



City of Concord

Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study

Final Report



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submitted by:



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Executive Summary

Policy makers in lower-density cities nationwide are becoming increasingly concerned about the ability of individuals who do not drive or have access to a car, to use local services. This is particularly true for seniors and low-income youth in suburban communities. In the past decade in the City of Concord, the over-65 population has grown to 13,000 - or 10% of the population - and the over-85 population has grown by more than 50%! The City wishes to address the mobility needs of this large and growing segment of the population. While there is a wide array of transportation services available to seniors in Concord, service gaps remain due to program constraints or eligibility limitations. In particular, there is a growing population of the frail elderly who experience mobility problems but are not considered to be ADA-paratransit eligible, or who do not perceive themselves as "disabled."

In 2000, in response to the efforts of members of the Commission on Aging, the Concord City Council approved a budget of \$250,000 over 10 years to enhance the mobility of Concord's senior population. This study represents the first step in the City's efforts to identify the current and future transportation needs of the senior population, and to develop strategies that will serve these needs in a customer-friendly but cost-efficient manner.

The initial target population for this study was expanded to include youth - the other substantial population of Concord residents besides seniors who typically have limited access to autos. Within these groups, many sub-populations are represented, such as those experiencing mobility problems due to language and cultural barriers, geographic isolation, or income level. Besides addressing these issues, the present study of mobility barriers also documents the range of transportation modes available to Concord residents, such as driving, getting rides from others, CCCTA fixed-route (bus) service, walking, LINK paratransit, specialized transportation, and taxis.

Over the course of this study, the consultant team worked with a project advisory committee consisting of representatives of transportation and social service agencies, members of the Commission on Aging and the Youth Commission, and city staff. The outreach component of the study covered several phases, including identifying barriers and then presenting strategies at public meetings with English and Spanish-speaking seniors and with youth. The consultant team also conducted stakeholder interviews with issue experts, service providers, and youth and senior consumers, and administered a survey on youth transit use through the Youth Council.

Based on community input and a demographic analysis of the City, the team identified and prioritized a range of strategies to address the transportation gaps. Chapter 5 presents an Action Plan in which almost 30 recommended strategies are described, followed by a description of potential funding sources and steps for implementation.

In an effort to ensure that the Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study will produce practical results, we have identified a number of strategies that can be implemented in the short term with a relatively limited infusion of funding. While the benefits of these measures may also be relatively modest in light of the challenges faced by the target population, we view them as building blocks that will serve an important role in enhancing the mobility of seniors and youth over the next fifteen to twenty years.

Following is a listing of the short-term priorities that are recommended for further consideration:

1. Implement one of the recommended shuttle options (see matrix in Chapter 5).
2. Improve bus stop infrastructure. Install Simme bus stop seats or collaborate with local high schools to design and build low-cost shelters to provide a relatively inexpensive but visible and community-supported improvement.
3. Promote youth ridership through a partnership between CCCTA and local schools. Making transit passes available at schools, creating an unlimited monthly youth transit pass, or increasing transit education through schools has significant potential to increase youth ridership at relatively little cost.
4. Establish development guidelines for new senior housing and medical facilities, to ensure location along existing transit lines and near retail or municipal services. Requiring that developments that are likely to attract transit-dependent populations locate along transit routes and within walking distance of services is one of the most effective ways to ensure future mobility for senior residents.
5. Subsidize youth transit fares by shifting part of the existing subsidy of student parking privileges. Recommend to the Mt. Diablo Unified School District that the cost of yearly parking permits at high schools be increased; use the revenue to provide discount transit passes for students not driving.
6. Establish formalized Casual Carpool programs at senior housing facilities. This low-cost strategy would require establishing a bulletin-style "ride board" at senior housing facilities, promoting use by residents by putting up "rides needed" and "rides available" notices.
7. Conduct "Older Driver Wellness" workshops for drivers to stay safe as they grow older. The program would enable seniors and their caregivers to make an informed decision about when to "give up their keys" and about other mobility options.

The report concludes with a number of implementation steps that should be considered following modification and acceptance of the study's findings by the City Council, including: Determining which of the short-term strategies are the most likely to be implemented, ensuring that the study's recommendations are integrated into CCCTA's and the City's long-term planning efforts, and ensuring that appropriate staff at various agencies are designated to coordinate implementation of the plan's recommendations.

Chapter 1. Introduction

In 2000, in response to the efforts of members of the Commission on Aging, the Concord City Council approved a dedicated annual budget of \$25,000 for 10 years to enhance the mobility of Concord's senior population. One of the first activities that emerged from this dedication of funding was the commissioning of the present study to determine mobility barriers and make recommendations for strategies to address service gaps.

The target population for this study was expanded to include those Concord residents who typically have limited access to autos -- seniors and youth. Within this group, many sub-populations are represented, such as those experiencing mobility problems due to language and cultural barriers, geographic isolation, or income level. The study of mobility barriers also covered the range of transportation modes available to Concord residents, such as driving, getting rides from others, CCCTA fixed-route service, walking, LINK paratransit, specialized transportation, and taxis.

The study worked with a project advisory committee consisting of representatives of transportation and social service agencies, members of the Commission on Aging and the Youth Commission, and city staff.

Outreach for the study involved several phases. To gather information on perceived mobility barriers for Concord seniors and youth, the consultant team held four public meetings – two with English-speaking seniors, two with Spanish-speaking seniors, and one with youth. Also conducted were stakeholder interviews with issue experts, service providers, and youth and senior consumers, and a survey on youth transit use administered through the Youth Commission.

