

**Improved Transportation for
Older Adults in Winnipeg, MB.:**

**The Recommendations and Final Report of the
Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group**

June, 2001

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This report embodies the collaboration of representatives from a wide spectrum of non-profit, public and private organizations, as well as concerned individuals. The interest and support demonstrated by all those involved has resulted in a new vision for transportation for seniors. Many have contributed their knowledge and expertise to address the transportation issues for the older population of Winnipeg. The Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group would like to express its gratitude to all the members of the group and steering committee who have contributed their time and effort. It was with their input that the project has been successfully completed.

Appreciation is also expressed to the participants of the focus groups including volunteer drivers, service providers, disability organizations and seniors representing various areas of the city, as well as some ethno-cultural groups.

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Executive Summary

The provision of adequate transportation is a crucial component for the well-being of society. There are various factors that impede the mobility of the aging population. In Winnipeg, the issue of inadequate transportation for older adults has become of increasing concern. In June, 2000, the South Winnipeg Seniors Resource Council held a public forum to gain the perspective of various members of the community. In response to the concerns raised at this forum, a working group was created to investigate more fully the problems experienced by seniors in gaining access to appropriate transportation.

The creation of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group signaled a new momentum to improve the mobility of the older population. Previous to the Working Group, issues regarding transportation for seniors have been addressed in isolation by organizations that develop program-specific solutions. The Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group represents a new approach to encourage the process of community-building. This process has included the involvement of various members of the community who have identified the issues and opportunities for seniors transportation. The ultimate goal of this process is to identify and implement solutions that will build on the available opportunities in order to develop new mobility options for seniors.

As part of this process, the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group quickly moved forward to establish and implement a research project. A primary objective of this research project was to develop recommendations that would be the basis for the creation of effective and sustainable solutions to address the inadequacy of present transportation provision for seniors in Winnipeg. This report presents the results of the Working Group's investigation of the factors causing mobility difficulties for the older population, along with an outline of recommendations that are suggested to improve the mobility of seniors in Winnipeg.

A key component in the development of the recommendations has been the process of dialogue within the Working Group. A series of meetings were held in the past nine months to discuss the issues, the findings of the research project and possible solutions. The participatory nature of this project was crucial. Solutions will only be effective if those involved in creating and implementing new initiatives and those affected by these initiatives are included in the development process. The consensus reached by the Working Group is represented in this final report that outlines recommendations that will ultimately lead to the creation of solutions to improve transportation for seniors.

The report includes four sections organized as follows:

- 1) An introductory section provides background information on the issues surrounding mobility for seniors, a description of the research project undertaken by the Working Group and the data collection conducted.
- 2) The second section includes a description of the guiding principles established by the Working Group in conjunction with the Manitoba Association on Gerontology. These principles represented a foundation from which the recommendations evolved.
- 3) The third section outlines the recommendations proposed by the Working Group based on a discussion of five transportation types. These transport types are described in terms of the benefits and limitations they offer for an older person's mobility. Following this discussion, a range of recommendations are developed that include:

- Improvements to the walking environment.
- Identification of resources to maintain an older person's ability to drive.
- Creation of incentives to promote rides by friends and family.
- Amendments to the organizational structure of formalized volunteer ride systems for seniors.
- Improvements in accessibility to scheduled bus service.
- Improvements in accessibility to Handi-Transit
- The incorporation of private, public and community-based transportation services to develop a new senior transportation service.

- 4) A final section briefly describes an action plan proposed by the Working Group to be used in the development of solutions based on the recommendations.

It is the intention of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group that this final report represents the first step in the implementation of effective and sustainable solutions to address the mobility problems of seniors in Winnipeg and Manitoba as a whole. It is anticipated that with time, the quality of life of the growing elderly population will be enhanced by the long-range mobility goals envisioned by the members of this group.

Sommaire

La prestation de services de transport adéquats est un élément important du bien-être d'une société. Plusieurs facteurs gênent la mobilité de la population vieillissante. À Winnipeg, la question du transport des aînés est devenue une préoccupation croissante. En juin 2000, le South Winnipeg Seniors Resource Council (Conseil de ressources pour les aînés de Winnipeg-Sud) a organisé une assemblée publique afin de recueillir les commentaires de divers membres de la collectivité. En réponse aux préoccupations exprimées lors de l'assemblée publique, on a créé un groupe de travail afin de cerner plus précisément les problèmes d'accès des aînés à des services de transport adéquats.

La création du Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group (Groupe de travail sur le transport des aînés à Winnipeg) a insufflé un nouveau dynamisme aux efforts d'amélioration de la mobilité de la population âgée. Avant la création du Groupe de travail, les questions liées au transport des aînés ont été traitées isolément par divers organismes qui ont élaboré des programmes particuliers. Le Groupe de travail a proposé une nouvelle approche qui intègre un processus de développement communautaire. Ce processus a favorisé la participation de divers membres de la collectivité qui ont cerné les questions et les possibilités en matière de transport des aînés. L'objectif ultime du processus est de cerner et de mettre en œuvre des solutions qui s'appuieront sur les possibilités offertes afin d'élaborer de nouvelles options qui favorisent la mobilité des aînés.

Le Groupe de travail a donc rapidement entrepris de créer et de mettre en œuvre un projet de recherche, qui a eu comme objectif prioritaire l'élaboration de recommandations en vue de produire des solutions efficaces et durables à l'inadéquation des services de transport offerts présentement aux aînés à Winnipeg. Le présent rapport présente les résultats de l'enquête du Groupe de travail sur les facteurs qui gênent la mobilité des aînés, ainsi que des recommandations générales en vue d'améliorer la mobilité des aînés à Winnipeg.

Le dialogue au sein du Groupe de travail a été un élément clé de l'élaboration des recommandations. Au cours des neuf derniers mois, le Groupe de travail a tenu une série d'assemblées pour discuter des questions de transport, des résultats de son enquête et des solutions possibles. La nature participative du projet de recherche a été cruciale. Les solutions proposées ne seront efficaces que si les personnes qui participent à l'élaboration et à la mise en œuvre de nouvelles mesures et celles qui sont touchées par les nouvelles mesures sont intégrées au processus d'élaboration des options. Le rapport final reflète le consensus établi au sein du Groupe de travail. Il présente des recommandations qui

mèneront finalement à l'élaboration de solutions en vue d'améliorer les services de transport offerts aux aînés.

Le rapport est divisé en quatre parties, comme suit :

1. L'introduction présente des renseignements généraux sur les questions liées à la mobilité des aînés, une description du projet de recherche entrepris par le Groupe de travail et le processus de collecte des données.
2. La deuxième partie comprend une description des principes directeurs établis par le Groupe de travail en collaboration avec la Manitoba Association on Gerontology. Les principes directeurs ont sous-tendu l'élaboration des recommandations.
3. La troisième partie présente les recommandations du Groupe de travail, qui sont fondées sur une discussion de cinq genres de services de transport. Les services sont décrits en fonction des avantages offerts à la mobilité des aînés et de leurs limites. À la suite des discussions, le Groupe de travail a élaboré des recommandations générales, notamment les suivantes :
 - Amélioration de l'environnement piétonnier.
 - Définition des ressources qui permettent de maintenir la capacité de conduire des personnes âgées.
 - Création de stimulants en vue de promouvoir le recours aux amis et aux membres de la famille pour le transport des aînés.
 - Modification de la structure organisationnelle des systèmes structurés de transport bénévole des aînés.
 - Amélioration de l'accès au service d'autobus normal.
 - Amélioration de l'accès au Service Handi-Transit.
 - Intégration des services de transport privés, publics et communautaires en vue de mettre sur pied un nouveau service de transport des aînés.
4. La quatrième partie présente brièvement le plan d'action proposé par le Groupe de travail pour l'élaboration de solutions fondées sur les recommandations.

Le Groupe de travail souhaite que le rapport soit la première étape de la mise en œuvre de solutions efficaces et durables pour résoudre les problèmes de mobilité des aînés à Winnipeg et dans l'ensemble du Manitoba. On prévoit qu'avec le temps, la qualité de vie de la population vieillissante sera améliorée par la réalisation des objectifs de mobilité à long terme visés par les membres du Groupe de travail.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evolution of the Transportation Issue

The increasing proportion of the Canadian elderly population has made it imperative to study how the living environment of this age cohort affects their quality of life. Although particular attention has been given to the necessities of seniors in the spheres of health care and social services, comprehensive analysis of their transportation requirements has been limited. However, the inadequacies of transportation for the Canadian elderly are clearly demonstrated by the report of Canada's National Advisory Council on Aging (1993) that 25 percent of those over the age of 65 experienced problems with transportation in 1990.

Personal mobility, the ability to travel from place to place, is an important component of independence and full participation in society. Adequacy of mobility directly impacts on a senior's independence and quality of life. Mobility represents self-sufficiency and engagement for older people. The maintenance of an older person's independence is reliant in part on access to the goods and services and social contacts necessary to a good quality of life. Accessibility is largely determined by an individual's level of mobility. There are several factors that affect the mobility of seniors including the decreasing physical, social and financial capacities of the individual and the opportunities and constraints encountered from an environmental perspective (AARP, 2000). As a result of these factors many elderly persons experience mobility restrictions. It is the provision of adequate transportation that can maintain the well-being of an elderly person regardless of mobility limitations (Andrew et al., 2000). Therefore, transportation is a key to an active and healthy old age, but inadequate transportation leads to the isolation of the elderly (Wachs, 1988).

The issue of transportation for the elderly population is a relatively new area of concern. The question of transportation for seniors was first brought to the forefront at the 1971 White House Conference on Aging where delegates ranked mobility third in importance preceded by income and health (Carp, 1972). The conference identified a key research area to be the effect of transportation upon an older person's ability to satisfy maintenance needs and its impact on quality of life. As a result, greater efforts have been made in the last decades to understand the problems associated with aging and decreasing mobility (Hallman et al., 1993).

1.2 The Provision of Transportation for Seniors in Winnipeg

The need to focus on improved transportation for seniors is underscored by the increasing elderly population. In Manitoba, concerns related to growing older are particularly pronounced as 13.6% of the population was 65 years of age and older in 1996 compared to 12.1% for Canada as a whole (Statistics Canada, 1996). The issues surrounding aging will become more acute as it is projected that the national proportion of persons 65 and over will increase to 22.6% by 2041. Furthermore, the most rapidly growing segment of the senior population will be those 75 years of age and over. While this age cohort presently represents 5.4% of the Canadian population, this proportion is projected to increase to 12.1% by 2041 (Statistics Canada, 1999). Consequently, issues of mobility will become increasingly important due to the growing number of frail elderly requiring greater support (AARP, 2000).

The issue of an aging population and the provision of adequate transportation for seniors is an increasingly significant area of concern in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority has projected that the population 55 years of age and over will almost double in the city from 144,377 in 1998 to 233,840 in 2025. As the elderly population increases, there is growing concern about the provision of adequate transportation for older adults in Winnipeg. There has been increasing recognition that many older adults are unable to access appropriate and effective transportation. Mobility in this urban center can be restricted by a variety of factors including the dispersion of services, winter conditions and inadequate transit and para-transit services. As the elderly population continues to grow in Winnipeg, the inadequacy of transportation services for those with mobility problems will become more acute. Therefore, it is essential to address the issue of transportation in Winnipeg and explore possible solutions that will ensure that the senior population can remain active members of our society.

There is now greater advocacy in the community to promote society's responsibility to address the transportation problems of our older members. As in other regions, there have been initiatives in the province of Manitoba to improve the mobility needs of seniors. Research has been conducted on the issue of mobility and seniors in Winnipeg (Heads, 1994; Finlayson, 1995, Sylvestre, 1996). As well, community representatives have expressed concern over the increasing mobility problems facing seniors in Winnipeg and the surrounding areas. Until now, these concerns have resulted in the development of small-scale, program specific transportation solutions.

In the past year a new impetus has emerged to address the mobility problems of seniors. A broad-based group of organizations and individuals have come together to create a working group that focuses specifically on transportation issues for seniors. The creation of the

Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group signals a new momentum. There is growing awareness that the mobility problems of older adults will only be solved if the community as a whole joins together to create solutions.

1.2 The Community-Building Process

The development of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group was a critical first step in bringing together various members of the community to work towards creating effective and sustainable solutions. The efforts of the Working Group have resulted in the important process of community-building. This process began, first, with the creation of the group. It was essential that the community come together to address mobility issues for seniors. Solutions to improve transportation provision for the elderly will only be effective if the community as a whole is committed to the endeavor.

Once the Working Group was created, three specific goals were envisioned within the community-building process. First, the Working Group worked together to identify the issues and opportunities relevant to transportation for seniors in Winnipeg. It was through the ensuing discussions of the Working Group that the second goal, to develop recommendations for improved mobility for older adults, was accomplished. This final report presents these recommendations and, as such, the report is regarded to be part of the community-building process. It must be emphasized that without the diligent efforts and cooperation of the members of the Working Group, this report would not have been possible.

The final goal of the Working Group's community-building process is to develop solutions that emanate from the recommendations proposed in this report. The recommendations present a framework from which specific solutions can evolve. Therefore, it is the objective of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group that this final report will lead to the creation and implementation of solutions to the mobility issues now affecting the senior population.

