for seniors. They then were invited to participate through the completion of the structured questionnaire, with the option of conducting the interview in person or over the telephone at a time convenient to the interviewee.

iii. Results

Sample and Sample Characteristics

A total of 72 different individuals or organizations were identified as potential service providers and/or being knowledgeable about seniors' alternate transportation. Fifty-four percent (n = 39) of those contacted either did not meet study criterion (e.g., did not provide an alternate transportation service to seniors) or had participated in the capacity of a resource for identifying potential service providers and, as such, were not targeted as potential survey participants.

A total of 33 of organizations met the inclusionary criteria and were interviewed (see Appendix C). Sixteen (48.5%) of the interviews were conducted in person, 16 (48.5%) over the telephone, and one (3%) was submitted via email. Most service providers in the City of Edmonton preferred face-to-face interviews, often citing advanced age or difficulty in hearing over the phone as the reason. All Area Municipality interviews were

conducted over the telephone. Of the 33 total respondents, the majority (n = 27; 82%) were female

Results Related to Research Question 1

1. What is the current status of alternate transportation service provision to seniors in Edmonton and Area in terms of:

a. Number and characteristics of organizations providing this service?

An overview of the number and the characteristics of organizations providing transportation to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities are provided in Table 1.

Number and Location of Organization

Of the 33 organizations providing service, 55% (n = 18) were located in Edmonton, with the remaining (45%; n = 15) located in Area Municipalities. The majority (73%) of service providers were located in a city (population of 10,000 or greater), with 24% located in a town (population of 1000 to 9999). Only one organization (13%) was located in a village (population of < 1000). The average number of years in operation, overall, was close to 15 years, with a range of one to 34 years. The average number of years in operation based on rural/urban location was similar, with an average of 14.38 years (range 1-22) for rural service providers and 14.79 years (range 1 - 34) for urban service providers. That difference was not statistically significant ($p > .10$). Two-thirds of the organizations had a website. Seventy-two percent of Edmonton alternate transportation providers have a website while 60% of Area Municipality transportation providers have a website. Importantly, the website was not strictly devoted to transportation services provided but rather provided information on the organization in general.

Location of Clients

Slightly less than one-quarter (24%) of the service providers indicated that their clients resided in a rural area (defined as residing in a community with a population less than 10,000), with the majority (73%) indicating that their clients resided in an urban area (defined as residing in a community with a population of 10,000 or greater). One organization (3%) provided service to a clients residing in both urban and rural areas.

The average number of clients overall (e.g., average number of client served for the sample as a whole) was almost 100 (Average = 94, SD = 108.74), with a range of one to 350. Almost one-half of the organizations (45%) were serving fewer than 50 clients. One-third of the organizations (33%) had between 50 and 99 clients. Only four organizations (12%) were currently serving 100 or more clients. Four of the respondents were unaware of the number of clients currently served.

Not surprisingly, there were significant differences in the average number of clients served between rural and urban areas. The average number for rural areas was approximately 20, with approximately four times that number for urban service providers (average = 121), a difference that was statistically significant ($p < .05$). Based on self-report and extrapolating from the information provided by respondents, Edmonton and Area service providers collectively provide approximately 4,383 rides to seniors per year.

Regions Served

Of the eighteen Edmonton based organizations, 33% served the entire city. Further, 33% served Central Edmonton, 17% served North Edmonton, 11% served South Edmonton, and the remaining 5% served West Edmonton. All Area Municipalities served clients in their respective jurisdictions, with almost half (47%) also providing trips into Edmonton.

Funding of Organization

The majority ($n = 30$; 91%) of organizations providing alternate transportation service to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities can be categorized as not-for-profit organizations, with the remaining ($n = 3$; 9%) categorized as private-for-profit organizations (see Appendix A for definitions). Of the not-for-profit organizations, 10% rely solely on government funding, with the remainder ($n = 90$ %) relying on government funding supplemented by user fees. None of the organizations is based on the social entrepreneurial model as described previously.

Table 1. Demographics of Organizations Providing Alternate Transportation to Seniors

Demographic	Results (n / %)⁴
Number of Organizations	33
Location of Organization	
Edmonton	n = 18 (55%)
Area Municipalities	n = 15 (45%)
Location of Organization (By Population)	
Village (< 1000 pop)	n = 1 (13%)
Town (1000-9999 pop)	n = 8 (24%)
City (≥ 10,000 pop)	n = 24 (73%)
Location of Organization (Rural/Urban)	
Rural (< 10,000 pop)	n = 8 (24%)
Urban (≥ 10,000 pop)	n = 25 (76%)
Average Years in Operation (Overall)	14.69 years (SD = 9.69)
Average Years in Operation (Rural/Urban)	
Rural Area (< 10,000 pop)	14.38 years (SD = 10.40)
Urban Area (≥ 10,000 pop)	14.79 years (SD = 9.69)
Has a Website	n = 22 (67%)
Area Municipalities	n = 9 (60%)
Edmonton	n = 13 (72%)
Location of Clients	
Rural Area (< 10,000 pop)	n = 8 (24%)
Urban Area (≥ 10,000 pop)	n = 24 (73%)
Mix of Urban and Rural	n = 1 (3%)
Average # of Clients Overall	93.52 (SD = 108.74)
# of Clients	
< 50	n = 15 (45%)
50-99	n = 3 (9%)
100 or more	n = 11 (33%)
Didn't know	n = 4 (12%)
Average # of Clients by Location	
Rural Area (< 10,000 pop)	20.38 (SD = 13.15)
Urban Area (≥ 10,000 pop)	121.38 (SD = 116.36)
Regions Served by Service Providers	
<i>Edmonton Only Providers (n = 18)⁵</i>	
All of Edmonton	n = 6 (33%)
Central Edmonton Only	n = 6 (33%)
North Edmonton Only	n = 3 (17%)
South Edmonton Only	n = 2 (11%)
West Edmonton Only	n = 1 (5%)
<i>Area Municipalities (n = 15)</i>	
Providing trips into Edmonton	n = 7 (47%)
Organizational Funding	
Not-for Profit	n = 30 (91%)
For-Profit	n = 3 (9%)
Type of Not-For-Profit Funding	
Government Funding (GF) Only	n = 3 (10%)
GF Supplemented by User Fees	n = 27 (90%)

⁴ Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

⁵ Percentages for Edmonton Only providers are calculated based on a sample of 18, and the percentage of Area Municipality providers is based on a sample of 15.

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- b. Is the service that is being provided, overall, available, acceptable, accessible, adaptable, and affordable?

Information from all 33 of the organizations was examined in terms of availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability of the alternate transportation providers. The results are provided in Table 2, and the pattern of findings is summarized below.

Availability of Services

- Slightly less than two-thirds (61%) of the organizations provide alternate transportation services during the daytime only, with slightly more than one-third (39%) providing both daytime and night time alternate transportation.
- No service provider provided night time trips only. Daytime transportation was defined as transportation provided between 0700 hours and 1900 hours, with night time transportation as that provided after 1900 hours.
- Approximately two-thirds (64%) of the providers provide rides on weekdays only, with approximately one-third (36%) of the providers indicating that rides are available on both weekdays and weekends.
- When asked about whether rides were provided on a fixed-route or based on client-response routes, respondents indicated that less than one-third (30%) provide rides on fixed-routes and more than two-thirds (70%) of organizations provide rides on client-response routes. No organizations provided both fixed-route and client-response routes.
- The majority (82%) of organizations indicated that there were jurisdictional limits for service provision (e.g., service not provided outside of city limits).
- Finally, when asked about the type of transportation provided, the majority (88%) of respondents indicated that their services could be used for essential transportation (e.g., banking, groceries), 85% for medical transportation (e.g., doctor's appointments, lab tests), 76% for social transportation (bingos, movies), and less than half (49%) for transportation to religious events. These numbers total more than 100% due to a number of service providers offering service for two or more reasons.

Acceptability of Services

- Service providers were asked how much advance notice was required for scheduling rides. Very few (21%) of the service providers provided 'on the

spot' transportation, with only 15% providing transportation without a reservation and only 6% providing same day service. The majority required at least 24 hours notice or more, with almost half (42%) requiring 24 hour notice, 21% requiring 48 hour notice, and 15% requiring more than 48 hour notice.