Based on outreach and a demographic analysis of the City and County, the team identified and prioritized a range of strategies to address the transportation gaps. These strategies were brought before three public meetings, assessed to determine their relevance in Concord, evaluated based on a set of criteria, and prioritized. They are described in detail in Chapter 5, which is followed by a description of funding sources and steps for implementation.

In an effort to ensure that the Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study will produce practical results, we have identified a number of strategies that can be implemented in the short term with relatively insignificant infusion of funding. While the benefits of these measures may also be relatively modest compared to the challenges faced by the target population, we view them as building blocks that will serve an important role in enhancing the mobility of seniors and youth over the next fifteen to twenty years.

Chapter 2. Existing Transportation Service

Concord is the largest city in Central Contra Costa County, with a population of just over 120,000. Seniors and youth make up a substantial part of the population – nearly 45% of the residents are either over 55 years old or under 18. Those with the most acute alternative transportation needs – seniors over 65 and school age children 5 to 17 – account for 11% and 18% of the population, respectively.

Concord is served by one major transit service, the Contra Costa County Connection, which provides fixed route bus service in Concord and other cities in the region. ADA paratransit eligible persons who cannot ride fixed route transit are served by LINK, County Connection's ADA paratransit service. The city of Concord is also served by two BART stations that connect to the major urban centers of San Francisco and Oakland, as well as other East Bay destinations.

Despite these extensive local and regional services, however, transportation options in Concord can be somewhat restrictive for those who do not own a private automobile. Fixed-route and paratransit services are limited on evenings and weekends, particularly on Sundays. Results from the focus groups indicate that Clayton Road and the routes connecting to the Monument Corridor are especially underserved. Clayton Road has two routes - one running Monday to Saturday, and the other Sunday only - both oriented towards BART. While the route on Monument Boulevard provides relatively frequent service, it connects to routes with a much lower level of service. Destinations off the Boulevard, in particular medical and support services, often require one or more transfers.

In addition to these general public transportation services, specialized transportation is available to many residents in Concord, but is often limited to certain populations, such as apartment complex residents, or runs infrequently.

The next sections will cover each of the existing transportation options available in Concord, including:

- CCCTA Fixed Route Service
- LINK
- BART
- Taxis
- School Bus Service
- Cambridge Shuttle Bus
- Limited-participant services

CCCTA Fixed Route Service

Service Parameters

The County Connection (Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority, or CCCTA) was established in 1980 and provides transit service within central Contra Costa County. The County Connection serves Clayton, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and unincorporated areas of Central County. CCCTA is overseen by an 11-member Board of Directors – one representative from each jurisdiction and one representative for the unincorporated areas of Central County.

The County Connection operates 28 routes covering a service area of 200 square miles and a population of 467,900, as well as the paratransit service, LINK, discussed in further detail in its own section. The entire fleet includes 130 fully accessible buses, as well as 48 paratransit passenger vans.

Fourteen of the CCCTA routes serve the City of Concord, including one express route and two routes that operate Sunday service only. The Concord routes, times of operation and frequency, as well as primary route destinations, are listed in Figure 2-1.

Buses operate from approximately 5:00 AM to 11:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Saturdays. None of the routes run Sunday service, with the exception of Routes 308 and 314, which operate on a limited schedule from 7:30 AM to 7:00 PM. Frequency between buses tends to be about 10-30 minutes during peak commute periods, 40 minutes during other weekday hours and Saturdays, and 60 minutes on Sundays.

Figure 2-1 Fixed Routes Serving Concord

Route	Hours of Operation	Frequency	Destination
Route 110	Mon-Fri: 5:30 AM to 11 PM Saturday: 7:30 AM to 9 PM	Mon-Fri: 6 - 20 minutes Saturday: 40 minutes	Clayton, Kirkwood/Pine Hollow, Concord BART, Sun Valley Mall, DVC
Route 111	Mon-Fri: 6:20 AM to 8 PM Saturday: 8:30 AM to 7 PM	Mon-Fri: 15-60 minutes Saturday: 40 minutes	Concord BART, Oak Grove Rd, Pleasant Hill BART, Geary Rd, San Miguel Rd
Route 114	Mon-Fri: 5:00 AM to 11:30 PM Saturday: 7:30 AM to 8:30 PM	Mon-Fri: 15-45 minutes Saturday: 20-40 minutes	Concord BART, Monument Blvd, Pleasant Hill BART
Route 115	Mon-Fri: 5:00 AM to 9:00 PM Saturday: 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM	Mon-Fri: 15-45 minutes Saturday: 60 minutes	Concord BART, Treat Blvd, Pleasant Hill BART, Walnut Creek BART, Ygnacio Valley High
Route 116	Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM Saturday: 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM	Mon-Fri: 15-30 minutes Saturday: 50 minutes	Walnut Creek BART, Pleasant Hill BART, Gregory Lane, Alhambra Ave, County Hospital, Amtrak
Route 117 (A and B)	Mon-Fri: 5:00 AM to 8:00 PM Saturday: 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM	Mon-Fri: 30-50 minutes Saturday: 40 minutes	A- Concord BART, Mt. Diablo High School, Mt. Diablo Medical Center, Olivera Rd, N Concord/ Mrtz BART B- Concord BART, Baldwin Park, 6th St, N Concord/ Mrtz BART
Route 117L	Mon-Fri: 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM	30-120 minutes	L- Concord Naval Weapons Station, N Concord/ Mrtz BART (Limited Service)
Route 118	Mon-Fri: 6:30 AM to 11 PM Saturday: 8:30 AM to 7:30 PM	Mon-Fri: 20-45 min Saturday: 60 minutes	Martinez Amtrak, DVC, Sun Valley Mall, Concord BART
Route 124	Mon-Fri: 6:30 AM to 7:30 PM	60 minutes	Cowell Rd, Cal State Hayward, Concord Blvd, BART Concord
Route 129	Mon-Fri: 6:40 AM to 6:40 PM Saturday: 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM	Mon-Sat: 60 minutes	Concord Blvd, Cal State Hayward, Cowell Rd, BART Concord
Route 308 Sunday Only	Sunday: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	80 minutes	North Concord/Mrtz BART, Sunvalley Mall, Amtrak
Route 314 Sunday Only	Sunday: 7:30 AM to 7:00 PM	60 minutes	Clayton Rd, BART Concord, Monument Blvd, Contra Costa Blvd, Diablo Valley College
Route 991 Express	Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM	30 minutes	Concord BART, Concord Airport Plaza, Galaxy Office Park, Chevron
Route 108	Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM Saturday: 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM	Mon-Fri: 30 minutes Saturday: 40 minutes	N. Concord/Mrtz BART, Kaiser Hospital, Veterans Hospital, County Courthouse, Mrtz Amtrak Station