1.3 Objectives of the Working Group

Representatives from community-based organizations and municipal and provincial governments, as well as service providers and seniors have come together with the objective of addressing the mobility problems experienced by older adults in Winnipeg and the surrounding areas. After initial discussions by the group it was agreed that before action could be taken, it was necessary to, first, identify the main issues of mobility for seniors, and, secondly, to develop recommendations that

will lead to effective transportation solutions. As a result, the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group developed a research project with the following objectives (Appendix A):

- To collect available knowledge of transportation problems for seniors
- To identify potential solutions
- To develop consensus on initial strategies

Based on these objectives, the group consulted with various representatives of the community to document transportation problems and to develop recommendations that will be effective in ensuring the active mobility of the older population. In the following sub-section, the data collection methods of the project are reviewed.

1.4 Data Collection

Data collection for the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group project was conducted during the period between September, 2000, and March, 2001. Information for the project was garnered from three main sources:

- 1) The working group has consulted on an individual basis with community, government and business members regarding the issues surrounding transportation for the older population.
- 2) A series of focus groups were conducted to gain the perspective of participants regarding their views on mobility problems for seniors, as well as their ideas about possible solutions. These focus groups consisted of seniors, representatives from disability groups, and ethno-cultural seniors groups. The structure and findings of these focus groups are described in Appendices B and C.
- 3) An inventory of transportation services available to older adults in Winnipeg was also conducted in order to identify the quality of services, as well as any gaps in service provision. The results of this inventory are found in Appendix D.

The Working Group has met on numerous occasions to discuss the findings of these information sources. These meetings have facilitated the development of consensus in the group regarding, first, the identification of mobility issues for seniors and, secondly, the development of recommendations to provide a framework for effective

and sustainable transportation solutions. The objective of this report is to describe these findings and consensus.

1.5 Organization of the Report

The goal of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group's final report is to provide a framework from which solutions to transportation for seniors can evolve. This final report represents the next step for the group to outline the issue of transportation for older adults and provide recommendations to improve the mobility of Winnipeg seniors.

The final report consists of two primary components. The following section outlines a series of guiding principles developed in conjunction with the Manitoba Association on Gerontology. The objective of these principles is to direct the investigation and advancement of solutions for the mobility problems of seniors. Based on these principles, the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group has developed the recommendations that are summarized in the third section of the report. The Working Group considers these recommendations to be the starting point from which effective community partnerships will develop to bring about concrete solutions to the mobility issues facing seniors in Winnipeg and the surrounding area. A fourth and concluding section briefly discusses the next step for the Working Group to develop an Action Plan to carry out the implementation of the recommendations.

2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES: IMPROVING THE MOBILITY OF SENIORS

The principles established by the Manitoba Association on Gerontology, in conjunction with the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group, provide guidance to establish a framework of solutions that address the mobility problems of seniors. The guiding principles fall into three categories: (1) the foundations for the importance of unrestricted mobility for seniors; (2) the issues that create mobility limitations; and (3) the factors that must be considered to ensure optimum mobility of older adults. The guiding principles are defined within the context of these categories.

2.1 Mobility is a basic human right.

Unrestricted mobility is essential for the quality of life of all members of society. Unrestricted mobility must be regarded as a basic human right, that is, everyone is entitled to equal access to all resources provided in the community. It has been advocated that elderly individuals “are entitled to the mobility necessary for them to maintain adequate nourishment and good health, conduct personal business, engage in social relationships and pursue recreation” (Wachs, 1979: 213).

It is essential to recognize that if all are entitled to unrestricted mobility, then society must provide support for those members who encounter mobility limitations. Restricted access to resources in the community has created the disenfranchisement of several groups including the poor, the disabled and the elderly. In order to uphold the principle of equal opportunity to resources, solutions to these groups mobility problems must be addressed. Accessibility through appropriate transportation provision is a key element to respect this basic human right (Wourgaft, 1992).

2.2 Mobility is fundamental to the quality of life of older adults.

A basic determinant of the quality of life of all persons is unrestricted mobility that allows access to needed services and social and recreational outings (Wachs, 1988). In particular, mobility is critical to the physical, social and psychological well-being of older adults. Access to medical facilities and other social services is essential to maintain physical health. Social contact is dependent upon accessibility to family and friends, as well as recreational and cultural activities. Finally, mobility enhances the psychological health of the elderly by enabling the avoidance of isolation and allowing choice of activities.

The lack of appropriate transportation for elderly persons results in immobility and isolation that may contribute to other social and physical problems of the older individual. Inadequate transportation services restrict the living space of any person, limit self-sufficiency, restrict activities and contacts with other people, and may contribute to disengagement and alienation from society. Therefore, accessibility to transportation is an important component of the quality of life of older adults.

The relationship between transportation provision and the emotional and physical well-being of the elderly indicates that mobility issues must be integrated into health and social care solutions for seniors. Joseph and Fuller (1991) advocate that the generation of policy alternatives has been hampered by a sector-specific approach. The emphasis of policy has been on the delivery of health and social services to ensure that seniors can age within the community. However, it must be recognized that the key to the policies of aging-in-place and the delivery of services is adequate transportation. A new framework is required that integrates issues of health, housing, services and transportation.

The population health approach promotes the concept of many determinants of health, focusing not only on physical health but also incorporating social health and psychological health (WHO, 1984). This approach advocates the need for the provision of supports to improve and maintain health. Fox and Gooding (1998) identify transportation to be one such support that is required to ensure access for many older adults to social support networks and health services.

It has been suggested that the provision of applicable modes of transportation might be considered as a determinant of health if transportation can moderate the effect of mobility limitations (Andrews et al., 2000). Therefore, health and social policy that promotes the independent living of seniors in the community must support the improvement of transportation provision. Improvements in access through the provision of transport and mobility services can be a major contributor to the quality of life of individuals who are transportation disadvantaged. Transportation strategies that are most effective in reducing the inadequacies of mobility will improve the well-being of the elderly population (Patrick, 1992).

2.3 Mobility is affected by the aging process.

Despite the importance of mobility for the quality of life of older persons, many seniors experience mobility restrictions as a result of declining physical, social and financial resources. The vast majority of trips made by elderly persons are made in a private vehicle (Rosenbloom, 1993). The automobile is key to mobility and feelings of independence. However, the ability to drive can be impacted upon by the aging process.

For example, changes in visual capability, loss of cognitive ability or other major changes in health can alter the ability of an individual to walk or drive a car (Fozard, 2000). In addition, a decrease in social supports and financial resources can affect an older person's access to the unrestricted mobility offered by the automobile.

The issue for older adults is the transition from independent mobility to dependency on transportation provision. This transition is often complicated by the lack of transportation alternatives that meet the physical and emotional needs of older riders (Stern & Stern, 2000). The mobility needs of seniors vary depending on a wide assortment of factors including their level of health, their social support networks, their financial resources, as well as their ethno-cultural background. The development of transportation solutions for seniors must recognize that the mobility needs of seniors are diverse. Therefore, optimum types of transportation will vary throughout the population. The provision of transportation services must reflect that seniors have varying levels of mobility and that they require access to a wide assortment of services, social contacts and events.

2.4 Mobility is dependent on the accessibility afforded by the environment.

In addition to the declining competencies of the older person, mobility is also affected by components in the environment that obstruct accessibility. In effect, it is the combination of the aging process of the individual and environmental barriers that cause incongruities between the user and the type of transportation that is available (Golant, 1976). There is a consensus that inconvenient geographical location and environmental barriers, along with the increased propensity of the elderly to experience functional impairment, diminishing health and lower income, contribute to mobility problems (Golant, 1976, Carp, 1988).

A wide variety of environmental factors exist to create mobility limitations for seniors. The design of new transportation alternatives for older persons must incorporate these factors into the solutions. The walking environment, for example, is often not suitable for older adults because of uneven walking surfaces, traffic hazards and long distances to access services and social contacts. Public transportation can also be inappropriate because of long distances to bus stops, lack of assistance on the bus and the inappropriateness of bus routes for the needs of the older population.

Environmental factors in Manitoba demonstrate that issues of mobility must be addressed in terms of physical accessibility. One important factor that must be stressed is the extreme climatic conditions experienced in this province. Manitoba winters are characterized by a prolonged period of cold and snow. These conditions result in

particularly vulnerable situations for an older person's mobility. Cold temperatures and ice-packed roads and sidewalks create very dangerous environments for older persons to access services and social contacts. As a result, many Manitoban seniors are house-bound for months at a time. Although there has been very little investigation of the effect of extreme climatic conditions on the mobility of seniors, this factor must be considered in the development of policy to improve transportation for seniors in Manitoba (Haldemann & Wister, 1994; Klinger-Zepic, 1995).

Transportation solutions for Manitoban seniors must also take into account that older persons live in a variety of environments and that mobility is affected by the local characteristics of each environment. In Winnipeg, the major urban center of the province, seniors live in both inner city and suburban locations. The availability of transportation, as well as health and social services, varies in these two distinct environments. As Rosenbloom (1988) has emphasized, mobility issues reflect the local conditions of transportation options and the ease of accessibility to desired services and social contacts.

Manitoba also has a great number of rural elderly. Mobility issues in rural areas are distinct for the older population because of long distances, heavy reliance on automobile use and the lack of transportation alternatives (Grant & Rice, 1982; Glasgow & Blakely, 2000). The rural elderly are considered as "transport dependent" because the lack of public transportation requires that they rely on others for mobility (Joseph & Mathews, 1994).

The varying environments in which Manitoban seniors live suggest that a wide-range of transportation solutions must be developed. These solutions must recognize the impact of local environmental conditions on the mobility of an older person. There must be equal opportunity to mobility throughout the province, however, local issues and conditions must drive research and solution development.

2.5 Mobility optimization is dependent on the needs of seniors.

There are several needs specific to the aging population that must be considered as key elements of transportation provision. It is only with the inclusion of these elements in the development of solutions that the mobility of seniors can be optimized. The provision of the following elements is essential in order that seniors have equal opportunities to mobility:

- **Safety**

Mobility solutions must ensure the safety of the older adult.

- **Affordability**

Mobility solutions must be affordable to ensure accessibility to all seniors.

- **Assistance**

Because of the varying levels of personal mobility of seniors, solutions must ensure the provision of assistance, including escort services, if required.

- **Equal access of mobility provision for all trip types.**

The well-being of seniors is dependent not only on access to medical services, but also on access to other services and social resources. Therefore, mobility solutions for seniors must ensure that medical, as well as trips for shopping and social outings are regarded of equal importance.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The principles outlined above have provided the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group with a framework from which to develop the recommendations. Furthermore, the development of the recommendations has been based on the information obtained in the data collection component of the project. This information has illustrated: (1) the availability of transportation services in Winnipeg; (2) the benefits and limitations of various transportation types; and (3) ideas on how to improve the mobility of seniors. In this section, recommendations are presented that include ideas to improve present transportation services, as well as proposals for new alternatives to address the mobility needs of a growing elderly population.

The recommendations are outlined based on a categorization of transportation types:

- Independent mobility
- Volunteer transportation
- Public transportation
- Private transportation
- Community transportation

In each category, the mobility provided to seniors by the transportation type is first discussed. This is followed by an overview of the availability to seniors of the transportation option in Winnipeg. The benefits and limitations of the transportation type are then reviewed, followed by a list of opportunities to take advantage of the benefits and to address the limitations of each transportation type. Finally, the recommendations to improve the various transportation modes are outlined.

3.1 Independent Mobility

Transportation that allows an older person to use his or her own personal resources in order to get around is regarded to be independent mobility. The two types of independent mobility considered in this report are walking and driving a car.

Walking

Walking as a mode of transportation is regarded to be important for the elderly population because it promotes independence and well-being. However, walking is not considered to be a feasible option for many seniors because of their declining health and functional capacities. In addition,

there are several factors in the environment that limit the ability of older persons to consider walking as an alternative form of transportation. Uneven walking services and traffic hazards are two reasons why many seniors do not walk. In addition, the icy and cold conditions prevalent in Winnipeg deter not only older adults, but also many other members of society from walking. Finally, the dispersed nature of services and social opportunities in Winnipeg means that walking is often not an option because of long distances. In order for walking to be considered as a mobility alternative for seniors, measures must be taken to improve the walking environment.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes independence • Promotes an active lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased physical functioning inhibits ability to walk • Traffic hazards • Uneven walking surfaces • Icy and cold conditions put seniors at risk • Distant services cannot be accessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Marked accessible paths ** research being conducted ⇒ Improved walking environment ⇒ Improved snow removal ⇒ Accessible services

Recommendations to promote walking as a mobility option for seniors:

- Investigate means to create marked accessible paths that limit the risk of traffic hazards.
- Investigate ways to improve walking surfaces.
- Investigate ways to improve snow removal.
- Initiate dialogue with businesses and service providers to improve the accessibility of services.