- The number of organizations that maintained a wait list for services was low (18%). However, the low percentage is deceiving in that many of the respondents indicated that they were “afraid to advertise their service because they could not meet their current demand”.
- Of the six organizations that responded affirmatively to having a wait list, one indicated that there was no one on the wait list. The average number of people on a wait list for the remaining five organizations was 82 (SD = 177.56, Range of 5 to 400).
- Service providers were asked about training for drivers and less than half (42%) indicated that their organization did provide training. Of those that provided training, 50% provided training related to mental health issues, 50% provided training on disability issues, 57% provided CPR training, 43% provided training to their drivers related to aging or seniors issues, and 43% provided training related to other concerns (e.g., organization-specific protocol and conduct, etc).

Accessibility of Services

- Of the service providers surveyed, 12% offered curb-to-curb service, 27% offer door-to-door service, and the majority (55%) offer door-through-door service (see Table A-2, Appendix A).
- Some service providers did not offer any of the above services. This small percentage (6%) offered service from a centralized, previously agreed upon location (e.g., local seniors centre).

Adaptability of Services

- To determine the adaptability of the service provided, respondents were asked to indicate what types of services they offered. The majority of respondents offered a variety of services including single passenger service (85%) as well as group passenger service (82%) (data not shown in table).

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- Slightly more than three-quarters (76%) allowed trip chaining (multiple stops), and almost one-half (48%) provided service for the disabled (e.g., assistance with wheelchairs) and 42% allowed for escorted services.

Affordability of Services

- Affordability of service provision was examined in terms of membership, rider, and parking fees, as well as waiting charges and the availability of coupons. Only one-third (33%) charged membership fees, with almost three-quarters (73%) of the fees mandatory. For the remaining (27%), the fees were voluntary.
- Mandatory fees ranged from \$5 to \$43, with an average charge of \$17.25 (SD = \$9.50). Voluntary fees ranged from 0 to \$15, with an average of \$1.21 (SD = \$3.96).
- When asked about fees for rides, 55% of the organizations indicated that they charged fees. Of those charging fees, the majority (89%) charged a flat rate for trips and 11% charged a flat rate plus mileage.
- Slightly more than one-third (38%) of the organizations charged for parking, and few (6%) charged a waiting fee. Less than one-quarter (24%) had a coupon system associated with their service.

Table 2. All Service Providers: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability of Alternate Transportation to Seniors (n = 33)

Service	n (%)
Availability of Service	
Operating Hours (e.g., Rides available)	
Daytime Only	n = 20 (61%)
Night time Only	--
Both	n = 13 (39%)
Rides Provided On	
Weekdays Only	n = 21 (64%)
Weekends	n = 12 (36%)
Routes	
Fixed Only	n = 10 (30%)
Client Demand Only	n = 23 (70%)
Jurisdictional Limits	n = 27 (82%)
Available for	
Essential Transportation	n = 29 (88%)
Medical Transportation	n = 28 (85%)
Social Transportation	n = 25 (76%)
Religious Transportation	n = 16 (49%)
Acceptability of Service	
Advance Scheduling	
No reservations	n = 5 (15%)
Same day reservations	n = 2 (6%)
24 hour reservations	n = 14 (42%)
48 hour reservations	n = 7 (21%)
+48 hour reservations	n = 5 (15%)
Wait List for Services	n = 6 (18%)
Any Additional Driver Training	n = 14 (42%)
Of those Providing Training, Training Provided On	
Mental Health Issues	n = 7 (50%)
Disability	n = 7 (50%)
CPR	n = 8 (57%)
Aging/Seniors	n = 6 (43%)
Other	n = 6 (43%)
Accessibility of Service	
Services Offered	
Curb-to-Curb	n = 4 (12%)
Door-to-Door	n = 9 (27%)
Door-through-Door	n = 18 (55%)
Other	n = 2 (6%)
Adaptability of Service	
Multiple Stops	n = 25 (76%)
Assistance with Wheelchairs, etc.	n = 16 (48%)
Escorted Services	n = 14 (42%)
Affordability of Service	
Membership Fee	n = 11 (33%)
Yes, Mandatory	n = 8 (73%)
Yes, Voluntary	n = 3 (27%)
Rider Fees	n = 18 (55%)
If yes, Flat rate	n = 16 (89%)
Flat rate plus mileage	n = 2 (11%)
Parking Fees (based on n = 29)	n = 11 (38%)
Waiting Charge	n = 2 (6%)
Coupon System	n = 8 (24%)

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2. Are there differences in alternate transportation service provision to seniors as a function of funding source of service provider (not-for-profit vs. for-profit)?

Characteristics of alternate transportation provided for seniors funding orientation (not-for-profit and for-profit) are provided in Table 3. The characteristics are, again, categorized in terms of the 5 A's of seniors alternate transportation (Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability).

As can be seen, the pattern of findings is such that there often are differences between the two types of service providers on the areas under investigation. However, due to the small sample size (e.g., n = 3 for the for-profit group), those differences failed to reach statistical significance.

The pattern of findings is summarized below.

Availability of Services

- A greater percentage of not-for-profit service providers provide rides in the daytime only compared to for-profit organizations (67% vs. 33%, respectively), with a higher percentage of for-profit service providers (67%) providing rides during both daytime and night time compared to the not-for-profit service providers (33%).
- A greater percentage of for-profit service providers provide rides on both weekdays and weekends (67%) compared to the not-for-profit providers (33%).
- All of the for-profit service providers provide 'client demand only' transportation (100%) compared to only one-third (33%) of their not-for-profit counterparts.
- Jurisdictional limits are more of a barrier for not-for-profit organizations (87%) than for-profit organizations (33%).
- For-profit organizations are able to offer a greater availability of rides for all transportation needs (essential, medical, social, and religious) (100% across all four categories) compared to the not-for-profit service providers (range of 43% to 87% offering services across the transportation need spectrum).
- There is little in the way of differences between the two types of service providers in terms of advance scheduling. Both types of service providers are more likely to require 24 hour or greater notice for ride provision.

Acceptability of Services

- Wait lists were uncommon for not-for-profit and for-profit service provider. However, the low number is likely not representative of the need for alternate service provision for seniors but rather due to a lack of awareness of organizations providing the service or other barriers to using the service.
- The number of service providers providing driver training was low to modest, with only 40% of not-for-profit service providers providing training compared to 67% of for-profit providers. Training in issues related to aging/seniors was low to non-existent (50% and 0% not-for-profit and for-profit, respectively).

Accessibility of Services

- Accessibility of services also differed across service provider, with the for-profit organizations offering the full compendium of services (curb-to-curb, door-to-door, door-through-door). Only one-half of the not-for-profit service providers offered door-through-door service, 30% offering door-to-door service, and 13% offering curb-to-curb service.

Adaptability of Services

- Both categories of service providers offered 'trip chaining' (e.g., multiple stops) but the percentage was higher for for-profit (100%) versus not-for-profit (73%). A higher percentage of for-profit providers (67%) offered escorted services versus their not-for-profit counterparts (37%).

Affordability of Services

- Not surprisingly, membership fees were more commonly employed by the for-profit service provider (100%), with only one-half of the not-for-profit providers charging this type of fee. For-profit service providers also were more likely to charge for parking and waiting for the client (100% and 67% vs. 69% and 0% for the not-for-profit provider). Coupons also were more likely to be offered by the for-profit provider (33% vs. 23%).

Table 3. Funding Source of Service Providers: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability of Alternate Transportation to Seniors (Not-For-Profit vs. For-Profit)