Fares

Fixed route fares are shown in Figure 2-2.

Apart from a summer Youth Pass, there are no discounts for youth bus travel. Summer Youth Passes are offered at half-price from mid-June through September, and are available to students age 6 to 18.

Significant savings are available to seniors (65 and over) and riders with disabilities on fixed route rides. Between the hours of 10 AM and 2 PM, every day, they can ride free. At all other times, cash fares are 50% off the regular adult/youth fare. To ride during the free hours, senior citizens and disabled passengers must have a valid Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount Card. The RTC Discount Card is a regional identification card

that allows eligible passengers to ride Bay Area transit systems at a discounted fare, and is available at a cost of \$3.00.

In addition to the fares described above, several multi-ride passes are available, including 10-ride, 20-ride, 40-ride, and Commuter Card passes (20 regular rides plus BART transfer, available for \$30.00).

Paratransit rides on LINK cost \$3.00 for each one-way trip.

Figure 2-2 Fixed Route Fares

Fare	Adult/Youth	Senior/Disabled	Express Bus Service
Cash	\$1.50	\$0.75	\$1.75
10 Ride Pass	\$12.50	n/a	n/a
20 Ride Pass	\$25.00	\$10.00	n/a
40 Ride Pass	\$45.00	n/a	\$55.00
Transfers to BART	\$0.75	\$0.25	Free

The Fixed Route budget for fiscal year 2002 was \$22,452,553, and for paratransit service, \$3,199,712.

Recent Improvements and Future plans

Service Changes

Within the past year, CCCTA has implemented a number of service improvements. These include: extending service on Route 114 to 11 PM and improving headways from 40 to 20 minutes, and adding a Sunday Route 314. On Route 118, service now deviates to serve the clinics on Stanwell/Bisso Lane, and headways on that route were improved from 80 minutes to 40 minutes. CCCTA implemented other changes on six routes, effective January 5, 2003. The most significant was interlining some midday trips between Routes 101 and 107 to improve service to John Muir Medical Center, and adopting a new Saturday schedule for Route 117. Routes 116, 118 and 121 now experience minor time point or starting time shifts, none exceeding five-minute margins.

Safe Place Service

The County Connection, in partnership with the Mt. Diablo Region YMCA and the Northern California Family Center, recently kicked off its participation in the national "Safe Place" program. The YMCA and County Connection are collaborating to add the CCCTA bus fleet and the YMCA's four facilities to the current "Safe Place" Locations. A youth in crisis can go to any of the above facilities or board any County Connection bus and identify themselves as needing help. The Northern California Family Center is then notified and the youth is transported to the "Safe Place" house in Martinez, where they can receive temporary shelter and assistance. The Northern California Family Center offers shelter to

runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth. The County Connection is one of only 15 transit systems in the country participating in this community youth program.¹

Better Service to Kaiser

In winter 2002/03, CCCTA and the community discussed current service to medical facilities in Concord. The discussion centered on bus service between Rossmoor and the Kaiser Permanente medical facilities in Shadelands. Participants expressed concern that it took too long to get to Shadelands, that transfers between buses at John Muir were not well timed, and that the schedules were difficult to understand.

While new, direct service was not possible at that time, several steps have since been taken to make getting to and from Shadelands on County Connection buses better, including:

- A new schedule that combines portions of both routes 101 and 107, with only those trips that are designed to meet at John Muir for the purpose of transferring.
- Signs installed at the bus stops on N. Wiget that boldly indicate to passengers which direction that bus will travel, and where to go if they need to travel in the opposite direction.
- Benches installed to make waiting more pleasant at the two bus stops on N. Wiget that most directly serve Kaiser offices.²

LINK Paratransit Service

In 1990, CCCTA assumed responsibility for three private paratransit operations and unified them into one system – the County Connection LINK – that now serves an average of 465 trips per weekday in Contra Costa County. Service is contracted out to a private operator, Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc.

In order to be eligible for County Connection LINK service, a person must be eligible for paratransit services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

According to the ADA definition of paratransit eligibility, service must be provided to people whose temporary or permanent disability prevents their independent use of fixed-route services. Customers are eligible if they meet one of these three conditions:

- They are unable to independently board or disembark, identify the correct vehicle or stop, maintain balance on a vehicle, understand directions needed to complete a trip, wait five minutes at a stop, or perform any of the usual tasks associated with using public transit.