Driving

Driving is considered to be the ideal mobility option for seniors. It promotes independence and allows the older individual flexibility in his or her choice of destinations. However, the aging process can diminish an older person’s ability to drive. With decreasing functional capacities, a senior may limit driving to the daytime and may only drive to destinations close to home. Opportunities for driving are also reduced for many seniors during the winter months because of the dangerous driving conditions

caused by ice and snow. In addition, the decreasing financial resources of an older individual may limit the ability to own and maintain a car. Independence and well-being can be sustained if older drivers are provided with resources that allow them to continue to drive. Therefore, solutions must explore alternative options that assist the elderly driver.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes independence • Unlimited access to services and social contacts • Flexibility and choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased physical functioning inhibits ability to drive especially at night and during the winter • Traffic hazards reduce where a senior will drive • Decreased financial resources create difficulties to own and maintain a car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Driver education ⇒ Park-and-Ride system ⇒ Financial incentives

Recommendations to promote driving as a mobility option for seniors:

- Promote Creative Retirement’s driver education program that provides seniors with resources to continue to drive.
- Investigate “Park-and-Ride” system that allows seniors to drive in their residential area while parking their car when they travel to further destinations.
- Investigate options to promote financial incentives that allow seniors to maintain car.

3.2 Volunteer Transportation

Volunteer transportation is defined to be transportation that is provided to an elderly individual in a private vehicle. There are two forms of this transportation type. The first are rides from friends and family. And the second is a formalized volunteer transportation system that has been established in Winnipeg.

Rides from Friends and Family

Apart from driving oneself, the most frequent form of transportation used by seniors is rides from friends and family (Burkhardt, 2000). Family and friends provide older adults with essential mobility for all trip types including medical appointments, shopping and social opportunities. The senior is provided with door-to-door service and escort assistance. In addition, this type of transportation is economical for older persons.

Despite the importance of this transportation type it must be recognized that older persons may feel a loss of independence as they view themselves as an imposition to their friends and family. Furthermore, those providing the rides are often elderly themselves and the task of providing mobility can be difficult. The provision of rides can also be arduous for friends and family from the perspective of lost time from work, and the cost of gas and parking. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of rides from friends and family. Without this transportation resource, the community would be faced with far greater issues concerning the mobility of seniors. Therefore, it is essential to explore means to promote and support this mobility option.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Door-to-door assistance• Escort assistance• Flexibility and choice• All trip types• Financially feasible for seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of independence, fear of imposing• Arduous for older driver• Cost of lost work, time parking and gas for few available friends and family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Recognition of the unpaid work of caregivers⇒ Income tax incentive to assist driver⇒ Insurance incentives

Recommendations to promote rides from friends and family as a mobility option for seniors:

- Explore possibilities to recognize the importance of the unpaid work of those who provide rides to seniors including income tax and insurance incentives.

Volunteer Driver Programs

Formal volunteer driving programs have been developed through the senior resource councils of Winnipeg. These programs have been established to provide seniors with a door-to-door, escort service that recognizes the importance of all trip types. The individual resource councils arrange for volunteers to provide rides to seniors who pay a small amount to cover gas expenses. It is an ideal service for seniors who cannot rely on friends and family for rides. The older individual feels a sense of independence while being provided with a safe mobility option.

However, there are several limitations associated with this type of transportation service. The senior resource councils have been unable to recruit sufficient numbers of volunteers for the needs of the older population in their respective areas. As a result, only a small number of persons are able to use the service and the mobility needs of many seniors go unmet. Furthermore, those who do receive rides must make arrangements well in advance that limits their ability to be spontaneous. In addition, the amount paid to the volunteer by the rider is insufficient particularly with increasing gasoline costs.

There have been many suggestions on how to improve this transportation service. In particular, it has been emphasized that the programs must be centralized in order to amalgamate the resources of all the programs. It has also been suggested that the importance of the unpaid work of volunteers must be recognized. However, the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group has concluded that it is perhaps more prejudicial to recognize the limitations of these programs in terms of supplying rides for seniors. Instead, attention should be focused on innovative solutions that can provide mobility to a much larger group of seniors.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence • Door-to-door assistance • Escort assistance • Flexibility and choice • All trip types • Financially feasible for seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited number of volunteers • Needs of all seniors cannot be met • 2-3 day notice for ride • Donation insufficient to cover expenses of volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Centralize programs to increase resources ⇒ Income tax incentive to assist driver ⇒ Insurance incentives

Recommendations to promote volunteer driver programs as a mobility option for seniors:

- Investigate possibilities of centralizing volunteer driving programs in order to increase volunteer resources
- Explore possibilities to recognize the importance of the unpaid work of those who provide rides to seniors including income tax and insurance incentives.
- Recognize the limitations of this transportation type, and consider new solutions that will provide appropriate mobility to a larger proportion of the elderly population.

3.3 Public Transportation

Mobility options provided by public sector are categorized under public transportation. In Winnipeg, there are two forms of public transportation. First, there is a scheduled bus service that provides accessibility throughout the city. Secondly, a para-transit system developed for the disabled is also available.

Scheduled Bus Service

The transit system available in Winnipeg is an important form of transportation for many seniors. The various routes provide access to most needed services in the city. In addition, it is an inexpensive mobility option. However, there are many factors that create difficulties for older persons to rely on scheduled bus service. Often the bus stop is not within easy walking distance for many seniors particularly when carrying parcels and in the winter. In addition, many bus stops do not have shelters where one can sit and find protection from the cold. Older persons also encounter difficulties when entering the bus because of steps and the insensitivity of some drivers who start the bus before the elderly person is seated. The Winnipeg Transit system has attempted to address some of these issues by purchasing low-rise buses that can accommodate wheelchairs. However, these buses are of no value in the winter when icy conditions inhibit many seniors and disabled persons from accessing the bus stop. Improvements to the transit system must focus on ways to overcome the barriers that create problems of accessibility.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled service throughout the city • Financially feasible for consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long distance to bus stop -walking difficulties encountered especially with parcels and during the winter • Lack of bus shelters • Difficulty entering, sitting and exiting bus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Increase bus stops to ensure accessibility ⇒ Feeder service to connect with main routes ⇒ Increase number of bus shelters ⇒ Driver education for seniors needs

Recommendations to promote scheduled bus service as a mobility option for seniors:

- Promote the increase of bus stops and bus shelters.
- Investigate the feasibility of a feeder system that would provide pick-up service at the home and connect passengers with main routes.
- Promote driver education that will sensitize drivers to the needs of the older population.

Handi-Transit

The para-transit system in Winnipeg, known as Handi-Transit, was originally developed to service the disabled community. It provides economical door-to-door service and wheelchair accessibility. This type of service is ideal for the frail elderly. However, as the aging population has grown, it has become increasingly difficult for Handi-Transit to service both the disabled and elderly communities.

There are many problems with Handi-Transit that have been well documented. These problems include a complex booking system that is not easily accessible to elderly persons who have not adapted to technological innovations. The service also requires 48-hour advance notice that does not allow for spontaneity. In addition, because of limited resources and high demand, Hand-Transit prioritizes rides for employment and medical purposes. This means that all too often older persons cannot access the mobility they require for grocery shopping and to attend social outings. And finally, users of Handi-Transit often complain that drivers do not provide sufficient assistance or are rude.

The Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group has considered the possibility that rather than attempting to improve the existing system, it is

necessary to develop a new type of system specific for seniors. It is envisioned that Handi-Transit would remain as a service specifically for the disabled community, and that a new system would be developed to address the needs of the older population. It should be noted that Handi-Transit contracts out to private transportation companies. It is important to keep this in mind as new mobility options are explored.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door service with wheelchair accessibility • Financially feasible for consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking system difficult to access • 48 hour advance booking • Lack of assistance by drivers • Rides for medical purposes emphasized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Simplify booking system interfaces ⇒ Decrease time for advance booking ⇒ Driver education for seniors needs ⇒ New senior para-transit service

Recommendations to promote para-transit service as a mobility option for seniors:

- Promote easier accessibility of the booking system and decrease the time for advance booking.
- Promote driver education that will sensitize drivers to the needs of the older population.
- Investigate possibility of a new senior bus system that will provide rides for all trip purposes.

3.4 Private Transportation

There are a variety of private companies in Winnipeg that provide transportation services for seniors. A range of vehicle types exists including taxis, wheelchair vans and buses. These transportation services are ideal for older adults because they offer door-to-door service to any desired destination. However, the major drawback of these services is the cost. Most seniors cannot afford to utilize these mobility options on a regular basis because it is prohibitively expensive. A further criticism of private companies is the lack of awareness of drivers to the needs of seniors.

Nonetheless, the Winnipeg Senior Transportation Working Group regards this transportation option to be an important consideration when developing

solutions to address the mobility problems of seniors. Just as Handi-Transit uses private transportation companies, these same companies could be part of the solution for a new transportation service for seniors.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door service • Flexibility • All trip types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive • Drivers unaware of the needs of seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Driver education for seniors needs ⇒ Part of solution for a new type of service for seniors

Recommendations to promote private transportation services as a mobility option for seniors:

- Promote driver education that will sensitize drivers to the needs of the older population.
- Investigate the role of private transportation in a new senior bus system that will provide rides for all trip purposes.

3.5 Community Transportation

Community transportation represents a broad category of transportation types. For the purpose of this report, two community transportation types have been identified. The first is transportation programs for seniors provided by non-profit organizations. The second is referred to as “Safeway Buses”.

Non-Profit Senior Transportation Programs

Several non-profit organizations in Winnipeg have established transportation services for seniors. The inventory of transportation services (Appendix D) provides a detailed description of the various programs. The key element of all these services is that door-to-door service is provided for specific programs. In some cases, the non-profit organization provides a vehicle for the service. Some programs contract out to private companies to provide transportation services.

The Winnipeg Senior Transportation Working Group has identified this transportation option to be a model for a new type of community

transportation for seniors. It is envisioned that a senior transportation service would provide community mobility to specific destinations based on door-to-door service. At the present time, non-profit senior transportation programs are dispersed throughout the city and have a limited impact on the mobility needs of seniors. However, the existence of these transportation services demonstrates that resources exist to address the mobility problems of the older population.

The Working Group proposes the establishment of a hybrid community transportation system for seniors that creates a partnership amongst those involved in senior transportation: non-profit organizations, the government and private transportation companies. Such a service would marry the benefit of established infrastructure, public funding and private senior-friendly service.

A community-based transportation system for seniors would emphasize the importance of solutions that emanate from the community. It would be more responsive to local needs and consider where seniors are located. Such a system would provide the opportunity to be more sensitive to the needs of a homogeneous group of seniors. For example, a community transportation system could be more responsive to the needs of various ethno-cultural groups. A community-based system would also be more responsive to the issues of poverty as they pertain to seniors and mobility. It is important to note the findings of the focus groups that, in general, seniors would be willing to pay between \$5 and \$10 for door-to-door round-trip service.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door service for specific programs or destinations. • Sensitivity to the needs of ethno-cultural and language groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are ideal but must be extended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Model for a new type community transportation ⇒ Coordination of resources to facilitate sharing

Recommendations to promote non-profit services as a mobility option for seniors:

- Explore the various non-profit transport services to determine their contribution as a model for a new hybrid community transportation service for seniors.

Safeway Buses

This type of transportation refers to businesses that have established transportation services to bring seniors to their businesses. Safeway is the most well known of these businesses. In conjunction with Tilden Rental, Safeway provides a van service mainly from apartment blocks to the grocery store. It has become an essential service for many elderly persons who experience difficulties in transporting their groceries.

Another example of the involvement of the private sector pertains to mall walking. In Fort Garry, car dealerships provide vans to transport seniors to the St. Vital Mall for mall walking during the winter. This illustrates the possibilities of creating partnerships with the private sector.

As with transport services provided by non-profit organizations, this transport type is limited to a specific destination. Older persons speak very highly of these services and voice a desire for the extension of this transportation option. "Safeway buses" illustrate that the business community must be part of the solution to provide effective transportation services for seniors. Therefore, the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group proposes that a new hybrid community transportation system for seniors must include the partnership of not only non-profit organizations, the government and private transportation companies, but also the business community. The need for improved transportation services for seniors provides an opportunity for corporate citizenship by the private sector.

BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Businesses provide scheduled service to shopping outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most services provided only for apartment-dwellers• Scheduling insufficient for seniors needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Extended service to community elderly⇒ Promote provision of service by other businesses⇒ Part of solution for a new type of service for seniors

Recommendations to promote transportation services provided by commercial businesses as a mobility option for seniors:

- Consult with the business community to expand transportation services provided by commercial outlets.

- Explore with the business community possibilities of their contribution to a model for a new hybrid community transportation service for seniors.

3.5 Summary of Recommendations

This section has provided an overview of the recommendations proposed by the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group to improve the mobility of older adults in Winnipeg. These recommendations can be summarized as follows:

- Improvements to the walking environment.
- Identification of resources to maintain an older person's ability to drive.
- Creation of incentives to promote rides by friends and family.
- Amendments to the organizational structure of formalized volunteer ride systems for seniors.
- Improvements in accessibility to scheduled bus service.
- Improvements in accessibility to Handi-Transit
- The incorporation of private, public and community-based transportation services to develop a new senior transportation service.

It is the objective of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group that these recommendations will be the basis from which solutions for improved mobility of seniors can be developed. In the final section, the next step of the process, that is the actions that must be taken in order to create effective and sustainable solutions, will be outlined.