Service	Not-for Profit (n = 30) (% Yes)	For-profit (n = 3) (% Yes)
Availability of Service		
Operating Hours (e.g., Rides available)		
Daytime Only	n = 20 (67%)	n = 1 (33%)
Night time Only	--	--
Both	n = 10 (33%)	n = 2 (67%)
Rides Provided On		
Weekdays Only	n = 20 (67%)	n = 1 (33%)
Both Weekdays and Weekends	n = 10 (33%)	n = 2 (67%)
Routes		
Fixed Only	n = 10 (33%)	n = 0 (0%)
Client Demand Only	n = 20 (67%)	n = 3 (100%)
Jurisdictional Limits	n = 26 (87%)	n = 1 (33%)
Available for		
Essential Transportation	n = 26 (87%)	n = 3 (100%)
Medical Transportation	n = 25 (83%)	n = 3 (100%)
Social Transportation	n = 22 (73%)	n = 3 (100%)
Religious Transportation	n = 13 (43%)	n = 3 (100%)
Acceptability of Service		
Advance Scheduling		
No reservations	n = 5 (17%)	n = 0 (0%)
Same day reservations	n = 2 (7%)	n = 0 (0%)
24 hour reservations	n = 13 (43%)	n = 1 (33%)
48 hour reservations	n = 5 (17%)	n = 2 (67%)
+48 hour reservations	n = 5 (17%)	n = 0 (0%)
Wait List for Services	n = 6 (20%)	n = 0 (0%)
Any Additional Driver Training	n = 12 (40%)	n = 2 (67%)
Of those Providing Training, Training Provided On		
Mental Health Issues	n = 7 (58%)	n = 0 (0%)
Disability	n = 7 (58%)	n = 0 (0%)
CPR	n = 6 (50%)	n = 3 (100%)
Aging/Seniors	n = 6 (50%)	n = 0 (0%)
Other	n = 6 (50%)	n = 0 (0%)
Accessibility of Service		
Services Offered		
Curb-to-Curb	n = 4 (13%)	n = 3 (100%)
Door-to-Door	n = 9 (30%)	n = 3 (100%)
Door-through-Door	n = 15 (50%)	n = 3 (100%)
Other	n = 2 (7%)	n = 0 (0%)
Adaptability of Service		
Multiple Stops	n = 22 (73%)	n = 3 (100%)
Assistance with Wheelchairs, etc.	n = 14 (47%)	n = 3 (100%)
Escorted Services	n = 11 (37%)	n = 2 (67%)
Affordability of Service		
Membership Fee	n = 11 (37%)	n = 3 (100%)
Yes, Mandatory	n = 8 (73%)	n = 3 (100%)
Yes, Voluntary	n = 3 (27%)	n = 0 (0%)
Rider Fees	n = 15 (50%)	n = 3 (100%)
If Yes, Flat rate	n = 14 (93%)	n = 2 (67%)
Flat rate plus mileage	n = 1 (7%)	n = 1 (33%)
Parking Fees	n = 18 (69%)	n = 3 (100%)
Waiting Charge	n = 0 (0%)	n = 2 (67%)
Coupon System	n = 7 (23%)	n = 1 (33%)

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3. Are there differences in alternate transportation service provision to seniors as a function of *location of service provider* (Urban vs. Rural)?

Characteristics of alternate transportation provided for seniors by function of *location of service provider* (Urban vs. Rural) are provided in Table 4. An urban service provider was defined as being located in a jurisdiction with a population of 10,000 or greater; a rural service providers was defined as one located in a jurisdiction of less than 10,000 (e.g., town, village, hamlet). Consistent with previous comparisons, the characteristics are categorized in terms of the 5 A's of seniors alternate transportation (Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability). As can be seen, the pattern of findings indicates differences between the two categories of service providers on many of the items of interest. In many cases, those differences failed to reach statistical significance due to the small sample size. However, despite the small sample size there are significant differences for a number of the comparisons (data available on request).

The pattern of findings is summarized below.

Availability of Services

- A greater percentage of service providers located in urban areas provide rides in the daytime only compared to those in rural areas (68% vs. 37.5%, respectively). However, a greater percentage of service providers in rural areas provide rides during both daytime and night time (62.5%) than urban service providers (32%).
- A greater percentage of rural service providers provide rides on both weekdays and weekends (62.5%) compared to those in urban areas (28%).
- A greater percentage of rural service providers provide only fixed-route rides (87.5%) compared to those in urban areas (12%). Conversely, service providers in urban areas provide client-demand only transportation (88%) compared to their counterparts in rural areas (12.5%).
- Jurisdictional limits are approximately the same between the two locations (84% vs. 75%, urban vs. rural, respectively).
- The availability of rides for essential transportation needs is approximately equal (~ 88%) between the two service provider locations. However, significant differences exist between medical and social transportation, with more urban providers providing medical transportation rides (92%) compared to 62.5% in rural areas. On the other hand, a greater percentage

of transportation providers in rural areas provide transportation for social activities (100%), whereas only 68% of the urban providers do so. Compared to the other transportation needs, transportation for religious activities was the lowest for both service providers, with less than one-half (44%) of urban based providers supplying this type of transportation, compared to almost two-thirds (62.5%) of providers in rural areas.

Acceptability of Services

- Service providers in rural areas are more likely to provide rides 'on the spot' (no reservations or same day service) (~ 50%) compared to only 12% in the urban setting. Conversely, the majority of the urban service providers (88%) require reservations of 24 hours or longer, with more than one quarter requiring 2 days or more advance notification.
- No rural based service provider had a wait list compared to 25% of those in the urban area.
- The number of service providers providing driver training was low, with only one rural provider offering training compared to 52% (n = 7) of the urban based providers. Training in CPR was the most frequent type of training provided in the urban setting, with approximately one half (54%) of the urban service providers offering this training. Notably, few service providers offer training on aging/seniors issues.

Accessibility of Services

- Accessibility of services also differed across jurisdictions with a higher percentage of urban based providers offering door-through-door service (64%) versus 25% in rural areas. Curb-to-curb service was the most common type of service provision by rural providers, with slightly more than one-third (37.5%) of the organizations offering this service. It may be that the rural context for many of the rural service providers minimizes the need for door-to-door and door-through-door service. That is, ready availability of parking and/or ability to easily wait until the rider is through the door may negate the need for more 'personalized' service.

Adaptability of Services

- Service providers in both locations offered 'trip chaining' (e.g., multiple stops) but the percentage was higher for urban service providers (80%) versus rural providers (62.5%). There appeared to be a greater need for escorted services in the urban setting (52% of urban service providers providing this service) compared to the rural setting (only 12.5% of rural service providers providing this service).

Affordability of Services

- Membership fees were more commonly employed by urban service providers (40%) compared to providers in the rural area (12.5%). Conversely, rider fees are more commonly charged by rural service providers (87.5%) versus urban providers (44%). Waiting charges are uncommon in both jurisdictions. Coupons are, however, more available from rural providers (100% of service providers offer coupons) compared to urban providers (32% offer coupons).

Table 4. Location of Service Providers: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability of Alternate Transportation to Seniors (Urban vs. Rural)

Service	Urban (n = 25) (% Yes)	Rural (n = 8) (% Yes)
Availability of Service		
Operating Hours (e.g., Rides available)		
Daytime Only	n = 17 (68%)	n = 3 (37.5%)
Night Time Only	n = 0 (0%)	n = 0 (0%)
Both	n = 8 (32%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Rides Provided On		
Weekdays Only	n = 18 (72%)	n = 3 (37.5%)
Weekends	n = 0 (0%)	n = 0 (0%)
Both	n = 7 (28%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Routes		
Fixed Only	n = 3 (12%)	n = 7 (87.5%)
Client Demand Only	n = 22 (88%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Jurisdictional Limits Available for	n = 21 (84%)	n = 6 (75%)
Essential Transportation	n = 22 (88%)	n = 7 (87.5%)
Medical Transportation	n = 23 (92%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Social Transportation	n = 17 (68%)	n = 8 (100%)
Religious Transportation	n = 11 (44%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Acceptability of Service		
Advance Scheduling		
No reservations	n = 2 (8%)	n = 3 (37.5%)
Same day reservations	n = 1 (4%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
24 hour reservations	n = 11 (44%)	n = 3 (37.5%)
48 hour reservations	n = 7 (28%)	n = 0 (0%)
+48 hour reservations	n = 4 (16%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Wait List for Services	n = 6 (25%)	n = 0 (0%)
Any Additional Driver Training	n = 13 (52%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Of those Providing Training, Training Provided On		
Mental Health Issues	n = 6 (46.2%)	n = 1 (100%)
Disability	n = 6 (46.2%)	n = 1 (100%)
CPR	n = 7 (54%)	n = 1 (100%)
Aging/Seniors	n = 5 (38%)	n = 1 (100%)
Other	n = 5 (38%)	n = 1 (100%)
Accessibility of Service		
Services Offered		
Curb-to-Curb	n = 1 (4%)	n = 3 (37.5%)
Door-to-Door	n = 8 (32%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Door-through-Door	n = 16 (64%)	n = 2 (25%)
Other	n = 0 (0%)	n = 2 (25%)
Adaptability of Service		
Multiple Stops	n = 20 (80%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Assistance with Wheelchairs, etc.	n = 11 (44%)	n = 5 (62.5%)
Escorted Services	n = 13 (52%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Affordability of Service		
Membership Fee	n = 10 (40%)	n = 1 (12.5%)
Yes, Mandatory	n = 7 (70%)	n = 1 (100%)
Yes, Voluntary	n = 3 (30%)	---
Rider Fees	n = 11 (44%)	n = 7 (87.5%)
If yes, Flat Rate	n = 10 (91%)	n = 6 (86%)
Flat Rate plus Mileage	n = 1 (9%)	n = 1 (14%)
Parking Fees	n = 11 (44%)	n = 7 (87.5%)
Waiting Charge	n = 2 (8%)	n = 0 (0%)
Coupon System	n = 8 (32%)	n = 8 (100%)

4. Are there differences between alternate service provision to seniors in Edmonton and Area Municipalities and other jurisdictions?