¹ From the CCCTA website: <http://www.cccta.org/CountyConnection.html>

² *ibid*

- There are no accessible services at the stop the applicant uses (for example, someone needs lift-assisted boarding, but the bus lift can't be deployed at the stop that person uses).
- The applicant can't travel independently to or from the bus or rail stop they use.³

Application for ADA paratransit eligibility and the County Connection LINK service requires either a visit to the County Connection's Transportation Center at the Walnut Creek BART facility or calling to have materials sent. Subsequent interviews also occur. Notification of eligibility status arrives within 21 days.

The LINK service operates a regular service for access to fixed route transit, as well as a service connecting to BART. Operating hours are shown in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 LINK service operating hours

	LINK regular service	LINK service on behalf of BART
Monday - Friday	6:00 AM to 10:00 PM	4:00 AM - 6:00 AM 10:00 PM - 1:00 AM
Saturday	8:30 AM to 7:30 PM (in limited areas)	5:00 AM - 8:30 AM 7:30 PM - 1:00 AM
Sunday	8:00 AM to 6:30 PM (in limited areas)	6:00 AM - 1:00 AM

Evening, Saturday and Sunday service, and service provided on behalf of BART, is provided in very limited areas and in strict compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Service is provided within 3/4 of a mile of regular bus service or a BART station.

The one-way fare for any County Connection LINK trip is \$3.00.

BART

BART is the major regional connector, serving points throughout the East Bay, the Downtown Central Business District (CBD) in San Francisco and other destinations south of the CBD. There are two BART stops in the Concord jurisdiction – Concord and North Concord.

General hours of operation for BART are Weekdays 4 AM to 12 AM, Saturdays 6 AM to 12 AM, and Sundays from 8 AM to 12 AM. One line – the Pittsburg/Bay Point to Daly City/Colma route – runs to the Concord and North Concord stations. Figure 2-4 shows the hours of operation and service frequency to the two stations.

³ From MTC: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/publications/paratrans/Paratransit_Guide.doc

Fares to/from Concord range from \$1.10 for the shortest trips, including North Concord, Pittsburg Bay Point, and Pleasant Hill, to \$3.85 for downtown San Francisco, and \$4.25 to Colma. BART offers discount fares for seniors, people with disabilities, and youth. Seniors 65 and older, persons with disabilities, and children 5 to 12 years old receive a 75% discount – \$4 for a \$16 value card. Middle and secondary school students can buy \$32 cards for \$16 (50% off), through participating schools only.

Several County Connection fixed route buses connect with BART. In fact, the Concord BART Station is the primary destination for many of the Concord bus routes, and functions as the only transfer point amongst fixed routes in the city. The buses connecting to each Concord BART station are:

Connection to North Concord BART:

- 108 Martinez/BART N. Concord
- 117 Solano/Olivera/Baldwin Park
- 117L Naval Weapons Station (Mon-Fri only)

Connection to the Concord BART:

- 110 Clayton Rd/D.V.C.
- 111 Oak Grove Rd/Geary Rd
- 113 Concord Blvd
- 114 Monument Boulevard
- 115 Treat Boulevard
- 117 Solano/Olivera/Baldwin Park
- 118 Morello/Amtrak
- 213 Cowell Road
- 308 Concord BART/Martinez Amtrak (Sundays only)
- 314 Clayton and Monument Corridor (Sundays only)
- 991 Concord Commuter Express (Mon-Fri only)

Figure 2-4 BART Hours of Operation

BART service between:		Hours of Operation			Frequency		
		Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Concord	Colma/Daly City	4:00 am to 1:30 am	6:00 am to 1:25 am	8 am to 1:25 am	5 - 20 minutes	20 minutes	20 minutes

Taxis

Approximately nineteen taxi companies provide service within the City of Concord. Most provide 24-hour service. Depending on the taxi operator, the initial flag drop fee is \$1.50 to \$2.00 plus \$2.00 to \$2.50 per mile. Because of cost, taxis may be an option of last resort for low-income persons. However, seniors age 60 and over are eligible to purchase Taxi Scrip, a discount book of tickets that can be used like cash to pay for taxi rides. Scrip books valued at \$20 are sold for \$15 at Senior Centers, as well as some banks. Scrip is accepted *only* by Sal's Taxi and is good for service in Clayton, Concord, Martinez, and Pleasant Hill.

Several other services similar to taxis are available to the public in Concord. They include:

SJW Transportation

Based in Pittsburg, CA, SJW Transportation provides non-emergency medical transportation in Contra Costa County.

Ambul-Cab

Provides non-emergency transportation to/from medical appointments, and is the only cab service in the city with wheelchair accessibility and gurney service. Users must be Medi-Cal patients whose trips are medically justified; in a wheelchair; or unable to be on their own. Saturday and Sunday appointments are available by special arrangement.

Have Car, Will Drive⁴

This is an informal taxi service operated by an individual in Pittsburg, with some service for people in Concord. He drives seniors to the doctor, shopping, or other errands, waits for the duration of the excursion, and gives the person a ride home. Fares are \$1 per mile, with a flat rate for trips within Pittsburg or Antioch, and an extra surcharge of \$10 to \$20 for passengers originating in Concord. If the wait is over one hour, the charge is \$5 per hour wait. His vehicle is lightweight-wheelchair accessible. Trips are available most days of the week, but given the nature of the service he drives typically no more than 2 to 3 trips per day.