4 IMPLEMENTATION: ACTION PLAN

The Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group has developed a broad-ranging list of recommendations to improve the mobility of seniors. These recommendations include strategies to improve existing transportation services, as well as the vision of a new community transportation service for seniors. The next step for the group will be to determine an action plan on how to implement these recommendations in the form of viable solutions. This action plan will include the following steps:

- 1) Establishment of priorities
- 2) Inventory of resources
- 3) Development of partnerships including:
 - Municipal, provincial and federal levels of government
 - Research institutions
 - Special interests groups including:
 - religious and ethno-cultural organizations
 - disability associations
 - community associations
 - Businesses
 - Public/Non-Profit/For Profit Transportation Service Providers
 - Medical and Social Service Providers
- 4) Identification of initiatives in other winter cities to address mobility problems for seniors including improvements to existing systems of transportation, as well as new models of mobility provision for older persons
- 5) Identification of issues for advocacy
- 6) Identification of areas for public awareness and education
- 7) Identification of further issues to address and investigate including:
 - a. This project has looked specifically at Winnipeg and the surrounding areas. Further investigation must consider the issues concerning transportation for rural Manitoban seniors.
 - b. Aboriginal issues: a brief discussion with First Nation Elders demonstrated that this group has specific issues and needs concerning mobility. Therefore, further analysis is required to determine solutions with the elder Aboriginal people.
 - c. The project did not specifically address the effects of poverty on mobility, but it did recognize its serious limitations. Further investigation is required to determine the relationship between aging, poverty and

mobility as this will inform solutions developed in certain parts of the city.

- d. The diversity of the aging population is well recognized to be an important component in determining mobility solutions. Therefore, further investigation of the varying needs of seniors must be investigated in order to inform appropriate solutions.

The Action Plan provides a starting point from which to develop and implement solutions based on the recommendations discussed in this report. The recommendations have been summarized in Appendix E. In addition to the recommendations, an “Action” column has been included. This column serves to initiate the next step of the community-building process that will ultimately lead to the improved mobility of seniors in Winnipeg.

The objective of the Winnipeg Seniors Transportation Working Group at its inception was, first, to identify the main issues related to older adults’ mobility and, secondly, to develop consensus in terms of appropriate action to be taken. It is anticipated by the Working Group that the development and implementation of solutions based on the recommendations presented in this final report will address the mobility problems currently facing the older population. By adopting a long-term perspective, it is hoped that mobility will be enhanced for the coming generations of seniors in our society.

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APPENDIX A

Seniors Transportation Working Group

Initial Research Project Plan

September 20, 2000

Project Description:

Transportation plays a vital part in keeping seniors active and well. A broad-based group of organizations have come together with a compelling interest in working on this issue. The purpose of this project is to collect the available knowledge of transportation problems for seniors, identify potential solutions, and develop consensus on initial pilots projects and strategies.

Project Scope:

This project will collect sufficient background and research material to allow participants to brainstorm alternative solutions. No further research such as community-based surveys will be used, rather data currently available is deemed sufficient to define the problems. The project will not include feasibility studies of recommended alternatives.

The group will focus on transportation issues facing seniors in the city of Winnipeg as well as St. Norbert and East and West St. Paul.

Deliverables:

The project will result in

1. a report to include:
 - Current Inventory of available transportation programs and services
 - Definition of the problem using the MAG Position Paper
 - Alternative models in use or planned elsewhere
 - Documentation of alternatives from focus group sessions
 - Proposed Strategies and Recommendations including the ongoing role, if any, for the Working Group
2. a proposal for application to the Population Health Fund for implementation pilot projects.

Resources and Roles:

Project Sponsor – Manitoba Association of Gerontology will administer funding on behalf of the working group. Also, the MAG Policy Committee is preparing a position paper that will provide background on and definition of the problem(s).

Seniors Transportation Working Group – co-chaired by Faye Rosenberg-Cohen and Linda Rigaux (membership list attached). The full working group will meet to:

- review and accept the project plan;
- provide available material on problem definition and current inventory;
- volunteer as hosts and facilitators for focus groups;
- meet to set priorities for potential solutions;
- review and accept final report and proposal.

Steering Committee – A small group will meet every 2 to 3 weeks to review progress, provide direction to the Research Assistant, and adjust the plan as required. They will also be responsible for pursuing additional funding. Steering Committee members are noted with an * on the Working Group membership list

Focus Groups – collections of “stakeholders” who will be invited to meet and contribute potential solutions

Research Assistant – an individual who will be contracted to perform research, coordination, and documentation tasks.

Research Supervisor – Gina Sylvestre has agreed to supervise the research assistant on a day-to-day basis.

Co-chairs – will provide project management, call and chair meetings, and represent the Working Group to others

Task Plan:

	<u>Task</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Estimated Hours</u>
1	Research		
1.1	Collect inventory of what is used in the community.	Coordinators and other members of Working Group to supply	
1.2	Assemble existing brochures, and phone numbers.	Research Assistant	25
1.3	Document inventory - Make a list for use and distribution by others	Research Assistant	25
1.4	Contact other cold climate communities for their experience and plans, such as Edmonton, Minneapolis, European winter cities	Research Assistant	25
1.5	Literary Search for other projects	Research Assistant, with the assistance of Gina Sylvestre	25
2	Brainstorm Long Term Solutions		
	Focus Groups with various stakeholders (5 to 10)(Stakeholders include seniors, transportation service providers - public and private, ethnic communities, seniors service providers, other potential users, and the Working Group)	Research Assistant to coordinate and document. Volunteer Facilitators and Hosts from Working Group	75
3	Develop recommendations		
3.1	Determine strategies and recommendations.	Working Group	
3.2	Develop alternatives for pilot projects with partners	Working Group	
3.3	Prioritize alternatives for pilot projects	Working Group	
3.4	Draft Report	Working Group Steering Committee, with the assistance of the Research Assistant	25
4	Develop project proposal for Population Health Fund	Working Group Steering Committee	
			200

Budget:

In kind contributions will include mailing, long distance, and hosting expenses. Direct expenses anticipated for this research project are estimated as:

Contract with Research Assistant	\$3,500
Focus Group Expenses, such as transportation for seniors	<u>500</u>
	\$4,000

Appendix B

Seniors Transportation Focus Groups: Seniors Groups

One objective of the seniors transportation project was to conduct a number of focus groups with seniors and service providers to obtain information on the mobility limitations of older adults, as well as insights into possible solutions to address these transportation problems. A total of seven focus groups were conducted in November and December, 2000. This section will outline the composition of the focus groups, the objectives of the focus groups and a summary of the results.

Composition of the Focus Groups

The Seniors Transportation Working Group recognizes that the mobility issues encountered by seniors varies depending on the area of the city in which they live. Therefore, it was essential to define representative areas of Winnipeg to ensure that the various mobility problems and locational issues would be addressed in all the focus groups. The group established five areas of Winnipeg in which the focus groups would be conducted: inner city, north, south-east, west and east. In addition, two Francophone focus groups were conducted in St. Boniface and Winnipeg south to address mobility issues specific to the Francophone community in Winnipeg.

The coordinators of senior resource councils were responsible to organize the focus groups. They organized the date and location of the meetings. In addition, they identified and invited seniors, volunteer drivers and service providers to participate in the focus groups. In all cases, the seniors were provided with transportation if required. The composition of the focus groups is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Composition of Focus Groups:
Number of Seniors, Volunteer Drivers and Service Providers

Focus Group	Seniors	Volunteer Drivers	Service Providers
Inner City	9	1	3
North	6	1	5
Southeast	9	3	5
West	8	1	1
East	8	1	2
South-French	11	3	3
St. Boniface-French	5	1	3

Objectives of the Focus Groups

Several community representatives were assigned to facilitate the focus groups. To ensure consistency in the collection of information, a set of objectives were developed. The Terms of Reference for the Focus Groups were as follows:

(i) Each facilitator was to establish that the purpose of the focus groups was to collect information on the transportation problems of seniors and identify possible solutions.

(ii) In order to set the baseline of discussion, the participants were asked to discuss the types of transportation they or their clients presently used and identify the opportunities and limitations offered by these mobility types.

(iii) Participants were asked to brainstorm regarding ideas for transportation that would best suit their or their clients' need.

(iv) After discussing possible solutions, participants were then asked to determine what the cost should be to users of such a service.

Themes from Data Analysis

Baseline Questions

Question #1: What type of transportation do you or your clients use now and in what way is it inadequate?

Question #2: What do you like about it?

Categories of Responses

Handi-Transit

“You have to fit into their schedule; they do not fit into your schedule” a HT user.

Responses address very thoroughly the problems and benefits of Handi-Transit. These include:

- (1) Many seniors maintain that the HT system works very well for them. There seems to be quite a bit of unevenness with respect to satisfied and unsatisfied HT customers.
- (2) There is very inefficient use of HT. Some people who do not really need the specialized service receive it because they are going to medical appointments (e.g., dialysis). People who are leaving from the same location or going to the same location have to book separate vans (this is especially notable when spouses are not allowed to go together to the same location).
- (3) Some say that the staff (i.e., drivers) are not trained well enough to provide a safe and efficient service, although others say the drivers were helpful and courteous.

- (4) The booking system is difficult for people with memory impairment, hearing problems or who are easily confused by complex processes (i.e., the booking period, confirmation necessary, only a five minute wait before they leave without you and two late shows [senior missed the van] means no further service). Sometimes the bookings get mixed up and the van arrives too early. This may also be related to the long waiting periods that many seniors complain about. The booking system precludes the ability to do many small necessary errands in conjunction with medical appointments; although one person says she plans such errands for the expected long waiting period before being picked up again.
- (5) The 48-hour booking requirement is frequently noted as a major problem, as this drastically limits transportation for last minute openings in medical appointment, and needs other than medical appointments. HT service is too limited to benefit seniors in the areas where it is most needed.
- (6) HT was originally developed as a service for people with disabilities, especially for those going to work. It was not developed for seniors and maybe with the past funding cuts the system is unable to service all the seniors needing it. The frequency of one way trips is a problem for some because this service is no good if you cannot get home. Also it becomes difficult waiting and waiting for the ride to come. It is questioned whether or not people should be able to use HT for going to church, etc. One person feels her exercise classes are very important for her health but she can not get two-way service. Also if one person cancels, the ride may be canceled for all the others who were booked. They will lose out especially if their need is for activities such as adapted exercise which is not considered vital.
- (7) Some seniors complain that HT will not provide service to people outside the city perimeter, even if they live just across the highway from someone who is receiving service.
- (8) There is a range of perceptions regarding abuse of the HT service. One person comments that she knows of a woman who uses the service although the woman's husband has a car and a van. There is the situation where people going for dialysis can receive HT but it is perceived that they are able to take a bus or taxi. Is there abuse of the system or are the rules of qualification unevenly applied? One senior notes that HT told her the drivers are subcontractors.
- (9) Some seniors note that Gull Wing and Vital Transit are more accessible than HT but are naturally more expensive.

Organized Bus or Van Service

- (1) A representative for an organization who provides group bus service for program participants says that if this service is not provided many people will not show up for the programs. Many of these people can

arrange to get to the centre but cannot get home without the centre's assistance. This bus service is very costly for the centre.

- (2) Safeway grocery van service is mentioned often. Some seniors note that despite it not being seniors' discount day the local Safeway will give the van group the discount on the day they arrange. Some seniors have problems with the timing of such service, the sign-up for the service, the length of time being too short or long etc.

Taxis

Responses briefly cover the idea of taxis as an important service despite its expense. However the taxi service remains for many a less than ideal because of their need for escort and assistance.

- (1) Many seniors feel that even if they could afford a taxi as a service it does not provide needed assistance.
- (2) Not all seniors are comfortable complaining to the taxi board about rudeness, abuse, or lack of assistance.
- (3) Both the Duffy's and the Unicity Companies are cited as the best and the worst companies to deal with.
- (4) Some seniors feel they cannot trust the taxi drivers.
- (5) Some drivers get angry when senior needs only a very short trip (three blocks).

City Transit Buses

Responses describe how the transit system could be better used by seniors if there were better supports for accessibility and assistance.

- (1) Winter is identified as a problem when using the city transit system. Sometimes it is impossible to walk outside in the winter. Therefore on a good day (i.e., a nice winter day) it is possible for some seniors to take the bus. On bad and difficult winter days some seniors will use HT. Overall the point is repeated often that seniors can have difficulty negotiating the sidewalks, the streets, and the accesses to transit stops during the winter.
- (2) Some areas of the city are identified as having poor transit service (St. Norbert) while others have none accessible to seniors (E and W St. Paul). One senior moved to an area where the service is better (inner city; i.e., is now closer to a bus stop than when living in St. James). Another senior in E and W St. Paul says that due to limited eyesight she cannot see the cars on the highway therefore is unable to cross and make use of the limited bus service (Selkirk bus?). A van service created in E and W St. Paul has become overwhelmed by people commuting to work and as a result is unavailable to seniors. Another person comments that the service in the inner city is very good.
- (3) One problem with city transit is that it does not solve the problem of getting the groceries home.
- (4) One person notes that with a bit of help some people with disabilities (e.g., people with visual impairment) can use the transit system

- (particularly the 'easy access' buses). Some seniors note that wheelchairs need to be strapped in on the bus and this takes up a large number of seats at the front which are needed by other seniors.
- (5) Related to point #4 is that there are people using HT that could be using the transit system; however for this to occur it is noted that more easy access buses are needed on all routes. Also there are people who receive HT service for medical appointments who must use the transit system for everything else, such as grocery shopping. And this is related to the issue that grocery shopping is not considered important to seniors' health!