To assist in a determination of how well Edmonton and Area Municipalities were meeting the alternate transportation needs of seniors, we compared the alternate service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities with the Independent Transportation Network (ITNAmerica®) model of alternate transportation to seniors using an objective rating scale. As noted in Section A, ITNAmerica affiliates are not-for-profit organizations that provide transportation to seniors based on a social entrepreneurial model. The ITNAmerica approach is considered a benchmark or gold standard for alternate transportation providers. To assist in the comparison, two ITNAmerica affiliates were contacted and the questionnaire administered to Edmonton and Area Municipalities was administered used the same methodology.

A standardized tool known as the 'Senior Friendliness Calculator' developed by the Beverly Foundation, was used to compare service across 5 domains: availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability (see Appendix D), with a maximum of 5 points possible per domain, and a maximum of 25 total points. Higher scores are representative are more 'senior friendly' alternate transportation.

Using the data from all 35 respondents (33 respondents from Edmonton and Area Municipalities and two ITNAmerica affiliate respondents), an average score was calculated for each sample group for the following comparisons:

- a. Edmonton and Area Municipalities (Overall) versus ITNAmerica Affiliates
- b. Edmonton and Area Municipalities For-Profit versus Edmonton and Area Municipalities Not-For-Profit versus ITNAmerica Affiliates
- c. Edmonton vs. Area Municipalities versus ITNAmerica Affiliates
- d. Urban vs. Rural versus ITNAmerica Affiliates

As shown in Table 5, the average score for all Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers was 11.15, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.94. The average score for the ITNAmerica Affiliate providers was 23 points out of a possible 25 (SD = 0). The score of the ITNAmerica Affiliates was significantly higher than the scores of the Edmonton and Area Municipalities ($p < .001$).

A comparison also was done to determine if differences existed in senior friendliness scores based on funding source (Edmonton and Area Municipality [EAM] Not-for-Profit vs. EAM For-Profit vs. ITNAmerica Affiliates). There was a significant difference ($p > .001$) between average scores for EAM not-for-profit (Average score = 11.07; SD = 2.99), for-profit (Average score = 12.00; SD = 2.65), and ITNAmerica Affiliates (Average score = 23.00; SD = 0). There was no statistically significant difference between EAM Not-for-Profit and EAM For-Profit service providers, indicating that the significant difference was between the ITNAmerica affiliates and EAM service providers.

A comparison also was done for senior friendliness scores by location of service provider (Edmonton vs. Area Municipalities vs. ITNAmerica Affiliates). The average score for alternate service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities was 10.78 (SD = 3.13) and 11.60 (SD = 2.72), respectively. There was no statistical significant difference between Edmonton service providers and the Area Municipalities service providers. The score of the ITNAmerica affiliates was significantly higher than the scores of the Edmonton and Area Municipalities ($p < .001$).

Finally, a comparison was made between Edmonton and Area Municipalities (EAM) transportation providers in urban areas (service providers in locations in centres with populations 10,000 or greater), rural areas (service providers in locations with populations less than 10,000) and the two ITNAmerica Affiliates. As shown in Table 5, urban service providers scored an average of 11.48 points out of a possible 25 (SD = 3.08) whereas rural service providers scored an average of 10.13 (SD = 2.29). The difference among the three was statistically significant ($p < .001$). When comparing scores for urban and rural transportation providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities, the difference was not statistically significant ($p > .90$) indicating that the ITNAmerica score was significantly higher than scores for the rural and urban service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.

Table 5. Senior Friendliness Scores: Edmonton and Area Municipalities by Location and Funding Source

	Total Score Average (SD)	p Value
Edmonton and Area vs. ITNAmerica Affiliates		
Edmonton & Area Municipalities (n = 33)	11.15 (2.94)	
ITNAmerica Affiliates (n = 2)	23.00 (0.00)	< .001
Funding Source		
EAM Not-for- Profit (n = 30)	11.07 (2.99)	
EAM For-Profit (n = 3)	12.00 (2.65)	< .001
ITNAmerica Affiliates (n = 2)	23.00 (0.00)	
Edmonton vs. Area Municipalities vs. ITNAmerica Affiliates		
Edmonton (n = 18)	10.78 (3.13)	
Area Municipalities (n = 15)	11.60 (2.72)	< .001
ITNAmerica Affiliates (n = 2)	23.00 (0.00)	
Urban vs. Rural vs. ITNAmerica Affiliates		
EAM Urban (n = 25)	11.48 (3.08)	
EAM Rural (n = 8)	10.13 (2.29)	< .001
ITNAmerica Affiliates (n = 2)	23.00 (0.00)	

5. How can alternate service provision be improved?

In addition to information on the availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability of services, organizations were asked how they could improve their services. A comparative analysis (Edmonton vs. Area Municipalities) was done, with the pattern of findings similar across jurisdictions. Thus, information provided by the organizations is presented as a whole (e.g., collapsed across all service providers), with the information summarized in Table 6. The most frequent response related to the improvement of services was for an increase in funding (41%) followed by the availability of more volunteers (24%), the availability of the organization's own vehicles (21%), and the expansion of services (21%). The need for more accessible vehicles, volunteer education/training, and for more office staff also was identified as ways to improve service.

Table 6. Service Provider Responses on How They Can Improve Their Service (Sample as a Whole)

Response on How to Improve Services	n (%)
(n = 29)	
Need more funding	12 (41%)
Need more volunteers	7 (24%)
Organization needs their own vehicles	6 (21%)
Expand service time, day, area	6 (21%)
Need more senior accessible vehicles	4 (14%)
Need more volunteer education/training	3 (10%)
Need more office staff	2 (7%)

* Total exceeds 100% as organizations often provided multiple responses

Organizations were asked if *clients* had provided any suggestions on how the organization could improve their alternate transportation service. Given that not all organizations administered formal client opinion surveys or specifically asked how service could be improved, there were few responses to this question (n = 15). Notably, the pattern of responses to the perception of priority of service in clients residing in the City of Edmonton and in Area Municipalities differed. As a result, the data were analyzed by location of service provider (see Table 7). Compared to the responses from Area Municipalities, the City of Edmonton service providers identified the ‘need for more volunteers’ as a priority (43% vs. 25%, respectively). On the other hand, the expansion of services was identified as a priority from a greater percentage of service providers outside of Edmonton (63%) versus those in Edmonton (29%). Both Edmonton and Area Municipalities identified the need for more/newer vehicles as a priority, but the need was seen as a priority for a greater number of providers from Area Municipalities than from those in Edmonton. The need for more senior accessible vehicles was identified by respondents in Edmonton as a way to improve services, with the need to lower the cost of alternate transportation and the need to decrease wait times uniquely identified by service providers in Area Municipalities.

Table 7. Suggestions from Service Providers on How to Improve Services (by Service Provider Location)

Suggestions on How to Improve Services	Edmonton (n = 7) n (%)	Area Municipalities (n = 8) n (%)
Need more volunteers	3 (43%)	2 (25%)
Expand service times, day, area	2 (29%)	5 (63%)
Organization needs more/newer vehicles	1 (14%)	2 (25%)
<i>Uniquely Identified</i>		
Need more senior accessible vehicles	2 (29%)	--
Need to lower the cost of alternate transportation	--	2 (25%)
Need to decrease wait times	--	2 (25%)

* Total exceeds 100% as data presented across multiple responses

6. Are Edmonton and Area Municipality alternate service providers aware of other alternate transportation service providers in their community?

Alternate transportation providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities were asked if they were aware of other service providers in their communities. A comparison between the two groups indicated that there was a difference in responses observed between organizations located in Edmonton and those in Area Municipalities. The data from Edmonton and from Area Municipalities are presented in Table 8. Knowledge of public transportation options only (e.g., city-operated buses, taxi service) was greater for Edmonton service providers versus those from Area Municipalities (33% vs. 27%, respectively), as was knowledge of three or more alternate service providers outside of public transportation (33% vs. 0%, respectively). The reverse was true for knowledge of public transportation options (40% for Area Municipalities vs. 28% for Edmonton service providers). A higher percentage of Area Municipalities were unaware of alternate transportation options in their communities (33%) versus 6% for Edmonton service providers. Overall, irrespective of location of service provider, knowledge of other transportation options was low.