School Bus Service

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District owns and operates a fleet of 79 school buses, providing school transportation to almost 3500 students (approximately 10% of the total student enrollment). Over half of these buses serve schools and students in the City of Concord. Eligibility for school bus transportation is based on the distance that a student lives from school and his or her grade. Requirements for service are:

- Grades K-5: Students must live 1.25 miles or more from school

⁴ From website: http://contracostatext.networkofcare.org/resource/tax_list.cfm?sw=357

- Grades 6-8: Students must live 3 miles or more from school
- Grades 9-12: Students must live 7 miles or more from school

School bus service costs \$250 for an annual pass, and must be paid in full at the beginning of the Fall semester. Discounts are available for families with more than one child—fees for the second child in a family are half off, and 75% off for the third child. Input at the October 2002 Advisory Meeting suggests that this lumped cost can be prohibitive for those with limited expendable income. The preferred alternative is often to pay smaller monthly installments for transit passes.

The bus service does not provide transportation for “zero” periods – classes and activities that start before or end after official school bell times. The bus service provides some transportation to the Concord Youth Center as well as summer trips to recreation destinations when contracted by a sponsoring agency such as Concord’s Parks and Recreation Department.

The location of school bus stops is subject to California Highway Patrol (CHP) rules, which are somewhat more restrictive than those governing the placement of transit stops. Criteria include maximum speed limits on adjacent streets, good visibility, and not blocking intersections.

Cambridge Shuttle Bus

The Cambridge Community Center operates Senior Transportation Services, which provides a free shopping-shuttle service for eligible Concord residents. The Community Center provides approximately 150 one-way trips per week with one shuttle vehicle. Trips run three days per week from senior housing to two different grocery stores, the Concord Senior Center and St. Michael’s Church (Loaves & Fishes) for lunch, and Cambridge Community Center Friday Bingo. Those who want to take the shuttle must apply by phone, and fit the following criteria:

- Low income
- Concord residents
- Age 60+
- Frail senior
- Limited access to transportation

The service is free on a first come, first served basis. Based on Fiscal Year 2003 information provided by Community Center staff, following are some of the service parameters:

- The service provides approximately 7,200 one-way trips each year.
- The fully loaded cost per trip for Cambridge is \$6.54 compared to the \$26.11 cost for a paratransit trip provided by County Link. There are two key explanations for

this substantial cost difference. First, salaries, the major portion of operating costs, are much lower in the non-profit sector due to the use of part-time and/or non-unionized labor. Second, the Americans with Disabilities Act requires paratransit services operated by public agencies to meet a higher level of service in terms of access and availability. For example, public agencies must provide the same level of service during peak and off-peak hours and respond to customers based on the specific time a trip is requested. Non-profit organizations are not subject to the same strict ADA service requirements. As a result, paratransit services operated by non-profit organizations can adjust their service based on peak and off-peak hours and group riders headed for the same or nearby destinations to ride at the same time. The combination of lower staffing cost and flexible scheduling practices combine to allow non-profit organizations to operate at a significantly lower per trip cost than public transit agencies. Finally it is important to note that the fully loaded per trip cost for Cambridge includes the annual amortization to replace the transit vehicle and is within the industry standard for non-profit paratransit services.

- The productivity of the service is about 6.25 trips per hour, which is comparable to industry standards for non-ADA paratransit service.
- Approximately 117 seniors use the program; potentially 270 seniors are eligible to use it.
- The seniors who ride the program are primarily located in the downtown Senior Towers, and also in the Monument Corridor. They are reportedly all low-income, with the majority living on less than \$16,000 per year.

Limited-participant services

There are a number of informal ride-giving services available to selected populations of Concord seniors. These include:

- **Caring Hands:** The Caring Hands Volunteer Caregivers Program supports seniors and disabled adults to help them remain independent as long as safely possible.
- Ride givers organized through **churches and women's groups**
- **S.O.S. (Senior Outreach Services)**, is a countywide program that provides some transportation elements.
- Special services provided through the **Department of Social and Health Services**. Transportation service is very limited, both in what is provided and who is eligible. Those who have access to this service must have a social worker and case open with the Department, and receive the benefit as part of the larger social work package.
- **New developments on Clayton Boulevard** in the vicinity of Bailey Road have some limited services for residents. They have their own shuttles for medical trips, stores, etc. The service is only offered to residents, and the apartments are in the mid- to high-income bracket.

- Some **residential care homes** also have their own service.
- **County Connection Travel Training Program** is a free service for people wanting to learn how to use the fixed-route bus service. Depending upon need, training could include everything from learning how to read the bus schedule, to riding the bus accompanied by a travel trainer. The program also includes a pass for 10 free rides.⁵
- **Park Express** is a low-cost service in Oakland that provides transportation to regional parks for non-profits serving low-income groups in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. Reservations can be made for one of two wheelchair accessible vans, or a 44-passenger bus.⁶
- **Multilingual Health Navigation Services for Seniors & Families** is one of the programs at the Jewish Family & Children's Service in Walnut Creek. The program provides many services, including transportation assistance. Volunteers provide in-home visits and reassurance calls, errand/escort/chore assistance, caregiver assistance, and small group activities. People over 55 years old are eligible for the program, and can access information in Bosnian, Farsi, Russian, and Spanish, as well as English.
- **FERST Multi-Service Center** is part of Phoenix Programs, Inc., and operates out of Antioch. The program targets several user groups: People with disabilities, Disaster Response, Homeless, and Senior Citizens. While not focused on transportation, the program includes a transportation component to access other services. The centers, including the one in Concord, are one-stop service centers designed to coordinate a variety of services and provide accessibility primarily for homeless individuals and families.