Volunteer Driver Services

“When you live to 94, some of their family is too ill [to drive them]” a senior.

Responses described both the great value of this service as well as the great difficulty in providing this service adequate to the demand.

- (1) Many people described how their lives are very isolated without the volunteer drivers who provide access to many aspects of life that most people take for granted. These aspects include visiting with relatives or grown children; church; shopping for food and other necessities; shopping for entertainment; medical appointments; support groups; community involvement such as the focus group; exercise classes; banking; recreational activities. Another related benefit of this type of service is that the seniors feel safer with the volunteer than they would venturing out alone. For seniors in E and W St. Paul this service can be the only way for them to get to vital appointment such as those at the cancer clinic. Since the distances are so great and the escort important in those instances the driver does not leave the senior but waits maybe two to three hours for the person. This problem of distances and time is reiterated by the people in St. Norbert.
- (2) There are some problems associated with providing a volunteer service. These include: Some people willing to volunteer do not have their own car; the cost and wear and tear on cars can be substantial (one program lost their van to the high cost of maintenance) and there is little or no compensation; the time commitment of an all day escort can be a burden; there may be too few drivers for the demand causing the resource coordinators to take on driving and so being unable to coordinate other services. Volunteers note that many of them are unable to put wheelchairs into their cars. When transporting frail seniors, seniors with disorientation, seniors in need of continual support many volunteers note that the drop off arrangements at many places (medical centres etc.) are very inadequate and possibly very dangerous. Often volunteers need to leave the senior alone to go park or will have to leave a car running to assist the senior.

- (3) From the client's perspective it can sometimes be a problem to fit appointments into the drivers schedule.
- (4) Volunteer drivers note many benefits to their clients. These include the look of happiness when the client is able to get out to appointments and occasions without difficulty. In areas such as E and W St. Paul the volunteer service is the only way seniors without friends or family can get around.
- (5) Awareness of available programs may not be wide spread among seniors as some seniors mentioned how difficult things were before they discovered their community program. It may be that seniors do not become aware of such programs until their situations are desperate (e.g., husband develops Alzheimer disease).
- (6) Assistance and escort service is an important aspect of the volunteer driver programs that many seniors identified as needed even within the HT and city transit system. Help with carrying bags and groceries, getting to buildings, negotiating complex buildings, as well as help with a spouse with a disability are noted. Taxi service is considered not always a good option because it is both very expensive and does not include the important escort service.
- (7) It is noted that volunteer drivers are insured under the WRHA.

Important Needs of Seniors

“All I do is drive to doctors, hospitals, and laundry” the daughter of a senior.

Responses addressed a variety of important needs seniors feel are difficult to meet without transportation assistance.

- (1) The need to remain independent is important to many seniors. This is especially noted by those who have some sort of disability (from stroke etc.). Transportation services mean they are not a burden to their families and so are able to maintain some independence and dignity. Medical appointments are mentioned as a priority need where seniors like to feel independent so as not to become a family burden.
- (2) The need to feel safe appears in relation to many aspect of transportation. Although most HT drivers are considered good, seniors complain occasionally that they feel unsafe with certain HT drivers. ‘Safety of person’ seems to be somewhat related to the freedom to get around or have help in doing so. Some seniors will not go anywhere without assistance. There is also a concern that seniors with specially-fitted wheelchairs should be able to have their own chairs rather than what may be an unsuitable one provided at the medical centre etc. This is both a safety and comfort issue; where seniors with wheelchairs are best served by being transported with their own wheelchair.
- (3) Grocery shopping is mentioned continually as both vitally important and extremely difficult to accomplish. For one woman who is coping

with a husband with Alzheimer disease, grocery shopping is considered her greatest 'transportation' difficulty. Some people are unable to access the Safeway van because the senior centre they live in has a Mini-Mart. Unfortunately the prices at the Mini-Mart make regular shopping there prohibitive. Others say that this service is just not available in their area.

- (4) A very important need of many seniors is for help when going home from the hospital. They said it is very hard to depend upon friends, neighbors, and family for this. Often this is a short notice need for which HT is of no use.
- (5) Working the system is mentioned as one of the only ways to meet life's necessities. For example one woman uses HT to go to a medical appointment but books it so she will have time to go shopping. One woman feels her needs do not get met because she doesn't know the rules of the system. The city transportation options are described by some resource coordinators as having a "hole in the system". Some seniors find the 'system' (whether HT or other service) to be so confusing they go without. One woman has to spend so much time driving her mother to appointments etc., that she is unable to maintain a career and they both suffer financially. She is unaware if or how the social system can help.
- (6) Social outings and recreation are continually referred to as unrecognized needs of seniors that are vital to health and quality of life. One woman goes to great lengths to maintain her mother's quality of life but the strain on her is great and in some ways she now spends so much of her time fulfilling her mother's vital needs that they have lost many of the recreational, quality of life benefits.

Related Services Used

Responses mention some services used by seniors that are transportation related.

- (1) Grocery related services are mentioned often and considered very important. These include grocery delivery for a reasonable cost; Safeway vans on a regular schedule. Note that some seniors say the Safeway van will pick up people who are not from the senior centre as long as they live 'along the route'. Other seniors say this is not provided. Some complain that space is limited on the Safeway vans and they may not get to 'sign up' in time. Some seniors are unaware of the Safeway van service. Seniors in E and W St. Paul note there is no grocery delivery service in their part of the city and HT will not drive to, or help people with shopping. Some seniors do not consider delivery service acceptable and want to shop for themselves.
- (2) It is mentioned that tour buses need to be wheelchair accessible so this aspect of life does not exclude seniors who use wheelchairs.
- (3) One senior mentions that she lives very close to recreational services so transportation is not a problem.

Brainstorming Questions

Question #1 What transportation would be the best service for you?

Question #2 What do you think that service would be worth? How should it be priced?

Categories of Responses: Question #1 What transportation would be the best service for you?

Volunteer Door-To-Door Service

“That’s why these private volunteers are just the thing-if you have two going in the same direction” a senior.

Responses indicated very clearly the need for a door-to-door service with escort and assistance.

- (1) Although mentioned in jest a chauffeured service is mentioned as the ideal by many seniors. The essence of this service is of course door-to-door when needed.
- (2) Many seniors feel that a volunteer door-to-door service is ideal. Such a service is what many are familiar with through their resource councils, church groups, community centres, or day-hospitals. Some feel this service should be for multiple-person rides to make it more available.
- (3) Resource coordinators (RCs) identify such a service as ideal if there is a van (with a wheelchair lift) or a car for those who cannot step up, with two trained volunteers or paid workers to go all over the city. In this way the RCs could coordinate the service rather than provide it (to the tune of 80 to 120 per month in one area). Other RCs feel that there are existing programs that are very under-funded and drivers can be very difficult to find. They feel it is important to keep the service at the community level. The problem of different areas receiving unequal service due to variable organization of volunteers needs to be solved.
- (4) All seniors agreed that any service (or some part of) should be paid for by seniors ; few feel it should be a free service.
- (5) Some seniors say that it is appropriate and more economical to have multiple persons on a ride.
- (6) Rules of access are considered to be important to prevent abuse by those who could ‘take the bus’. Volunteers note that there needs to be better reimbursement for costs especially if the service includes travel outside the district served. They note that the costs to volunteers include gas, extra time in the winter, warmer cars for seniors, insurance for vandalism, theft of property etc.
- (7) If cars were provided for volunteers the potential pool of volunteers would increase.

Transit Service

“If you are not independent in driving you spend very much of your time waiting” a senior.

- (1) One senior says she would need the bus to stop at her front door for it to be possible for her to use the transit system. Another suggests the bus must stop on her street. One block seems to be the average distance a senior wants to walk to catch a bus. Some seniors want a nice place to wait for the bus that is warm, maybe with coffee (especially in St. Norbert).
- (2) The need for further low-ride bus service is mentioned often. These need to be wheelchair accessible even in the winter. Some seniors complain that the low-ride buses are jerky so drivers should wait until they sit down. These buses do not seem to be able to get close enough to the curb for seniors. Also those buses have hand loops that are badly situated and unsafe for use by seniors. On the plus side the yellow strips on the ‘steps’ are considered a valuable addition for those with some visual impairment.
- (3) Bus drivers are viewed as unable or even unwilling to provide seniors with the concern or service necessary for them to use the transit system. Therefore bus drivers need to be aware of and provide for the safety of seniors taking the buses; such as really waiting until a senior is seated before resuming travel (many cannot walk on a moving bus), being aware that the bus may be too far from the curb for safe departure or boarding of the bus. There could be an assistant on the bus to help people with disabilities. Seniors feel that transit, HT and the taxi systems should fire bad drivers—consumer power must be exerted.
- (4) The former Dart Bus is a possible model for service to seniors. This service involves a phone call and ten minute wait for a door-to-main route shuttle service. Apparently the person then phones to say when she or he will be at the main route stop again for transport home. This could be paid for by extra fair, extra ticket etc. The suggestion is some sort of reinstatement and expansion of this service. Some seniors note that this service could involve long waiting periods. It is suggested that such a service depends upon buses working on schedule and the availability of heated, convenient shelters. The former Dial-A-Bus system is noted as a similar service.
- (5) Related to #4 seniors in E and W St. Paul say that transit service must be extended beyond the perimeter. It is noted that the WRHA recognizes E and W St. Paul as parts of the city but they do not receive any transit service. St. Norbert residents feel we must work with transit authorities to improve service in their area.
- (6) If the bus service was better, as in Vancouver with only a five minute wait for a bus, two staff accessible, and comparable fares more seniors would use it. If there was a park and ride system there would be an overall increase in transit use and the whole city would benefit.

As well, in Vancouver every second bus has handicap access and there are three sections for seniors.

- (7) It is stated that the HT notice required should be reduced to 24 hours, especially for those beyond the perimeter. There should be set days for drivers in each area of the city so that people can plan their appointments and possibly coordinate with others for more efficient use of the HT system. It is mentioned that there is more HT available in Edmonton where service is provided with only a half hour notice.

Group Vans or Buses

“What is the point of going to the doctor if you cannot get food” a senior.

These responses describe variables related to the desire for a special single function transport service that would be for both a particular community and for members of an ‘activity community’ (who may be spread throughout the city).

- (1) Special service buses such as the Safeway bus, the Golden Retriever bus (which are provided by a particular company and may include a request for a small \$2.00 donation) are mentioned as a starting model for further service. *A Social Bus Service* Seniors want a transportation service that is dependable to take them to various locations (Safeway, Polo Park, Forks, Walmart, mall-walking program, recreation and exercise groups, etc.) at regular planned times (once a week, twice a month, near pension cheque time, etc.). They note that Safeway will pick up people along the route, so this is possible to organize. Others suggest that there should be a central gathering place, although many seniors want a door-to-door service. It is also suggested that such a service could be arranged to run certain days for certain areas with a ‘10 a.m. pickup at home and a 4 p.m. pickup at the mall to go home’. They feel if a regular service can be provided for school children why not for seniors? Although people with visual impairment can use a blind pass on the city buses they still have a need for weekly program buses to ensure that people can come when the going is difficult. *Such a service is better than a city transit bus because there is no need to transfer; multiple buses can be difficult for all seniors. Also pickup at homes is an important need for seniors not living in senior housing.*
- (2) A regular van service with a driver for different blocks on different days is suggested.
- (3) Some communities (Gimli, Arbour) have organized bus or van service for the community and this should be tried in E and W St. Paul. Such a service should be safe with seat belts, storage containers, and trained drivers who are consumer friendly and sensitive of individual differences.

- (4) A big question arose as to the status of school buses and why these can not be sued for seniors transportation; after all seniors pay taxes for these buses. Also a senior suggests there be “carpooled taxis”.
- (5) Some suggest that the business community may be able to provide such van or bus service (such as a mall ambassador) because seniors will support them by shopping at their shops/malls. Some seniors promote that they have ‘put in’ to this society a lot and should get some help back from these businesses. Some say the big banks should be shamed into providing transportation funding, etc. The Hollow Mug is mentioned as a business that provides transportation for groups of seniors to attend the restaurant. Car dealerships might donate vehicles. Businesses should take account of the human component more in business decisions. Also businesses such as Vital Transit, Arrow Transit, and First Class Transit, hotels with shuttles buses, and personal care homes could allow their vans and buses to be used by seniors when they are not booked for hospital transfer.
- (6) *It is said there should be both community based service as well as city-wide service.* Such a service is considered important to look at for E and W St. Paul and St. Norbert.
- (7) All vans and buses need to be considered for wheelchair transport. Some seniors feel that those in wheelchairs should not be segregated from other seniors for these group ventures.