Table 8. Summary of Awareness of Other Transportation Options (by Service Provider Location)

Awareness of Other Transportation Options	Edmonton	Area Municipalities
	(n = 18)	(n = 15)
	n (%)	n (%)
Knowledge of public transportation options only (e.g., city-operated buses, taxi service).	6 (33%)	4 (27%)
Knowledge of three or more alternate service providers outside of public transportation.	6 (33%)	0 (0%)
Knowledge of public transportation options and up to two service providers.	5 (28%)	6 (40%)
No knowledge of other alternate transportation options in their communities.	1 (6%)	5 (33%)

* Total exceeds 100% as data presented across multiple responses

7. What do Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers perceive as the mobility challenges faced by seniors?

Respondents were asked what they thought were challenges that seniors faced in the community with respect to mobility. This question did not specifically address the need for alternate transportation, but was a general inquiry into what service providers perceived as mobility concerns of the senior population. Data were examined separately for Edmonton and Area Municipalities, with the pattern of findings similar. Hence, Table 9 depicts combined results from Edmonton and Area Municipalities.

Consistent with responses to the previous questions, the high cost of alternate transportation, the need for expansion of services, limited operating hours, and lack of alternate service providers were identified as challenges to senior mobility. Unique areas identified as challenges included the lack of access to medical and essential locations, unsafe roads/winter conditions, and the lack of senior friendly public transportation.

Table 9. Service Providers' Perceptions of Senior's Mobility Concerns
(Sample as a Whole)

Perception of Senior's Mobility Concerns	n (%)
(n= 30)	
High cost of alternate transportation	11 (37%)
Lack of access to medical and essential locations	7 (23%)
Unsafe roads/winter conditions	5 (17%)
Public transportation is not senior friendly	5 (17%)
Expand service times, days, area	4 (13%)
Limited operating hours and limited stops on public transit	3 (10%)
Lack of alternate transportation service providers	2 (7%)

* Total exceeds 100% as data presented across multiple responses

8. Do Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers have suggestions to improve seniors' transportation services in the community?

Respondents were asked if they had any other suggestions to improve alternate transportation service in the community. There were no differences in responses between Edmonton and Area Municipality service providers. Thus, the data were combined (see Table 10). Many of the suggestions are consistent with those identified previously. Newly identified items include the need for more public education on aging and seniors issues and the need for improvement in communication among service providers, government, and seniors themselves.

Table 10. Service Providers' Suggestions to Improve Alternate Transportation in the Community (Sample as a Whole)

Suggestions for Improvement (n=25)	n (%)
Increased funding	7 (28%)
More senior friendly public transportation	4 (16%)
Cost of alternate transportation is too high	4 (16%)
Educate public on aging and seniors issues	3 (12%)
More/newer vehicles in their fleet	3 (12%)
Improve communication with government regarding seniors concerns	2 (8%)
Need more volunteers	2 (8%)
Improve communication amongst service providers	1 (4%)
Improve communication with seniors regarding alternate transportation options	1 (4%)
More personalized, senior-specific alternate transportation	1 (4%)
Expand service times, days, area	1 (4%)
Less research, more progress in improvements	1 (4%)

iv. Discussion

The results from our survey provide important information on seniors' alternate transportation service provision in Edmonton and Area Municipalities. It is notable that 33 organizations are engaged in providing alternate transportation to seniors in Edmonton and area.

In terms of the 5 A's of senior friendly transportation (The Beverly Foundation, 2001), there are areas of strength but also areas of deficiency. The majority of service providers provide trips to meet essential (grocery shopping, banking) and medical needs, but also provide transportation to meet social needs. This suggests that service providers consider transportation for social activities as relevant for quality of life and well-being. However, less than one-half provide transportation for religious reasons. Given the importance of both social activities and religion for quality of life and well-

being (Carp, 1988), the findings presented here suggest that alternate transportation services need to be expanded to meet the religious transportation needs of seniors in Edmonton and area.

The lack of transportation to religious activities is predicated, in large part, on the absence of transportation in the evening or on the weekend. Notably, few service providers provide rides in the evening or on weekends; times that rides are needed for both social and religious activities. Provision of service in these two time periods would address a large gap in service provision to seniors and would likely result in an enhancement in quality of life and well-being for many seniors dependent on alternate transportation.

In terms of affordability, the majority of organizations did not charge an annual membership fee. Further, rides were most frequently offered as either a free service or on a fixed rate where fuel and mileage are of no consequence to the client. This suggests that service providers are aware of the financial constraints of many of their clients. However, scarcity of resources from clients utilizing the services is a 'double-edged sword' in that service providers themselves often are under financial constraints, a situation which impacts on service provision today and impedes the sustainability of the service over the long term.

An examination of the results related to 'acceptability of service' indicates that there also are concerns. Only 21% of service providers will provide rides on a same day basis. Rather, the majority require a minimum of 24 hours notice for a ride. The lack of 'on the spot' transportation is one of the major areas that most distinguish alternate transportation from that afforded by being behind the wheel of one's own private vehicle, and is a frequent concern heard from those dependent on alternate transportation.

Most organizations rely on volunteer drivers. One-half of the service providers have varying forms of driver screening protocols. However, few service providers offer additional education and training for drivers on issues relevant to the senior population (e.g., aging/seniors, mental health issues). Two of the organizations cite the scarcity of volunteers as a primary reason as to why stricter driver training and education protocols are not implemented. Irrespective of the reason, this gap in alternate

transportation service provision will become more salient with the aging of the population and the projected increases in those with a dementia.

Feedback from one-third of the respondents indicated that recruitment of volunteer drivers is a growing concern. Barriers to recruitment include insurance issues (fear of liability) as well as the rising cost of fuel. Given the downturn in the economy, costs of providing alternate transportation likely will continue to be a major concern for service providers and a major barrier to meeting the transportation needs of a significant portion of the senior population.

Based on the concerns discussed above, it is not surprising that a primary topic of discussion throughout the interview was the discrepancy between the need for alternate seniors' transportation programs and the ability to meet that need. The majority of service providers expressed great concern that this gap would be exacerbated in the future as the elderly population grows at an exponential rate. Notably, feedback from an overwhelming number of respondents indicates that funding is an almost constant concern, with many of the Edmonton and Area Municipalities' service providers describing a direct relationship between deficiencies in alternate transportation services with insufficient availability of government funding. Based on respondent's feedback, it appears that approximately one-half are unable to survive without government aid.

Results from our survey indicate that alternate transportation service provision in Area Municipalities often is fragmented, with service providers unable to meet the transportation needs of seniors in their areas. There are concerns in some Area Municipalities that their community is not 'senior friendly'. The majority of these communities provide a very limited bus service into the City of Edmonton on fixed-routes for the purpose of essential trips, but very few are able to meet *individualized* assistance to medical appointments. Some service providers believe that if a senior is unable to sustain their mobility, then the 'fit between that senior and the community' becomes challenging both from the individual's perspective but also from the community's perspective.

Many Edmonton service providers indicated that they refused to advertise their services widely for fear that the demand would be too great for their organization to

handle. This fear may be justified. That is, based on recent census data, the population of Edmonton and Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) is 1,034,945 (Mid-2006 Census Data), with 11.9% of the population 65 and older. Thus, there are approximately 123,158 seniors in Edmonton and Census Metropolitan Area (Statistics Canada 2006 Census, 2007). Assuming that 10% of the senior population is in need of alternate transportation in Edmonton and Census Metropolitan Area (an estimate that is likely to be conservative), there is need for alternate transportation service provision for 12,315 seniors in this defined catchment area. Based on data collected from service providers in our region, 33 service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities currently are providing alternate transportation service to an average of 94 clients, or a total of 3,100 seniors. This leaves a conservative estimate of 9,200 seniors with unmet needs. Stated another way, utilizing current models of service provision, approximately 100 more alternate transportation service providers would have to come on board in order to meet *current* demands, with a six fold increase in service providers (from 33 to 198) needed to meet the projected increases in the senior population over the next two decades. With current models, this means all of the resources of the current service providers would need to be expanded from the current 33 to the future 198 providers. Some of the resources are monetary, but many are not (e.g., volunteers).

Over one-third of the respondents indicated that an increase in funding would allow for the recruitment of more volunteer drivers, more vehicles, extended hours with weekend service, and a wider area of service provision (e.g., ability to go past current jurisdictional boundaries), resulting in an increased ability to accommodate a greater number of seniors. However, as noted above, the ability of existing service providers to meet current demands for alternate transportation for this segment of the population is likely not feasible.

Another gap in the currently existing models does not directly or indirectly involve the issue of funding. A concern among many service providers is the lack of communication that currently exists between different organizations providing, essentially, the same service. It is seldom that an organization with a wait list refers those clients to an organization able to accommodate them. This is due simply to the reason that each organization is operated independent of the other organizations.