Summary

Given the largely suburban nature of development densities in the City of Concord, there is a surprisingly wide range of transportation options available to seniors and youth. However, many individuals are unaware of these services. Even for those who regularly use the transportation options described above, reaching many destinations without the use of a car remains a formidable obstacle. The next section, Chapter 3, provides demographic information and existing transit service gaps in relation to senior and youth population density. The gaps in transportation services as perceived by senior and youth consumers are documented in the subsequent section, Chapter 4.

⁵ Senior Services Resource Directory for Central Contra Costa County

⁶ www.contracostatext.networkofcare.org

Chapter 3. Demographic Analysis and Transit Service Mapping

Background

The previous chapter identified transportation resources available to seniors and youth in Concord. This chapter provides demographic analyses to provide information on the population of Concord as well as any gaps in existing transit service. It will complement the more anecdotal information discussed in Chapter 4, the barriers to mobility gleaned from outreach and public focus groups.

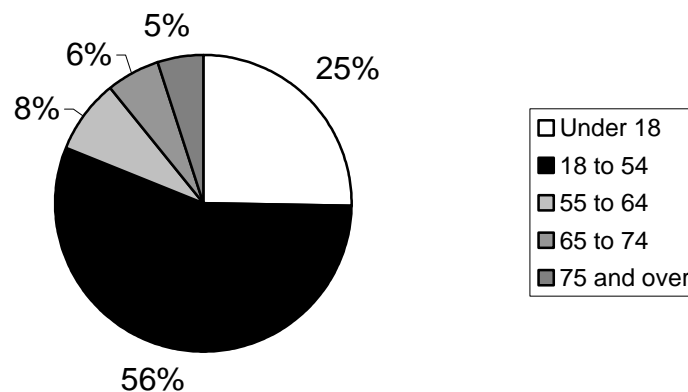
Demographic Analysis: Census Data

This section presents an overview of several basic demographic measures, such as the age, income, and racial breakdowns of the Concord population, as well as language barriers and vehicle ownership by age group. These figures are derived from the 2000 Census.

Age

Figure 3-1 indicates that approximately 25% of Concord residents are under 18, while 11% are over 65. These percentages are very similar to the County as a whole (26.5% and 11.3% respectively). However, more significantly, the number of Concord residents in the over 85 category has grown by 50% since 1990.

Figure 3-1 Age of Concord Residents



Income

As illustrated in Figure 3-2, it is important to note that fully one in four seniors (27.2%) has an annual income of less than \$20,000. This level of income will be taken into account in the development of strategies to address mobility barriers. Figure 3-3 shows the distribution of poverty within the senior cohort, indicating that those over 75 are almost three times as likely to be living in poverty than those in the 65 to 74 age range. The definition of poverty in Contra Costa County is an annual income of less than \$8,860¹.