Organizational Suggestions

- (1) The best service should be administered such that seniors can pick and choose what is most appropriate for the needs of that group or individual. Such a organized service must be affordable, efficient at matching service to need, and “free of discrimination” where everything is available to everyone at minimal cost. It should be accessible to seniors who normally drive or take the bus but cannot during the winter. A taxi-like system is suggested. A marketing survey of who would use the service is suggested.
- (2) Health access centres such as NERNS are suggested a places that could function as overall coordination and resource networks. Some seniors point out that there must be a centralized organization (person or office).
- (3) A half-day reservation time period with same day confirmation would be best.
- (4) Such an organization must recognize recreational needs as being as important as medical needs.
- (5) This system must be integrated for efficient service; unlike how HT operates (i.e., where one person receives cross-city service while others receive none). Such a system should take account of what services are available in what communities (i.e., some people are better located regarding transportation, recreation, groceries, medical needs, etc.). This could be community based in a similar manner that

senior centre meal programs are centre based. But it is the coordinator that is the major cost in meal programs; so this may not relate to a transportation program. A person involved in organization says that if a system is organized properly it is possible to run it at a reasonable cost.

- (6) A user/membership system is suggested. Some see this as good for those in blocks but not for those who own houses. Marketing of such a system would be very important. Maybe an existing transportation service such as Franco-Voyage Bus Tours could provide such service.
- (7) Many raise the question of who should own or control a community van or bus service (be responsible for vans, drivers, maintenance etc.). Judy Redmond of the City of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee (Genny Gerbasi's office) is suggested as a contact.

Related Desires

- (1) Seniors living in their own homes mentioned snow removal as a very important part of accessibility to transportation. This includes removal of snow on their own sidewalks because it may be making it impossible for them to leave their homes.
- (2) Medical centres could have assistants at the doors to help seniors unload from vehicles, as well as to help them find their way around in complex buildings. Also signs at entrances allowing volunteer drivers to stop so they can help the senior into the centre would help. There is a need for a loading zone; a place to wait and be picked up as well (seniors want some place warm).
- (3) The Francophone community feels that drivers that speak French are needed.
- (4) Handi-Parking passes should be permitted for use on provincial roads (i.e., legislature grounds). Regulations and availability of these passes should be better advertised to seniors.

Needs Behind Desired Services

“He has his own life for heaven sake” a senior referring to her son and grandson.

There is a long list of senior needs that are considered by seniors to be important when planning a transportation program.

- (1) Independence is considered a very important aspect of this type of service. Independence can be promoted by creating a service that removes the physical and cognitive difficulties for seniors. Some seniors point out that they still try to walk whenever they can, and one says he rides a bicycle when he can. Most seniors who use services want to pay for the service (between \$3 and \$5 per trip) and this is better than depending continually on friends and family. Some noted that they will be better able to support the economy (e.g., shopping) if they are able to get to the shops.

- (2) Recreation, social and leisure needs of seniors are often overlooked. This relates to mental and physical health and should be addressed.
- (3) Another mental/emotional health need mentioned by seniors need to have a support person with them when they attend appointments etc. This is especially important for seniors in their own homes. Seniors in residences often have a larger resource of support. Some seniors feel they cannot trust taxi driver while a volunteer driver gives them the confidence to venture out of their homes. Avoiding depression when giving up a car (for good or for just the winter) requires a supportive resource.
- (4) RCs feel a better organized and supported system is needed because of the wear and tear on RCs, volunteers, vehicles, and budgets The issue cannot be ignored because the need is so great.
- (5) The need to visit friends and family; inability to meet the basic needs of spouse, self, or a older child with a disability; the need for recreation and exercise are all mentioned as reasons for better more equitable service. Some seniors need a service to assist them to go home from the hospital on short notice where an escort will help them and carry all the dressings and equipment needed.
- (6) For those seniors living where there is a high concentration of seniors the services are better. Those seniors living in more isolated situations suffer a real lack of support and transportation. For persons with disabilities or spouses with disabilities a comprehensive need driven, caring escort service is necessary. Some seniors want to just be able to go out safely at night to the theater, symphony, movies etc.
- (7) Lack of awareness by seniors of the services available is mentioned. A suggestion is to market any new service so that all seniors become aware of its existence.
- (8) RCs feel that a well set up system of community drivers could build community capacity. Another aspect of this is the concern for community services (banks, groceries etc.) closing and leaving seniors with too far to go for service. Tied in with transportation needs is the need to pressure businesses to remain in communities. The values of *living life in a community* is raised and noted as very important to the current generation of seniors. Community partnering initiatives (including helping new people moving to Canada, into the city, to a new home, or helping people with low income) are considered as a potential by-product of such community service development. Many see that there is currently a service gap for seniors and others in need in most communities.

Categories of Responses: Question #2 What do you think that service would be worth? How should it be priced?

Priced According to the Type of Service Needed

“Cafeteria Style Transportation!” a senior (translated from French)

Responses point to the importance of the duration and quality of the transportation service to determine cost. Separating medical from other needs stands out in these suggestions.

- (1) In general the amount seniors are willing to pay ranges between \$5 and \$10 for a door-to-door return trip (without escort suggest some seniors but same price without escort suggest other seniors). Although some seniors are paying much less (\$3.50) for door-to-door service. If the trip includes several destinations or is a last minute need the cost should be more. These prices should include the all areas of the city (E and W St. Paul and St. Norbert as well).
- (2) Another person suggests that an escorted service should be paid by the hour. For example \$10 per hour; as this is a public service. Others feel that 35 cent per kilometer and parking is fair. Some feel a round trip from St. Norbert to the city is fair at \$20.
- (3) Some seniors suggest that for those on a fixed income \$1.55 would be an acceptable price for a Dart Bus style system. The person would then need to pay the regular bus fare at the main route.
- (4) HT rates are often used as a standard by which to measure what they should be paying.
- (5) Seniors said group buses such as the Golden Retriever should cost about \$2 for a door-to-door trip.
- (6) Medical appointments are considered to be more important and should not cost as much as shopping or recreation trips. For a two or three hour medical appointment that may occur two or three times per month an escorted round trip should not exceed \$15. Also if a person needs many medical appointments in a row it can become very expensive. *A separate system for medical transportation needs and community/ social/ recreational transportation needs is suggested.* However it is important to note that all trips are seen as equally important.
- (7) Most seniors agree that a premium should be paid for special services such as short notice (less than one day notice might be \$3 extra), more than two hour trips, out of district trips, help with packing and moving, etc. Seniors say they will pay for quality personalized service. A \$10 fee is mentioned as reasonable to have assistance moving a senior's belongings from one location to another.
- (8) It is noted that some people pay \$30 per month for a crisis line; therefore people can afford to pay that for transportation service. Such a membership service could cost \$100 to \$300 per month for some number of rides depending on the value of the membership (i.e., 100 rides @ \$300 or \$200 membership).

Priced According to Ability to Pay
“People need to continue living!” a senior (translated from French)

Responses cover a variety of issues regarding one's ability to pay for the type of service needed.

- (1) Most seniors qualify that any service cost must take into recognition one's ability to pay. One senior says that \$20 each week is too much to pay for transportation to an exercise program (she feels \$5 is appropriate).
- (2) A means test system like Pharmacare is suggested as a possibility.
- (3) A special price for couples is suggested.
- (4) Seniors could have discount cards for taxi rides.
- (5) Some seniors feel that a centralized seniors transportation system should be a socialized system that is free to all; paid entirely by public funds. Others feel that we can't always have everything for free, but at least it should be equal fare for all. Some people note that seniors already receive many free services and it is time to consider the needs of the younger people who are in debt with low-paying jobs.

Recognizing the Health Services Savings of Improvements to Quality of Life

A substantial justification for the expense of a seniors transportation program is related to health and quality of life benefits.

- (1) A strong point is made that quality of life can have monetary savings as well as general health benefits. It is pointed out that this must be quantified; related to rates of depression, cost of medication, hospitalization etc.
- (2) The detrimental effects of isolation are strongly noted.
- (3) That this should be a publicly subsidized system for those who cannot use the mainstream system is generally agreed upon; the public benefits as well.

Other Financial Incentives

Seniors identify other important issues that have financial bearing on transportation.

- (1) Volunteers receiving tax deductions or rebates etc. is considered a way to maintain current volunteer systems. This would involve guarantees of hours worked etc. Some volunteers note that volunteer work is classified as leisure; not as 'valued' as working a job is. In addition to this the seniors who volunteer their time in communities (ESL classes, etc.) are not recognized as needing transportation for these valuable services.
- (2) Seniors recognized that service providers must be paid a living wage. It is pointed out that right now we cannot quantify the cost of the volunteer driver system (cost to the driver and the organization) therefore there should be some sort of reckoning of the number of hours, expenses, maintenance, and wage rate of the service.
- (3) Taxis who offer discounts to seniors could receive a rebate on income taxes.

Appendix C

Seniors Transportation Focus Groups: Disability Groups and Aboriginal Groups

Interviews with spokespersons from a selection of disability groups were arranged. The format of the interviews consisted of the first three questions from the seniors focus group terms of reference (i.e., What transportation do you or your clients use now? How is it inadequate and what do you like about it? What transportation would be the best service for you?).

All persons interviewed were of one or more of the following categories:

- A person with a disability
- A service provider for persons with disabilities
- An advisory person for people with disabilities
- A parent with a child with a disability
- A senior

In total, four interviews were conducted. The first interview was with a representative from the city of Winnipeg Access Advisory Committee. The second interview was with a spokesperson for independent living for persons with disabilities. An Ottawa representative from an active living for persons with disabilities organization joined this meeting. The third interview was arranged with two spokespersons from an organization mandated to assist aboriginal persons with disabilities. In this interview, the perspective of the Elders of the First Nations Community was related. Coincidentally some of these Elders were meeting in the same building. The spokespersons approached the Elders regarding our research project and the Elders agreed to speak with us. There were seven Elders (five men and two women). The following is a summary of the discussions which took place in the four interviews.

Seniors Transportation Focus Groups with Disability Groups Themes from Data Analysis

Baseline Questions

Question #1: What type of transportation do you or your clients use now and in what way is it inadequate?

Question #2: What do you like about it?

Categories of Responses

Handi-Transit

“Handi-Transit promotes [the] social isolation we are working against” a disability group spokesperson.

- (1) There are very many stories told by disability group spokespersons regarding the inadequacies of HT. In general it is felt that although programs for persons with disabilities try to encourage independence and the use of public transportation, the clients tend to remain isolated in their homes. This is considered in many cases to be due to bad experiences with HT. Some examples of poor service from HT include: refusal to help with putting on a jacket or open a door, being pushed into the van, refusals of pick-up.
- (2) The HT priority system that values work and education above leisure does not reflect the real needs of many persons with disabilities. Another HT policy states that people can only carry on to the bus objects (bags etc.) that the persons are able to hold on their lap. This can be very difficult for persons with disabilities and can be of great inconvenience to them. One group spokesperson feels HT is not able [does not desire] to service the *community* of persons who use wheelchairs.
- (3) The lack of guarantees to provide transportation, to get people back home, not to cancel unnecessarily, to be of convenience to the user, to provide service in a timely manner, etc. make HT a very unsuitable service for persons who may have anxieties regarding the safety of waiting environments, have a lack of familiarity with destinations, and have special needs that require timely transport.
- (4) Some persons receive better service than others. This is dependent apparently on a frequent or personal relationship with the drivers.
- (5) The method of dispatching rides is very inefficient and wastes the time of the user.
- (6) The allowance of a free ride for an attendant does not take into consideration young children whose mother or father wishes to take the child somewhere with the necessary attendant. In this instance the mother or father must pay an additional fee. It is noted that children under 5 do not pay on regular transit buses when accompanied by a parent. The point being made seems to hinge on the fact that the attendant, in some instances, is not a choice but a necessity.
- (7) The spokesperson from Ottawa comments that their para-transit system guarantees a ride home although people are often a half to an hour late. Users who are very disabled can either have a standing order for a ride or can book ahead. Other users must call before 9am of the day service is required. This is on a first come first served basis. There are no priority rides and all rides are based on availability. Users are recommended by a doctor for service.

Taxis and Private Van Service

“It scares me to see how they tie down the chairs—the vehicles the way they are kept” a disability group spokesperson.

- (1) Private taxi and van companies are considered very inconsistent regarding the level of assistance available. One company is cited as being the worst [“horrendous”] for their attitude towards persons with disabilities. An important area of required assistance often overlooked is the needs of persons who are nonverbal. The First Nations Elders and disability spokespersons commented frequently on the difficulties for Aboriginal seniors and persons with disabilities generated by racism.
- (2) One van company is considered to have great staff. Unfortunately that company’s vehicles are considered unsafe. Although the city regulates the safety of all taxi and van service vehicles, the existence of unsafe vehicles and the unsafe use of vehicles is a common comment. The lack of proper use of the four point harness was mentioned frequently.
- (3) One spokesperson points out that most taxi companies contract their service to HT; therefore there is really only one taxi company that can be used as a taxi for persons using wheelchairs. This particular company now begins to run the meter before the person is loaded and until the person is unloaded.
- (4) The service with some private van companies can be ‘pretty good’ however they are fairly expensive (\$12.00 to get in the van).
- (5) One of the First Nations Elders said that many of the Elders on the council are unable to come to meetings because they lack the funds for transportation. This Elder who uses occasionally an Aboriginal van service complains about many of the same problems associated with HT (e.g., long waits, phone difficulties, lack of assistance, lack of information, approval process).

City Transit Buses

“This all comes down to basic human rights—equal treatment does not mean same treatment” a disability advisory spokesperson.