Advertising of services also was identified as an area of concern. Although there are varying forms of advertising employed by service providers, the one utilized most is word of mouth. This is not surprising considering the funding issues faced by the service providers. Due to limited advertising, it is possible that a large number of seniors are not aware of the alternate transportation options in their area, thereby limiting their mobility and independence.

Respondents also provided us with their perceptions of problems, limitations, or concerns with their program as well as in the community as a whole. We first asked how the organization could improve the service they were providing and if clients had given suggestions on improving the transportation service. Not surprisingly, the responses were varied. However, a central theme was the need for more funding. Of the 33 respondents, 13 (39%) directly referred to more funding as a concern, seven (21%) expressed the need for more volunteers and staff, six (18%) indicated a need to expand the current service area, six stated more vehicles would increase the quality of their service, and four (12%) believed their organization was lacking in the ability to adequately train their volunteer staff with respect to seniors concerns and issues. Other concerns included the desire to reach more seniors, run more client-response routes, conduct vehicle inspections, decrease client wait times, and have a more open line of communication with community stakeholders.

When asked about suggestions for improvement from the organizations' clientele, less than one-quarter indicated that they conducted formal client surveys. As a result, there were few responses in this section. The responses provided included the request for an expansion of the service area as well as service times and the request for more drivers that were capable of meeting more individualized needs (reported by three organizations). Other client suggestions included decreasing the cost of the service, decreasing waiting times, increasing the number of vehicles, and increasing the number of day trips.

Notably, the central theme in the 'suggestions for improvements' differed in Edmonton when compared with Area Municipalities. Understaffing was a key issue reported by Edmonton providers, with the belief that access to more staff (e.g., volunteers) would allow them to provide transportation service more effectively and efficiently. In Area Municipalities, the prevailing theme was that seniors desired an increase in the scope

of service provided by the organizations. This topic included increased transportation service to more locations, a focus on individual needs and client-response routes, as well as an increase in operating days and times. Many of these issues revolve around the central theme that limited funding is a barrier to service provision.

Organizations also were asked about their knowledge of other available transportation options in their community. Knowledge of multiple transportation providers was operationally defined as the knowledge of three or more service providers excluding public transportation systems, such as Edmonton Transit Services (ETS), Disabled Adult Transit Service (DATS), or taxi services. In Edmonton, there were a total of 19 respondents. Of these, six were aware of public transportation options alone, five knew of transportation providers of up to two services, and seven knew of three or more service providers. One organization was unaware of any other alternate service provider. In Area Municipalities, there were 15 participants surveyed, with four having knowledge of public transportation services and six knowing of public transportation and up to two service providers. Five respondents were unaware of other service providers in their communities, while none was able to name three or more service providers. For Area Municipalities, these data are not surprising as many communities do not have the population to justify multiple service providers. When examining the data from Edmonton and Area Municipalities as a whole, the numbers suggest that there is a strong need for open lines of communication between service providers.

Service providers were asked about limitations of services in the community as a whole. The first question asked the respondents to posit what current transportation concerns for seniors existed. The data indicate that there was considerable overlap between the responses to this question and previous questions. Respondents believed that a major concern of seniors was the lack of affordable transportation options, with 12 respondents citing this as a concern. Further, seven respondents believed that lack of access for essential and medically related services was a primary issue, while five cited unsafe roads or winter conditions, five cited a need for expansion of the service provision area and for expansion of days and times of service. A further five cited that public transportation is not senior friendly. Other concerns included a lack of stops on fixed-route public transit, a need for expanded hours of service on public transit, and an overall lack of alternate transportation providers.

For the final question, respondents were asked whether or not there were other suggestions to improve seniors transportation in the community. The varied responses were indicative of the broadness of the question. Seven respondents revisited the issue of a need for increased funding, five respondents spoke of a need for senior friendly public transportation, four wanted to decrease the cost of alternate transportation services, three believed that educating the general population would be helpful, two wanted better communication between alternate service providers and the government, and two desired more volunteers. Other responses included the need for better communication amongst service providers, better communication with clients with respect to existing alternate transportation options, a need for more personalized and individualized service, a need to expand service areas, and a need to begin the process of addressing the issue of a lack of alternate transportation services.

In summary, the results of the survey indicate that there are a significant number of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities. It is evident, from our interviews, that those service providers are dedicated and often work tirelessly to provide necessary transportation services to seniors in their area. It also is evident that Edmonton and Area Municipalities play an important role in advocating for and championing the need for improvements in alternate transportation for seniors.

Common barriers to responsive alternate service provision service include lack of funding, understaffing, and a heavy reliance on volunteer drivers, barriers that are unlikely to change within the current models of alternate transportation service provision. Thus, despite the commitment, dedication, and efforts of alternate transportation service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities, the demand is much higher than available resources, resulting in unmet needs in this area.

The challenges of meeting the transportation needs of seniors today, combined with the projected increases in demand in the near future, suggest that current models of alternate transportation lack the capacity and sustainability to meet current and future transportation needs of the senior population in Edmonton and Area Municipalities.

C. Objective 3: To assist in the development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors.

i. Purpose

The development of an online, searchable database of alternate transportation for seniors is an important modality that could potentially allow service providers to communicate with their clients. Results of our interviews indicate that service providers are concerned that their services are going unnoticed, due in part to the lack of easily accessible and cost effective marketing materials. As a result, the perception is that many clients are unaware of available alternate transportation services that could assist them in maintaining or enhancing their mobility in the latter part of their lives. Further, respondents indicated that clients often request or require individualized service due to specific medical or psychosocial needs.

Despite the need, many of the service providers lack the resources to provide transportation services to this segment of the older population, resulting in a deficiency of services to a sizeable percentage of the older population. Based on discussions from organizations affiliated with the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, an online, interactive, searchable database was proposed as a potentially valuable resource to seniors as a means of enhancing mobility and independence, while simultaneously allowing alternate service providers in Edmonton and Area Municipalities to better meet their clients' needs.

The goal of the online searchable database is to provide seniors and/or their caregivers and other family members with a resource that allows a search for service providers, using specific ride requirements, that are most closely aligned with the senior's needs, and and to eliminate, as much as possible, the frustrating calls to service providers who are unable to meet their needs.

ii. Methods

Under the leadership of the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, a firm specializing in web-based design was approached to assist with the development of the database. The initial step involved identifying the key components of the database (e.g., questions/search strategies) that are fundamental to software development. Questions (with sub-questions used for clarification) that were determined to be of the highest priority are listed below.

-
- a. Client Information.
 - Origin of client (e.g., where will the client be picked up from)?
Destination of client?
 - b. Service Provider information
 - Location of service provider? Jurisdiction served? Hours of operation? Capacity of provider?
 - c. Service demands
 - Areas identified relative to service demands include:
 1. When is the ride required: Day time? Evening? Weekends? This information will allow for the development of searchable fields that allow for the identification of providers that operate during set hours (such as business hours only) from those that do not.
 2. What type of assistive device/transportation companions need to be accommodated? That is, does the person require assistive transportation that includes accommodating a walker? a wheel chair? Are they accompanied by an animal?
 3. Route and timing demands? Does the client require the driver to wait for the client? Does the client need to be accompanied? Is the ride one way/return? Is trip chaining needed?

iii. Results

An online searchable database has been developed that allows seniors (or their caregivers) to search for service providers, using specific ride requirements, that most closely fit their needs. Seniors can access the database by going to <http://www.seniorscouncil.net> and clicking on Find a ride.

iv. Discussion

The online searchable database is merely a step in the evolving process of supporting existing services by encouraging service providers to address their issues and concerns co-operatively and collaboratively. A Seniors Transportation Steering Committee has been established in Edmonton to assist service providers in examining issues, to support their efforts to bring about solutions, and to look for ways to deal with gaps by both

strengthening existing services and augmenting them with additional services. Both are seen as key initiatives in addressing the unmet alternate transportation needs of an ever increasing number of seniors in Edmonton and area.