Figure 3-2 Income of Concord Seniors 65 Years and Older

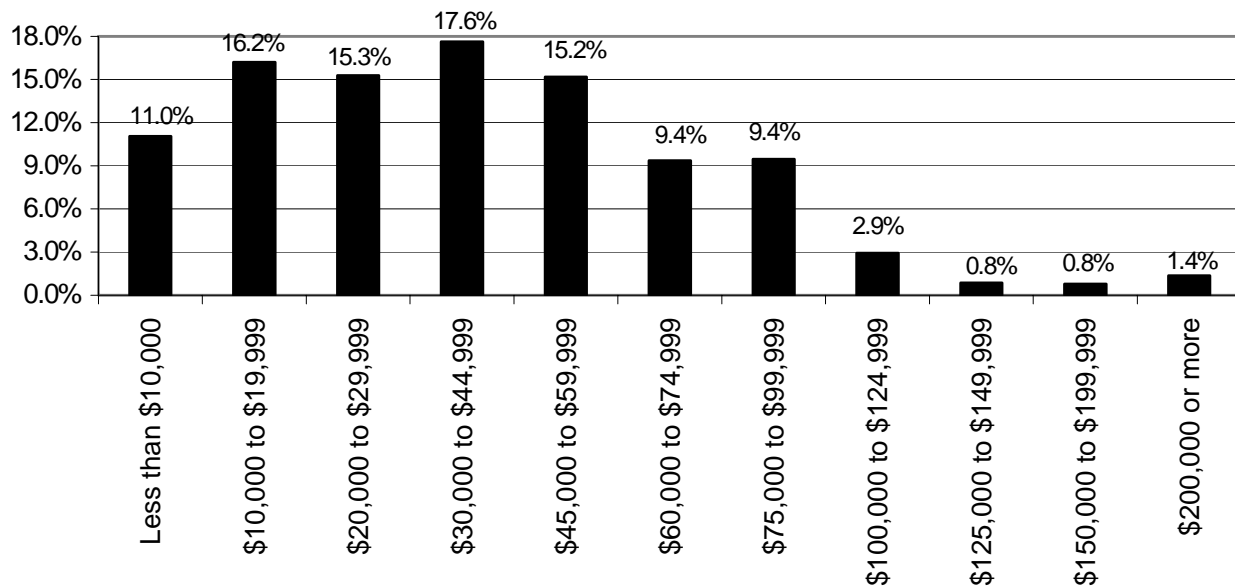


Figure 3-3 Distribution of Poverty by Age

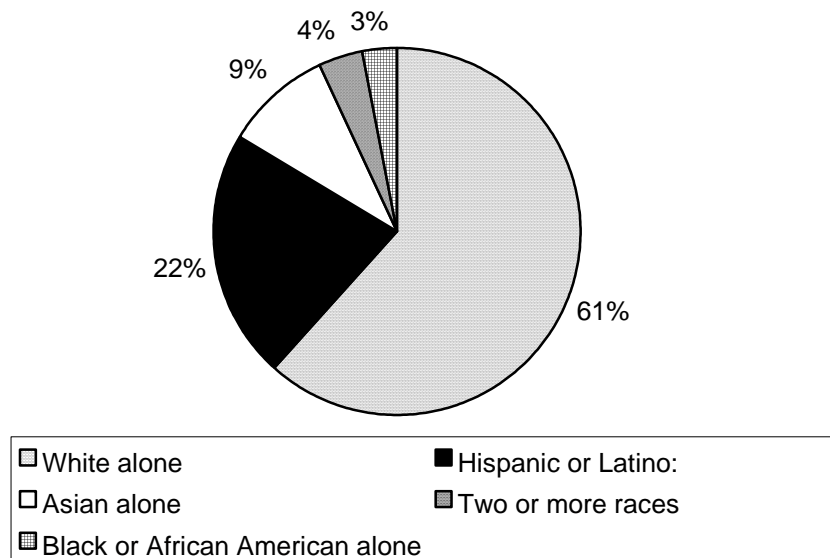
Age Range	Number with income below poverty level:	Number with income at or above poverty level:	Percent below poverty level
Under 65 years	8,368	99,508	7.8%
65 to 74 years	233	6,693	3.4%
75 years and over	550	5,059	9.8%
Total	9,151	111,260	7.6%

¹ Source: U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Race

While the majority of the City's population is White, this proportion is lower than the County-wide average (61% versus 70%). The City has a significant Latino minority of 22%, which is more than twice as high as the County-wide average, suggesting that particular attention must be paid in the development of strategies that will address this population.

Figure 3-4 Distribution by Race in Concord



Language Barriers

Figures 3-5 and 3-6 describe the ability of residents to speak English and other languages. Nine percent of seniors 65 and over speak English “not well” or not at all, while four percent of youth 5 to 17 years old are non-English speakers. Seven percent of Concord households are considered “linguistically isolated”, or unable to speak English well. This information is critical in the development of informational materials and outreach efforts for transportation programs.

Figure 3-5 Language Barriers for Concord Youth and Seniors

	5 to 17 years	Percent of Age Group	65 and over	Percent of Age Group
Speak only English	15,581	70.5%	10,309	78.2%
Speak another language and English "well or very well"	5,639	25.5%	1,686	12.8%
Speak another language and English "not well or not at all"	879	4.0%	1,185	9.0%

Figure 3-6 Language Barriers by Household

	Households	Percent of Total
English Speaking	31,302	71.0%
Other Language - <i>not linguistically isolated</i>	9,742	22.1%
Other Language - <i>linguistically isolated</i>	3,067	7.0%
Total Households	44,111	100.0%

Vehicle Ownership

The number of residents without vehicles is significant in understanding the level of dependence on alternative transportation modes for youth and seniors in Concord, and determining strategies to improve their mobility.

Figure 3-7 shows the percentage of residents who do not own a vehicle, by age, for both Concord and Contra Costa County. Compared with countywide statistics, residents in Concord of all ages (with the exception of those 55-64) are less likely to have access to a vehicle. This is particularly true for youth (included in the 15 to 24 year old age category), and seniors 75 years and older, where nearly 15% and 25%, respectively, did not have access to a vehicle. This statistic is conservative in that it does not capture seniors who have cars but have forfeited their licenses. As discussed in the previous chapter, approximately 12% of Contra Costa seniors aged 65 to 74 do not have a license, compared to 28% of 75 to 84 year olds, and 63% of those 85 or older.

Figure 3-7 Percentage of Residents (Householders Only) Who Do Not Own a Vehicle

Householder Age	Concord	Contra Costa County
15 to 24 years	14.3%	11.6%
25 to 34 years	7.3%	5.9%
35 to 44 years	5.7%	4.4%
45 to 54 years	4.5%	3.9%
55 to 64 years	3.7%	4.2%
65 to 74 years	9.0%	6.8%
75 years and over	24.2%	20.5%
Total	7.6%	6.5%

Analysis of Maps

Figures 3-8 through 3-12 show map analyses of the Concord youth and senior populations. All maps show the eighteen CCCTA bus routes that serve Concord. Two maps show the 2000 senior and youth population density with transportation-access "buffers", or the area surrounding each bus route that is considered within walkable distance to bus stops. Walkable buffers for the senior population density map show the area that is within ¼ mile of each bus route. The youth population "buffer" shows the area within ½ mile of each bus route. The areas that lie outside the "walkable distance" buffers in each map are shaded in gray, showing the residences considered transit inaccessible. The five maps shown and discussed in Figures 3-8 through 3-12 below include:

- Senior Population Density, 2000, with ¼ mile "buffers" around bus routes
- Senior Population Density Projections, 2010
- Mean Annual Income of Senior by Census Tract
- Youth Population Density, 2000, with ½ mile "buffers" around bus routes
- Youth Population Density Projections, 2010

Senior Population Density and Mean Income by Census Tract

Figure 3-8 shows where the greatest concentrations of seniors live in Concord. The densest senior populations, shown in dark purple, are in the downtown area, and south of Clayton Road and Treat Blvd. Many of these are directly correlated with senior housing areas – for example, the Plaza and Heritage Apartments in downtown and the assisted-living housing developments along Clayton Road. The map also depicts the areas that are further than ¼ mile from bus routes. Assuming that ¼ mile is the maximum distance for most seniors to comfortably walk to the bus stop, the gray areas show parts of Concord that would be considered inaccessible by transit. Several areas in Concord fall into these inaccessible gray-shaded areas, including substantial sections of relatively dense areas on either side of Treat Boulevard and between Clayton Road and Concord Boulevard.