- (1) The disability advisory spokesperson lists many of the complaints heard regarding transportation. Specific to transit buses are a number of issues. These include: the lack of a safe walkway with accessible hand-grips on the low floor buses, the lack of assistance on all buses, and the lack of training of bus drivers in dealing with seniors and persons with disabilities.
- (2) The spokesperson for people using wheelchairs notes that getting to a bus stop during the winter can be next to impossible. Although downtown sidewalks in the winter are in better condition; using them requires that you can get to the bus stop to get downtown. In general the use of low floor buses is considered unsuitable for our climate and does not lessen the burden on HT.
- (3) Another issue the spokesperson for people using wheelchairs raises is the perceived inequality of special fares for students (college and university) but not for persons with disabilities (this includes HT

users). He notes that airlines allow persons using wheelchairs a 50% reduction but buses and HT do not. He says that transportation for persons with disabilities should be free. He says transportation is a fundamental human right and that persons with disabilities should not have to advertise their disability to receive the assistance needed to maintain a normal life.

Aboriginal-Specific Issues

“Taxis make a tour of the person who does not know the city—these are the tricks they pull over the eyes of our people” a First Nations Elder.

While the First Nations persons describe many of the same problems described by other seniors and disability group spokespersons it is impossible to overlook the overwhelming exacerbation of these problems caused by racism. The nature of the Aboriginal experience results also from factors relating to culture and isolation.

- (1) *Isolation*—Many Aboriginal seniors (Elders) come to the city for medical reasons. Sometimes they need to relocate permanently for those reasons. When this occurs they find often that they are in an unknown place without the supports of friends or family. This can be a source of fear and anger to these Elders. Often their health or mobility problems further isolate them. Many of these independence problems cause Elders to lose self-respect which exacerbates their feelings of isolation. It is of note that a word for disability does not exist in the Cree or Ojibwa languages.
- (2) *Language Problems*—The current cohorts of Aboriginal seniors coming into Winnipeg often do not speak English or French. This can result in great difficulty with all medical, social and city services. This includes the ability to obtain assistance with communication problems. A simple example of this is the use of the telephone and telephone menu systems that for many of the social services is the first line of contact. Specific to transportation the spokespersons noted the phone difficulties with taxis and HT. Although some strides have been made in educating translators there is still much work to be done in educating the translator’s sensitivity to the Elder’s cultural and educational level of comprehension.
- (3) *Cultural Differences*—The Aboriginal spokespersons emphasize the importance of understanding “*what an Elder is*”. Within many Aboriginal cultures, and especially within the First Nations culture, respect for the Elders is emphasized and expressed very differently than in the dominant Euro-North American culture. Many of the situations relocated Elders experience cause them so much frustration that some of them simply ‘give-up’. Within these cultures (e.g., First Nations) there may be very specific role for males and

females regarding what is appropriate conversation. Therefore some Elders are not comfortable discussing many medical conditions or needs (including transportation to certain required appointments) with persons of the opposite sex. Age can also become a barrier to access to transportation. For some Elders it may be inappropriate to question the reason for the transportation need (medical or ceremonial). Some things are simply not discussed. Since it is considered by their culture that respect comes with age, the Elders like to listen to Elders but will not discuss certain things with younger persons. This is an important point and service providers must be sensitive to it if they wish to meet the Elders' needs. However one spokesperson pointed out that the trust necessary can develop over a period of time. Another large problem of transportation for Elders arises from the type of cultural experiences the Elders wish to take part in. Generally these are problems of access and time frame. Many Elders would like to attend First Nations ceremonies outside of the city. Transportation to such events are either difficult or unavailable. Additionally, for events held within the city, two way transportation can be problematic due to the unscheduled nature of many of those events (i.e., length of an event is not predetermined; for cultural/religious reasons). Another cultural-social inequity is mentioned by an Elder who says that he can not receive funding for transportation to meetings (such as their council meeting). He does not understand this because these meetings are to find ways to meet the needs of their people (regarding poverty etc.). Whenever he makes a request for this funding he "is given a pass over and nothing ever happens". There is only money for medical needs and for those looking for work.

- (4) *"The Ping-Pong Effect"*—First Nations Persons with Disabilities living in Winnipeg find invariably that they are referred to Aboriginal agencies because they are Aboriginal; these agencies in turn refer them to disability agencies because they have a disability. This can continue for sometime until they are lost and forgotten within the system. Eventually the person gives-up. The spokesperson describing this ping-pong effect explains that many disability agencies are not culturally appropriate or do not target Aboriginal persons adequately. They ping-pong effect can occur also when such Aboriginal persons are referred back to their home communities having been told they do not qualify for off-reserve service, even though the service may not exist on the reserve.

Brainstorming Questions

Question #3 What transportation would be the best service for you?

Categories of Responses

Efficiency and Safety

“A system where people [with disabilities] can get around just like everybody else” a disability advisory spokesperson.

- (1) Although transportation is considered a complex problem by all there is general consensus that safety and efficiency are of greatest importance. An efficient system would serve more people with fewer mistakes. Such a system could begin with more low floor buses and Handi-Transit vans. Better use of the available vans during off-peak times is also suggested. A multi-use system is suggested. Maintenance of vans and buses and the use of proper wheelchair restraint are mentioned as important safety features. Safety is also considered to be improved with better training of dispatchers, drivers, and other related personnel. Service providers should be educated to understand what persons with disabilities experience when trying to use services. Safety and sensitivity education should be mandatory for both public and private providers of transportation of persons with disabilities.

Within Current Means

- (1) Although it may not be realistic the ridership of HT could be reduced to service only persons using wheelchairs. These people would then be able to access transportation for a reasonable range of needs (shopping, recreation) that they do not have now.
- (2) All persons using wheelchairs could receive transportation funding regardless of whether it is HT or transit buses.
- (3) Education and enforcement of current laws regarding parking of wheelchair vans on city streets would simplify life. When tickets are incorrectly placed on properly parked vans (especially during the winter—special laws allow alternative parking arrangements) or a ticket is placed where the person using a wheelchair cannot reach it extra unnecessary barriers are placed upon the person.

An Ideal System

- (1) Separate systems for persons using wheelchairs and for those who are ambulatory is suggested.
- (2) A system that is door-to-door, with centralized administration, and safety and training control is suggested. This should be a move away from the multi-person taxi system. In this system no trips would be turned down and a 24 hour service would be available. Short-term notice for special situations should be available.
- (3) The First Nations spokespersons say that a transportation system for their people has been considered in the past. The benefit of such a system is that they could ensure access for their elderly to a “holistic community life”. The draw back is that it removes their elderly from a system in operation that they have the right to use. First Nations spokespersons would like to have a voice in policy advisement for HT. They think also that there should be a separate transportation system for the elderly (due to the high percentage of elderly persons). Like all other persons interviewed they think that recreation and social activities must be recognized as important to good health and well-being; and the necessary access and transportation provided.

Appendix D

Inventory of Transportation Services Available for Seniors in Winnipeg

In addition to the collection of information to document transportation issues and possible solutions, a second objective of the Seniors Transportation Working Group was to conduct an inventory of transportation services presently available for the elderly population in Winnipeg. The objective of this inventory was to illustrate the mobility resources presently available. The inventory was also undertaken to illustrate where gaps exist in terms of the types of services that are offered and the areas of the city where there is greater need for improved transportation provision.

The data collection period was from November, 2000, to March, 2001. It was initiated with an overview of previous transportation inventories conducted in Winnipeg. In addition, information was collected from the coordinators of the senior resource councils of Winnipeg. They were asked to identify transportation services for seniors operating in their service areas. A list of transportation services resulted from these sources. A survey form was developed and each service was contacted by telephone for further information. Information was collected on the types of transportation, the type of organization providing the service, the area of the city serviced and the destinations offered by these services, the type of driver, the source of vehicle used, the degree of assistance provided for older adults, if wheelchair access was available, the length of booking notice, and the cost to the user of the service.

The following is a summary of the inventory of transportation services. The inventory includes information on the following: (i) transportation provided by volunteer driver programs; (ii) public-sector transportation; (iii) private transportation; and (iv) community transportation.

I Volunteer Driver Programs

Total Surveyed: 11

Resource Councils: 10

Caregiver Program: 1

Resource Council Type Programs

- Most volunteer driver programs in Winnipeg are supported by the various Winnipeg Resource Councils. Within these councils the resource coordinator arranges rides for seniors in need.

- Each Resource Council has a catchment area for pickup (although there may be the occasional overlap). Most drivers will drive to any area in Winnipeg, although sometimes they will stay within the perimeter highway.
- Most resource coordinators prefer about two days notice to arrange rides.
- The volunteer drivers use their own vehicles; therefore wheelchair and walker accessibility is variable.
- The cost of service varies from a low of \$3.00 for a return trip within the catchment area (Rupertsland Caregivers Services) to \$10.00 for pickup outside of the catchment area (Bonivital Council for Seniors). With some programs the client must also pay for parking costs.
- Generally, escort for the senior during appointments, shopping, or visits can be arranged with the resource coordinator. This may or may not increase the cost to the client.
- Resource Councils do not incur great costs to run these programs (aside from the current cost of the resource centre and coordinator). Advertising and volunteer appreciation are cited by some as related expenses.

Demand for Service

- The Rupertsland Caregivers (although not a Resource Council Program) is an example of the demand for this service. This provider has set -up a special phone line for booking rides. This phone line requires three volunteer dispatchers to keep up with the demand.
- The St. James Assiniboia resource coordinator said that she has 550-600 clients and provided 3400 runs (return trips) during the period January to December 2000.
- The Brooklands Weston Community Resource Council coordinator, referring to the demand, said “The need is huge!”

Barriers to Providing Service

- Lack of available drivers is the most common problem. Ease of finding volunteer drivers varies across the city considerably. In areas with people in lower socioeconomic groups it is more difficult to find drivers.
- The South Winnipeg Seniors Resource Council coordinator states that she has zero drivers, a large catchment area, and great demand for service.
- The Friendly Neighbourhood Resource Council coordinator states that she has no drivers and must do all the driving herself. She notes also that many of the people using this service are unable to pay for it. This situation makes it especially difficult to find volunteer drivers.
- The River East Rides for Seniors coordinator notes that the requirement for volunteers to pay for their own criminal record check reduces interest in volunteering.

- The Community Services Program of East and West St. Paul coordinator states that volunteer drivers are very challenged by the distances involved in providing this service in their community.
- Overall the need is greater than the service available. This is due mainly to a difficulty finding and maintaining volunteers. Many coordinators say they are unable to spend time finding volunteers because they are so busy driving.

On the Positive Side

- The St. James Assiniboia Senior Centre coordinator runs a very successful volunteer driver program. She says that coordination and advertising for volunteers are important aspects of this maintaining this success. Although the drivers are unable to take persons using wheelchairs, they can take persons with walkers and canes or with visual impairment. The resource coordinator prefers two days notice but will attempt to fulfill short term need for a medical emergency. This program gives priority for medical appointments with the next priority being given to social outings. Users are asked to donate money to the volunteer for the cost of gas. The coordinator suggests \$4.50 for a return trip of one to ten kilometers. After this distance she suggests an additional 40 cents for each extra kilometer. There is a required, unspecified donation for escort service. The resource coordinator asks that the user provide 50 cents to the Centre for each return trip received.
- Overall seniors with any transportation need are accepted as clients of these service providers. Priority is given generally to medical appointments; however this situation exists due to a lack of volunteers. Were there enough volunteers most programs are designed to fulfill the local transportation and escort assistance needs of seniors for all medical, social, recreational and mundane activities.
- The low cost of these programs make them very accessible to all seniors; in some instances even to those unable to pay.
- Many resource coordinators said there were few instances of problems with volunteer drivers. Most volunteers make great efforts to provide a useful and caring service.

II Public Transportation

Total Surveyed: 2

Public Transit Services: 1

Handi-Transit Service: 1

- The City of Winnipeg provides public transportation in the city excluding East and West St. Paul.

- Generally, transit buses on city routes cost \$1.65 for regular fare, but is reduced to \$1.35 for seniors. A transfer can be obtained for a return trip taken within one hour.
- Some assistance for people using wheelchairs and people with visual impairments is available.
- The Handi-Transit service is publicly available to persons who qualify through a physician's assessment.
- This is a door to door service.
- Users must book 48 hours in advance, although it was said that this will change to 24 hours this year (2001). Handi-Transit has a booking priority for transportation to: 1st work, 2nd medical, 3rd school, destinations.
- The cost of the service to the user for a one way trip is one ticket; with tickets costing \$16.00 for ten tickets.
- All schedules and registration is handled by the City Transit Department, however all the direct transportation service is provided by private contractors. These contractors use buses, taxi vans, and car taxis; and therefore take both persons using wheelchairs and person who are ambulatory but need assistance.

III Private Transportation Services

Total Surveyed: 10

Transportation Companies: 8

Senior Services Companies: 2

Transportation Companies

- All eight of these companies charge rates set by the Winnipeg Taxicab Board for pre-booked or immediate dispatch service.
- All but one have wheelchair accessible vans. The wheelchair vans cost the user \$11.25 for pickup plus \$1.35 per kilometer. Regular car taxi service costs the user \$2.70 for the first 887 meters; 10 cents for each additional 87 meters and for each minute of meter waiting time.
- Usually if door to door service is needed it must be requested at the time of booking.
- Some companies offer lower group rates for advanced booking or contracted service (e.g., \$72.00 plus gst return and \$40.00 plus gst one way).
- Some companies will travel outside the city, while others will only service the city or certain areas of the city.