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IV. APPENDICES

Appendix A Operational Definitions of Commonly Used Terms

Table A-1. Types of Transportation

Term	Definition	Source
Alternate Transportation	Transportation in a private vehicle, excluding taxis or buses.	--
Disabled Transportation	A transportation service catering specifically to individuals with a disability (see Miscellaneous).	--
Senior's Transportation	A transportation service catering specifically to individuals 65 years of age and older.	--
Supplemental Transportation Program (STP)	A term encompassing both formal and informal alternate transportation programs for seniors.	The Beverly Foundation (2001)

Table A-2. Characteristics of Service Provision

Term	Definition	Source
Availability	Transportation exists and is available when needed (e.g., evenings, weekdays, and weekends).	The Beverly Foundation (2001)
Acceptability	Deals with standards including cleanliness and safety (e.g., the transporting vehicle is clean, transit stops are in safe areas, drivers are courteous and helpful).	The Beverly Foundation (2001)
Accessibility	Transportation can be reached and used (e.g., bus stairs are negotiable, seats are high enough, vehicle comes to the door, and transit stops are reachable).	The Beverly Foundation (2001)
Adaptability	Transportation can be modified or adjusted to meet special needs (e.g., the vehicle can accommodate a wheelchair, trip chaining is possible, escorts can be provided).	The Beverly Foundation (2001)
Affordability	Deals with costs (e.g., fees are affordable, vouchers or coupons are available to defray out-of-pocket expenses).	The Beverly Foundation (2001)

Table A-2. Characteristics of Service Provision (Cont'd)

Term	Definition	Source
Door-through-Door	Door-through-door transportation services offer personal, hands-on assistance for persons who have difficulties getting in and out of vehicles and buildings, thus opening doors to a wider range of opportunities and experiences.	http://www.aoa.gov/prof/transportation/media/Door-Through-DoorGuide/HowToGuide_DoorThroughDoorTransportation.pdf
Curb-to-Curb	Curb-to-curb transportation services offers transportation from curbside of place of origin to curbside of destination. This type of service is likely to be inappropriate for seniors with cognitive deficits such as dementia.	
Door-to-Door	Door-to-door transportation services offers transportation from the door of place of origin to door of destination. Although this type of service is more appropriate for seniors with cognitive deficits such as dementia and for those with sensory or motor deficits, there also are safety concerns, particularly for those with a dementia.	

Table A-3. Types of Funding

Term	Definition	Source
For-Profit	An approach that depends on revenue generated from the sale of goods and services to customers or clients. The source of income typically is from a customer who purchases and utilizes the product/service, and pays for the product/service upon receipt. With the for-profit approach, the organization most often received revenue after or on completion of providing a product/service for the customer or client.	Rippon (2002)
Not-For-Profit	An approach wherein revenue is generated from a variety of sources including funding from government, philanthropic organizations, and/or membership fees or donations from membership or sponsorship. Not-for-profit organizations typically receive revenues in advance and only later offer benefits to its membership. In some circumstances (e.g., donors), the donor often is not the recipient of the benefit (Rippon, 2002).	Rippon (2002)
Social Entrepreneurship	<p>The social entrepreneurial approach “makes efficient and effective use of public sector resources, and leveraging those resources through collaboration with the private and nonprofit sectors” (Wolk, 2008, p. 1).</p> <p>Three core characteristics of the social entrepreneurial approach are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Innovation - finding, testing, and honing new and potentially transformative ways of approaching social problems; • Accountability - measuring results, continuously making improvements based on those results, and sharing performance and outcome data with stakeholders; • Sustainability - identifying reliable financial and other types of support by utilizing markets, forming partnerships across sectors, and responding to stakeholder needs to ensure that the solution will be enduring. 	Wolk (2008)

Table A-4. Miscellaneous Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Disability	The individual is unable to walk more than 50 metres (150 feet). They require the use of a wheelchair.	http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/pdf/mv/ParkingPlacardsREG3164.pdf
Trip Chaining	Multiple stops for multiple tasks or chores in the same trip.	http://nhts.ornl.gov/2001/pub/TripChaining.pdf
Client-Response Route	A route that is flexible to the needs of the client accessing the ride.	--
Fixed-Route	A route that has predetermined initiation and termination points.	--
Essential Trip	A trip taken to facilitate the acquisition of necessary items or perform necessary tasks.	--
Social Trip	A trip taken for recreational purposes.	--
Medical Trip	A trip taken to attend a medical appointment, and/or to secure medical services (blood tests, x-rays).	--
Volunteer Driver	An individual who altruistically dedicates time to aid in the transportation of other individuals.	--
Senior Friendly	Services or facilities that are designed to be accessible for the elderly (defined as individuals 65 years of age and older).	--

Appendix B

Alternate Transportation for Seniors Questionnaire

(Dobbs, VanderMeulen, & Bhardwaj, 2008)

Date: _____ ID#: _____

Time Started: _____

A. Demographics

The first few questions are general questions about your organization.

1. Name of Organization: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Community: _____

4. Postal Code: _____

5. Telephone: _____

6. Years in Operation: _____

7. Website: _____

8. Name of Respondent: _____

9. Title: _____

10. Organization located in a: INTERVIEWER TO CODE

City (4)¹ Village (2)³

Town (3)² Hamlet (1)⁴

¹ Defined as population of 10,000+

² Defined as population of 1,000 to 9,999

³ Defined as population of 300 to 999

⁴ Defined as 4 plus dwellings, a specific boundary, a name, land used for non-residential purposes

11. Where are your clients primarily located?

Urban (1) Rural (2)⁵ Both (3)

12. Which region of Edmonton and area do you serve?

North (1)⁶ Central (2)⁷ South (3)⁸

a) Describe the boundaries of your primary service area. For example, do you only serve a certain area of the city (i.e. Northeast or Southwest)?

B. Organization

13. Is your organization not-for-profit, for-profit, or a mix of the two?

Not-for-profit (1)

For-profit (2)

Mix (3)

(Estimate: ____% Not-for-profit, ____% For-profit)

14. What is your primary source of funding? CAN CHOOSE MULTIPLE

Government grants (1)

Philanthropic grants (2)

Membership/client fees (3)

Revenue from fundraising (4)

Donations (5)

Other (6) (Specify: _____)

Mix (7)

Estimate: ____% Government grants

____% Philanthropic grants

____% Membership/client fees

____% Revenue from fundraising

____% Donations

____% Other (Specify: _____)

____% Mix

Don't Know (99)

⁵ Census rural: individuals living in the countryside outside centres of 1,000 or more population

⁶ Areas north of 107th Avenue

⁷ Areas between the North Saskatchewan River and 107th Avenue

⁸ Areas south of the North Saskatchewan River

15. Can clients use your service for: CAN CHOOSE MULTIPLE

- Medical reasons? (1)
- Essentials trips (e.g. banking, groceries)? (2)
- Social activities? (3)
- Religious events? (4)

C. Transportation Services

Next, I'd like to ask about the availability of your services.

16. What are your operating hours?

- Day time only (1)
(Specify: _____)
- Night time only (2)
(Specify: _____)
- Both (3)

17. Do you provide rides on:

- Weekdays only? (1)
- Weekends only? (2)
- Both? (3)

18. Are your rides on:

- Fixed routes only? (1)
- Client response routes? (2)

19. Are there jurisdictional limits on your service (e.g., no service outside city limits)?

- No (0)
- Yes (1) (Explain: _____)

20. Please approximate, in km² or miles², the area of service: _____ (km²) or _____ (miles²)

D. Accessibility

21. Which of the following services do you offer?

- Curb-to-curb (1)
- Door-to-door (2)
- Door-through-door (3)
- Other (4) (Specify: _____)

E. Adaptability

22. Which of the following services does your organization provide?

- i. Single passenger service Yes (1) No (0)
- ii. Group passenger service Yes (1) No (0)
- iii. Trip chaining Yes (1) No (0)
- iv. Escorted service Yes (1) No (0)
- v. Service for the disabled Yes (1) No (0)

(if yes, specify:_____)

23. Who is eligible to receive your services?

- Seniors (1)
- Disabled (2)
- Seniors & Disabled (3)
- Seniors & Companions (4)
- All ages (5)
- Other (6) (Specify:_____)

24. Are reservations required? If so, how much notice is needed?

- No reservation (0)
- Same-day (1)
(Amount of notice:_____ hrs)
- 24 hour notice (2)
- 48 hour notice (3)
- +48 hour notice (4)

25. a) Currently, on average, how many clients use your service? _____

b) Historically, is that your average?

- No (0) (explain _____)
- Yes (1)

c) Currently, do you have a "wait list" (e.g., people wanting your service but you are unable to accommodate)?

- No (0)
 Yes (1) (how many people? _____)

F. Affordability

The next two questions are about fees for your service.

26. Is there a membership fee?

- No (0)
 Yes, mandatory (1) (how much? \$_____)
 Yes, volunteer basis (2) (how much? \$_____)

27. Are there rider fees?

- No fees (0)
 Flat rate (1) (Specify: \$_____)
 Mileage rate (2) (Specify: \$ ____/km)
 Flat rate and mileage (3)
(Specify: \$_____/km)
 Sliding Fees (4) (Based on:_____)
Rates: _____

 Only for parking, if required (5)

b) Is there an additional charge if the driver must wait for the client (e.g., at a doctor's appointment, or while grocery shopping)?

