



UMTRI

The Potential Benefits of Transit Travel Training

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Transit Travel Training

- **Mobility is central to all of our lives:**
 - **Nearly everything we do requires mobility: work, shopping, medical care, worship, educational and recreational activity, and seeing friends and relatives.**
- **For many of these trips, most of us drive or ride with someone in a car.**
- **However, for people without regular or reliable use of a car, other community travel options, such as fixed-route transit, are needed to fulfill mobility needs.**



Transit Travel Training

- **Even in areas where fixed route transit services are available, older adults generally do not utilize the services.**
- **Many older adults are not familiar with the procedures/ requirements for using fixed route public transit services.**
- **At the same time, many public transit agencies are facing severe resource constraints and need assistance in increasing the cost effectiveness of their services**
- **Travel training is a series of educational activities designed to help people (primarily people with disabilities and older adults) be comfortable using non-driving mobility options, particularly fixed route transit.**

Travel Training in General

- **Instruction on:**
 - **Entering/exiting the transit facility, paying fares, special passes, purchasing tickets, reading schedules, locating seating, planning trips, personal safety, transferring, and mobility devices use.**
- **Travel training comes in many forms:**
 - **Information on websites**
 - **Brochures**
 - **Videos**
 - **Group instruction**
 - **One-on-one instruction**
 - **Classroom**
 - **Hands-on**



Benefits of Travel Training

- **Benefits for Older Travelers:**
 - Expanded their travel options.
 - Increased trip making.
 - Improved travel attributes (no advanced reservations, etc.).
 - Improved quality of life (e.g., aging in place, more control over one's life and schedule).
 - Improved social connectedness.
 - Several economic benefits:
 - Fixed route transportation costs are generally lower than most other travel alternatives.
 - In most communities, older adults enjoy lower-price fares
 - Increased mobility supports aging in place, which can help to avoid or defer the costs of nursing homes.

Benefits of Travel Training

- **Benefits for Public Transit Agencies:**
 - **Save money.**
 - **Some research have found that travel training for appropriate ADA paratransit users can produce benefit-cost ratios from 1.45 to 3.98**
 - **Annual savings ranged from \$201,822 to \$440,918.**
 - **Increased use of public transit system.**
 - **Supports a mobility options philosophy of providing people with more options for travel.**
 - **Encourages the use of the most appropriate and cost-effective transit options.**



Benefits of Travel Training

- **Benefits for Public Transit Agencies, continued:**
 - A training program not only saves transit dollars, it also creates more space on paratransit vehicles for riders who have no other transit options.
 - Builds good will in the community for public transit:
 - Emphasis on cost control makes transit funders happy.
 - Shows that the agency cares about community mobility needs.



Benefits of Travel Training

- **Benefits for Caregivers:**

- Recent studies have found that more than 90 percent of unpaid, informal caregivers for older adults provide some form of transportation assistance, usually by driving the older adults to destinations.
- Informal caregiving has been linked to poorer health and economic hardship among caregivers.
- Travel training has the potential to ease caregivers' burden throughout their support network by allowing at least some of these trips to be made by bus or rail, freeing up informal caregivers for other activities.
- At the same time, trips taken by public transit can save resources that would otherwise be spent by the caregiver to transport the older adult.

Benefits of Travel Training

- **Benefits for Communities:**
 - In the most general sense, travel training programs can be an essential component for a healthy community.
 - Communities in which older adults are unable to meet all of their transportation needs are faced with greater health care costs and a general lowering of quality of life.
 - Research shows that when people lose mobility they are more likely to reduce spending due to a lack of access to goods and services.
 - Travel training can help meet these mobility needs among older adults, which in turn helps the entire community.



Benefits of Travel Training, Conclusions

- **These benefits depend entirely on the ability of the travel training program to promote consistent use of public transit.**
- **Some types of travel training have been found to be more effective than others.**
- **It can be difficult to initiate and maintain an effective travel training program.**