List of Companies

- Arrow Wheelchair Transportation Inc.
- Blueline Limousine & Executive Car Service
- Duffy's Taxi (1996)—only folding wheelchairs
- First Class Transportation Inc.

- Handi-Helper Transit
- Spring Taxi
- Unicity Taxi
- Vital Transit Services Inc.

Senior Services Companies

- Two companies surveyed offer seniors support services including transportation with escort service available. Neither can take persons using wheelchairs. Both prefer some advanced notice. The cost of these services range from \$10.00 to \$14.00 per hour with parking extra.

List of Companies

- Help Plus
- Houseworks Chores 'N More

IV Community Transportation

Total Surveyed: 21

Senior Residences: 8

Adult Day Care Programs: 5

Religious Organizations: 2

Nonprofit Community Centres: 1

Medical Appointment Services: 2

Community Shopping Services: 2

Resource Councils: 1

Senior Residences

- Six of the seniors residences surveyed are nonprofit. Three of the nonprofit senior residences offer their services to residents only. The other three residences have on-site Day Programs that receive transportation.

List of Nonprofit Seniors Residences

- Carriage House North
- Deaf Centre
- Fred Douglas Lodge—includes Day Program
- Golden West Centennial Lodge
- Holy Family Home—includes Day Program
- The Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg—includes Day Program
- Service providers at The Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg and Carriage House North use the North Winnipeg Community Council van (housed at Luther Home) to provide grocery shopping trips for residents (both ambulatory persons and those using wheelchairs).
- Golden West Centennial Lodge owns its own van which is used by the Activities Department to take both ambulatory seniors and those

using wheelchairs on recreational day trips. This residence covers the costs of maintenance, gas, insurance, and proper equipment: while the residents pay \$5.00 return for an in-town trip and \$7.00 return for an out-of-town trip.

- Service providers at The Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg, Holy Family Home, and Fred Douglas Lodge provide similar recreational trip service for their residents in addition to providing transportation service to their Adult Day Care Program participants.
- The Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg charges the residents \$7.00 for a return trip, while Holy Family Home charges nothing.
- The Middlechurch Home of Winnipeg has a bus, as well as uses the Luther Home van.
- Holy Family Home and Fred Douglas Lodge contract transportation service with private wheelchair accessible transportation companies. The costs of these services vary from \$100.00 per day to \$120.00 per day for two vans. These van companies provide door to door service.
- All three Adult Day Care Programs have transportation included in the \$5.60 per day charge set by Winnipeg Long Term Care (this includes the day program, transportation, and a meal).
- Two seniors residences surveyed are for profit residences and offer their services to residents only.

List of For-Profit Seniors Residences

- Amber Meadows Retirement Residence
- The Wellington
- Both for profit residences own a bus for use by the residents. Group trips for shopping and social events, or individual medical appointment and related needs trips are possible.
- These services are paid for in the residents' rent payment.
- Both buses can take only folding wheelchairs. While the contact person at The Wellington says that minor assistance to board the bus is available, the contact person at Amber Meadows Retirement Residence says they will transport only persons who can step-up on their own.

Adult Day Care Programs

- All five of these additional, adult day care programs contract with private companies for a door to door transportation service for senior in their programs, who live within their catchment areas.

List of Additional, Adult Day Care Providers

- Deer Lodge Centre Day Hospital
- Health Action Centre
- Riverview Health Centre Day Hospital
- St. Boniface Geriatric Day Hospital
- Seven Oaks Geriatric Day Hospital

- St. Boniface Geriatric Day Hospital subsidizes Handi-Transit and taxi fares. The contact person said that sometimes they will reimburse 50% of the taxi fare.
- According to information provided by the contact persons the client's cost appears to be variable from program to program. There is no charge to the client at Health Action Centre and Deer Lodge Centre Day Hospital, while there is a \$7.50 charge within the catchment area and an \$8.50 charge for service outside of catchment area for clients of Seven Oaks Geriatric Day Hospital.
- The costs of providing these transportation services also vary considerably. Riverview Health Centre Day Hospital pays \$20.00 for a return trip while, Seven Oaks Geriatric Day Hospital pays nearly \$75.00 per van going outside the catchment. St. Boniface Geriatric Day Hospital pays 40% of the \$60.00 (return) charge. The Health Action Centre pays \$160.00 per day for 2 vans and estimates an annual cost in excess of \$40,000.00 for this service.

Religious Organizations

- These two organizations, John Black Memorial United Church and Knox United Church, run services whereby a bus route is driven by a private contractor, picking up members at their apartment block doors and delivering them to the organization's religious service, and then back home.
- People using these transportation services are not charged, although a collection or donation is accepted.
- John Black Memorial United Church pays \$75.00 for one run or \$110.00 for two runs. Their transportation service is available only from November to the end of April.

Nonprofit Community Centres

- The one nonprofit community organization surveyed is Gwen Sector Creative Living Centre. They provide transportation service for their members (seniors who are 55+ years old) to attend programs.
- This organization uses the North Winnipeg Community Council's van to bring seniors from north Winnipeg to their centre once a week for a program.
- Seniors from the south area of Winnipeg receive transportation service via Vital Transit or Unicity Taxi.
- A taxi voucher program is also available during the winter months.
- For those using the NWCC van (the Luther Home van) the cost to the senior is \$3.50 for a return trip. The organization reimburses Luther Home for the use of the van and driver with a \$50.00 honorarium, as well as \$2.00 per person per ride.
- For those using Vital Transit from the south end of Winnipeg the cost of a return trip is \$2.00, while a one-way trip is \$1.00.

- The contact person stated that the annual transportation costs (including the taxi voucher program) are approximately \$9000.00 for a one day-a-week program.

Medical Appointment Services

- Two nonprofit organizations provide transportation to medical appointment for members of their programs. These are Klinik and The Canadian Cancer Society.
- Klinik employs a community service worker, using his or her own vehicle, to transport the client. There is no charge to the client for this service. As well, this organization arranges for and pays Handi-Transit for clients needing wheelchair accessible transportation to medical appointments. All users of these services must be clients of Klinik's Community Services Program.
- The other medical appointment transportation service offered is a volunteer driver program coordinated by The Canadian Cancer Society. This service is available only to persons receiving active cancer treatment. This is a door to door service (either one-way or return) for a fee of \$6.00. Clients must be ambulatory. This organization provides cars and vans for the volunteer drivers to use. All gas, maintenance, and insurance are paid for by The Canadian Cancer Society.

Community Shopping Services

- Glenlawn Senior Service (The Golden Retriever) provides a community shopping service, as well as transportation to other social events. However shopping is the main use of this service. This organization provides service only to residents of a certain catchment area. Their buses are available to seniors who organize themselves for shopping and social events to anywhere in the city of Winnipeg. The seniors are not charged for this service. There are six buses available which can each transport 19 ambulatory persons and 3 persons using wheelchairs. This organization has been set up by a local businessman.
- Seniors Special Touch (the Safeway bus) is exclusively for grocery shopping at Canada Safeway stores. The supporting organizations are three corporations (CIBC, Canada Safeway, and Tilden). This van service is contracted out to a transportation company. Seniors are generally picked up at apartment buildings. Although some assistance is provided to the seniors the van cannot take wheelchairs. The service is scheduled weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly. There is no cost to the seniors using this service. Although there are a large number of Safeway stores receiving this senior transportation there are large areas of the city not included in this service; notably areas of

St. Boniface, St. Vital, Charleswood, Downtown, Point Douglas and North-end Winnipeg.

Community Resource Councils

- North Winnipeg Community Council has set up a vehicle loaner program for the benefit of residents of North Winnipeg. This organization loans its vans (two are available) out to agencies within the catchment area.
- These vans were donated by the Rotary Club and are housed and maintained by Luther Home of Winnipeg. A person from Luther Home assists the program as a volunteer driver although he or she receives a \$50.00 honorarium for this service.
- The cost of this service including maintenance, insurance, and gas for one van is cited as \$3,500.00 per year. They do not directly charge seniors for the use of their vehicle. Seniors are charged through their affiliated organization, therefore the costs to them will vary.

Appendix E: Recommendations and Action Plan

Independent Mobility for Seniors: Recommendations

Driving

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	OPPORTUNITIES	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INDEPENDENCE • UNLIMITED ACCESS TO SERVICES AND SOCIAL CONTACTS • FLEXIBILITY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DECREASED PHYSICAL FUNCTIONING INHIBITS ABILITY TO DRIVE • DECREASED FINANCIAL RESOURCES CREATES DIFFICULTIES TO BUY AND MAINTAIN A CAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRIVER EDUCATION • PARK-AND-RIDE • FINANCIAL INCENTIVES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → CREATIVE RETIREMENT → RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA → CITY OF WINNIPEG → POVERTY ISSUES

Walking

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INDEPENDENCE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEVEN WALKING SURFACES/SNOW & ICE PUT SENIORS AT RISK • DISTANT SERVICES CANNOT BE ACCESSED • DECREASED PHYSICAL FUNCTIONING INHIBITS ABILITY TO WALK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMPROVED WALKING ENVIRONMENT • IMPROVED SNOW REMOVAL • MARKED ACCESSIBLE PATHS • ACCESSIBLE SERVICES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → CITY OF WINNIPEG → RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA → BUSINESSES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS – ISSUES OF LOCATION AND ACCESS (DROP-OFF ZONES, PARKING)
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Volunteer Transportation: Recommendations

Rides from Friends and Family

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOOR-TO-DOOR ASSISTANCE • ESCORT ASSISTANCE • FLEXIBILITY • ALL TRIP TYPES • FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LACK OF INDEPENDENCE • FEAR OF IMPOSING • ARDUOUS FOR DRIVER • COST OF LOST WORK, TIME, PARKING AND GAS FOR FEW AVAILABLE FAMILY/FRIENDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INCOME TAX INCENTIVE TO ASSIST DRIVERS 	<p>→ FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</p>

Volunteer Transportation Programs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOOR-TO-DOOR ASSISTANCE • ESCORT ASSISTANCE • FLEXIBILITY • ALL TRIP TYPES • FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIMITED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS • NEEDS OF ALL SENIORS CANNOT BE MET • 2-3 DAY NOTICE FOR RIDE • DONATION INSUFFICIENT TO COVER EXPENSES OF VOLUNTEER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CENTRALIZE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS TO INCREASE RESOURCES • INCOME TAX INCENTIVE TO ASSIST DRIVERS 	<p>→ SENIOR RESOURCE COUNCILS, WHRA</p> <p>→ FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</p>
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Public Transportation: Recommendations

Public Transit

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCHEDULED SERVICE THROUGHOUT CITY • FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE FOR CONSUMERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LONG DISTANCES TO BUS STOP – DIFFICULTY WALKING ESPECIALLY IN WINTER • LACK OF BUS SHELTERS • DIFFICULTY ENTERING, SITTING AND EXITING BUS • DIFFICULT TO REACH SOME DESTINATIONS DUE TO ROUTES • CANNOT SATISFY MANY NEEDS FOR THOSE WHO ARE SLIGHTLY FRAIL, FOR PARCELS ETC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMPROVE WALKING ENVIRONMENTS • INCREASE BUS SHELTERS • DRIVER EDUCATION OF SENIORS NEEDS • IMPROVEMENT OF ROUTES TO SERVICE OUTLETS 	→ WINNIPEG TRANSIT

Handi-Transit

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE • FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE FOR CONSUMERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOKING SYSTEM DIFFICULT TO ACCESS FOR SENIORS WITH IMPAIRMENTS • 48-HOUR ADVANCE BOOKING • RUDENESS OF DRIVERS • RIDES FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES EMPHASIZED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIMPLIFY BOOKING SYSTEM INTERFACES • DECREASE TIME FOR ADVANCE BOOKING • DRIVER EDUCATION OF SENIORS NEEDS • NEW SENIOR TRANSIT SERVICE 	→ WINNIPEG TRANSIT

Private Transportation: Recommendations

Private Transportation Companies

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE• FLEXIBILITY• ALL TRIP TYPES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EXPENSIVE• DRIVERS UNAWARE OF SENIORS NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PART OF SOLUTION FOR A NEW TYPE OF SENIORS COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICE	→ PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION COMPANIES

Community Transportation: Recommendations

Non-Profit Organizations

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OR DESTINATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SERVICES ARE IDEAL BUT MUST BE EXTENDED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MODEL FOR NEW TYPE OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → INVENTORY OF COMMUNITY VEHICLES → DIALOGUE WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS → CREATE PARTNERS FOR DELIVERY

"Safeway" Buses

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS	LIMITATIONS	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUSINESSES PROVIDE SCHEDULED SERVICE TO SHOPPING OUTLETS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOST SERVICES PROVIDED ONLY FOR APARTMENT-DWELLERS SCHEDULING INSUFFICIENT FOR SENIORS NEEDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXTEND SERVICE TO COMMUNITY ELDERLY PROMOTE PROVISION OF SERVICE BY OTHER BUSINESSES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → BUSINESSES

** It is envisioned that a new hybrid of transportation service would be created under this heading. One of the opportunities is to create a new service that would marry the benefit of established infrastructure, public funding and private senior friendly-service.