- No (0)
 Yes (1) (how much? \$_____)

28. Does your organization have coupons?

- No (0) PROCEED TO 30
 Yes (1) PROCEED TO 29a)

a) Are there restrictions placed on coupons (e.g., is there a maximum number of coupons, maximum distance/time allowed per coupon)?

G. Drivers

The next few questions pertain to your drivers.

29. Are the drivers volunteers or paid?

Volunteer only (1)

Paid only (2)

Both (3)

(Estimated: ___% Volunteer, ___% Paid)

a) If paid, what is the method of payment?

Honorarium only (1) (How much? \$_____)

Reimbursement for mileage (2)

Reimbursement for gas (3)

Reimbursement for mileage and gas (4)

Honorarium and reimbursement (5)

(Specify: _____)

30. a) Does your organization screen its drivers?

No (0) PROCEED TO 30

Yes (1) PROCEED TO 29b)

b) Which of the following does your organization screen for?

i. Insurance coverage Yes (1) No (0)

ii. Driving records Yes (1) No (0)

iii. Reference checks Yes (1) No (0)

iv. Road test Yes (1) No (0)

v. Criminal background check Yes (1) No (0)

vi. Drug test Yes (1) No (0)

c) Are their records on file?

No (0)

Yes (1)

c) What type of insurance coverage do you have?

- Basic coverage (1)
(e.g. mandatory \$200,000 liability)
- Collision and comprehensive (2)
- Don't know (99)

33. a) Do you have volunteer drivers that use their personal vehicles?

- No (0) PROCEED TO 35
- Yes (1) (how many? _____) PROCEED TO 34b)

b) What insurance requirements do you have for your volunteer drivers?

- Driver's personal insurance (1)
- Extra insurance (2)
- Don't know (99)

c) Are insurance issues a barrier to recruiting volunteer drivers?

- No (0)
- Yes (1)
- Don't Know (99)

d) Is the price of fuel a barrier to recruiting volunteers?

- No (0)
- Yes (1)
- Don't Know (99)

34. Does your organization conduct vehicle inspections?

- No (0)
- Yes (1)
- Don't Know (99)

I. Marketing

I now have a couple of brief questions about how your organization advertises this service.

35. What types of advertising do you use?

- i. Word-of-mouth Yes (1) No (0)
- ii. Social services Yes (1) No (0)
- iii. Medical services Yes (1) No (0)
- iv. Newspapers Yes (1) No (0)
(if yes, which one? _____)
- v. Newsletters Yes (1) No (0)
- vi. TV/Radio Yes (1) No (0)
- vii. Community centers Yes (1) No (0)
- viii. Other Yes (1) No (0)
(if yes, specify:_____)

36. Do you keep a record on how many rides you provide in a month?

- No (0) PROCEED TO SECTION J
- Yes (1) (how many?_____)

J. Problems/Limitations with Program

Finally, we are interested in how transportation services to seniors could be improved.

37. How do you think your *organization* could improve its service?

38. What suggestions for improvement have clients given you?

K. Other Options

39. What other transportation options for seniors are you aware of in the *community*?

L. Limitation of Transportation Services in the Community

40. In thinking about your *community* as a whole, are there any transportation concerns related to seniors?

41. Finally, do you have other suggestions to improve seniors transportation services in the *community*.

THANK PARTICIPANT FOR HIS/HER TIME.

Time Completed: _____

Appendix C

Table C-1. Organizations Participating in the Survey

Organization	URL
1. Calder Seniors Drop-In Society	http://www.calderseniors.org
2. Canadian Cancer Society	http://www.cancer.ca
3. Capital Health Home Care	http://www.capitalhealth.ca
4. Classic Caregivers Ltd	http://www.classiccaregivers.com/services.html
5. Driving Miss Daisy	http://www.drivingmissdaisy.net/home.html
6. Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers	http://www.emcn.ab.ca
7. Fort Saskatchewan Specialized Transportation Service Society	--
8. Golden Gems Seniors Club (Bon Accord)	--
9. Golden Pioneers (New Sarepta)	--
10. Jewish Drop-In Centre	--
11. Korean Seniors College Society	--
12. Landlubbers Ltd.	http://www.landlubberstoursandshuttles.com
13. Leduc Assisted Transportation Service	--
14. Leduc Home Care	http://www.capitalhealth.ca
15. Legal Lions	--
16. Lifestyle Helping Hands	http://www.seniorscouncil.net/content.php?id=51
17. Morinville Town Office	http://town.morinville.ab.ca
18. Multicultural Women's and Seniors Services Association	http://www.mwssa.org
19. Native Seniors Centre	http://www.nativeseniorscentre.ca
20. Operation Friendship Seniors Society	http://www.ofss.org
21. Redwater and District Seniors Transportation Society	--
22. Senior Citizens Opportunity Neighbourhood Association	--
23. Seniors Assisted Transportation Society	http://www.satsofedmonton.org
24. Seniors Outreach Network Society	--
25. Society of Seniors Caring About Seniors	http://www.sscas.com
26. Spruce Grove Specialized Transit Service	--
27. St. Albert Seniors Citizens Club	http://www.stalbertseniorsclub.org

Table C-1. Organizations Participating in the Survey (Cont'd)

Organization	URL
28. Strathcona County Accessible Transit	http://www.strathcona.ab.ca
29. Strathcona Place Seniors Centre	http://www.seniorscentre.org
30. Town of Bruderheim (FCSS)	http://www.bruderheim.ca
31. Town of Devon Recreation Department	http://www.townofdevon.ca
32. Town of Gibbons	http://www.gibbons.ca
33. Westend Seniors Activity Centre	http://www.westendseniorsactivitycentre.com
Other	
34. ITNAmerica®	http://www.itnamerica.org/

Appendix D

A "Senior Friendliness" Calculator For Public and Paratransit Services

The 5 A's of Senior Friendly Transportation have been refined as criteria for use by transportation services in making a preliminary judgment as to their senior friendliness. To initiate your review, check each of the factors below that are represented within your public or paratransit program. Each check equals one point. When you have completed your review, add up your score and look at the scoring key at the bottom of the page to know where you are on "the road to senior friendliness."

Availability: The Transportation Service....

- provides transportation to seniors
- can be reached by the majority of seniors in the community
- provides transportation anytime (days, evenings, weekends, 24/7)
- can take riders to destinations beyond city & county boundaries
- maintains organizational relationships with human & transit services

Acceptability: The Transportation Service....

- uses vehicles that are easy for seniors to access
- offers "demand transportation" with no advance scheduling requirement
- provides driver "sensitivity to seniors" training
- adheres to narrow "window of time frame" for home and destination pickup
- ensures cleanliness and maintenance of vehicles

Accessibility: The Transportation Service....

- can accommodate the needs of a majority of elders in the community
- has information program for improving senior transportation knowledge
- can provide "door-thru-door" transportation when needed
- can provide services to essential and non essential activities
- can link seniors with "more appropriate" transportation options

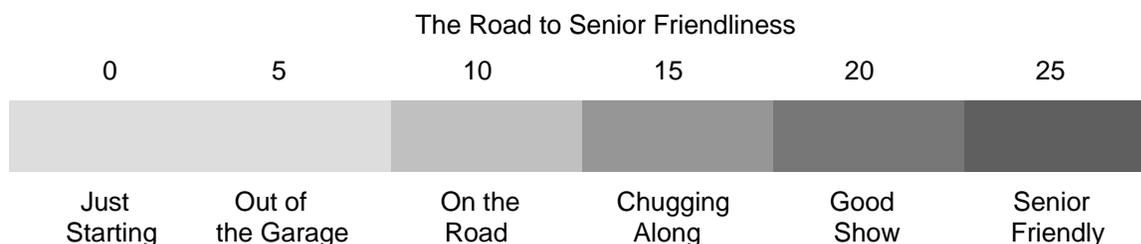
Adaptability: The Transportation Service....

- will provide transportation escorts when needed
- can provide multiple stop trips for individual passengers
- can access vehicles that accommodate wheelchairs and walkers
- maintains a policy of "adapting the system to meet the needs of seniors"
- undertakes annual senior customer survey for service improvement

Affordability: The Transportation Service....

- offers reduced fares (or free transportation) to senior passengers
- secures funding specifically to support senior transit services
- offers opportunity to purchase monthly pass instead of paying cash
- offers options to purchasing tickets by mail or the internet
- uses volunteer drivers to reduce costs for providing "extra" services

Total (Possible Score = 25)



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