Projected population densities for seniors in the year 2010 are shown in Figure 3-9. The most notable increases in senior population density are in areas in Northeast Concord, particularly areas off Willow Pass and Clayton Roads, as well as in the South off Monument Boulevard. The area with most significant increase in senior population is the section between Cowell and Ygnacio Valley Roads. It is interesting to note that senior population density is actually expected to decrease in central downtown, which according to 2000 data is one of the densest areas, with over 1,000 seniors per square mile.

Figure 3-10 shows the concentration of seniors by mean annual income. Although all seniors, regardless of income, have potentially lower mobility due to health concerns, those in the lowest income brackets tend to have the greatest reliance on public transportation given the often-prohibitive costs of other options. Seniors in Concord in the

lowest income bracket – annual incomes less than \$15,000 – are concentrated in the area surrounding Downtown Concord. The census tracts with the next lowest mean annual income – \$25,000 or lower – are the areas off Monument Boulevard and south of Clayton Road.

Figure 3-8 Senior Population Density, 2000, with ¼ mile buffers

INSERT MAP

Figure 3-9 Projected Senior Population Density, 2010

INSERT MAP

Figure 3-10 Mean Annual Income of Seniors by Census Tract, 2000

INSERT MAP

Youth Population Density by Census Tract

Youth population density in Concord is shown in Figure 3-11. The most concentrated youth populations are in the areas near Downtown between Willow Pass Road and Monument Blvd, as well as east of the city near Pine Hollow Middle School, where many new single-family houses have been built. The next densest areas are concentrated along Monument Blvd, Clayton Road, off Ygnacio Valley Road near Clayton Valley High School, and to the north of downtown near Mt. Diablo High and several other schools.

Youth are generally able to comfortably walk longer distances than seniors. The map depicts a ½ mile “buffer” zone around bus routes as being transit accessible to youth. There are only two small areas that are beyond ½ mile of a bus route, between Monument, Treat, Cowell, and Oak Grove Roads, and between Treat Blvd and Ygnacio Valley Road. Assuming that ½ mile is a reasonable distance for youth to walk to access a bus (approximately a 10 minute walk), youth are geographically relatively well served. This does not take into consideration the frequencies or destinations of bus routes that are accessible, however. As indicated by the map, many of the medium youth density areas are served by infrequent bus routes with frequencies of 30 minutes or more (depicted by blue and gold lines).

Figure 3-12 shows youth population projections for 2010, depicting relatively little change in youth population density compared to current patterns. Some increase in youth density is expected in the area between Monument Boulevard and Treat Blvd, as well as the section adjacent to Cowell Road and Ygnacio Valley Road. Some of this growth is expected in the area surrounding both Oak Grove Middle School and Carondalet/De La Salle and Ygnacio Valley High Schools.

Figure 3-11 Youth Population Density, 2000, with ½ mile buffers

INSERT MAP

Figure 3-12 Youth Population Projection 2010

INSERT MAP

Concord Youth Center Zip codes analysis

The Concord Youth Center (CYC) is a popular destination for many youth in Concord and neighboring cities, but has been identified as one in need of better transit access. Existing transit service to the Center was evaluated in Chapter 2. In an effort to better understand the needs of CYC youth and the potential for transportation improvements, the home origins of program participants were compiled. The following figures show the zip codes and cities that have the highest share of students who attend programs at the Concord Youth Center.

Figure 3-13 shows the city of origin for program participants. Just over half (52.7%) of CYC youth live in Concord, while the cities with the next largest populations of CYC youth are Bay Point (8%), Pittsburgh (6.8%), and Martinez (6.6%). The CYC draws youth from all over the Bay Area, however, with students from 30 additional cities that are not represented in the table (all those with fewer than 10 students each, or 1% overall, are not shown). The high proportion of youth coming from outside the City of Concord presents a particular challenge for those relying on transit to get to CYC activities.

Figure 3-13 Home Origins by City of CYC Youth

CITY	Frequency	Percent
Concord	640	52.7%
Bay Point	97	8.0%
Pittsburg	82	6.8%
Martinez	80	6.6%
Walnut Creek	63	5.2%
Pleasant Hill	53	4.4%
Antioch	39	3.2%
San Ramon	19	1.6%
Benicia	18	1.5%
Clayton	16	1.3%
Danville	15	1.2%

Figure 3-14 shows the zip codes of the home origins of CYC youth. Within Concord, the zip codes where the most CYC participants live correspond with the Monument Corridor (94520 and 94518) and Clayton Corridor (94521). Within the cities of Pittsburgh and Bay Point, the zip code 94565 has the highest number of participants.

Figure 3-14 Home Origins by Zip Code of CYC Youth

City	ZIP	Frequency	Percent
Concord (Monument)	94520	237	19.5
Concord (Clayton)	94521	184	15.2
Pittsburgh/Bay Point	94565	176	14.5
Concord (Monument)	94518	113	9.3
Concord (North)	94519	99	8.2
Martinez	94553	87	7.2
Pleasant Hill	94523	53	4.4
Walnut Creek	94598	29	2.4
Antioch	94509	26	2.1
Walnut Creek	94596	22	1.8
Clayton	94517	19	1.6
San Ramon	94583	18	1.5
Benicia	94510	17	1.4
Danville	94526	12	1.0
Antioch	94531	12	1.0

Chapter 4. Barriers to Mobility

Driving is the standard mode of transportation in America, offering people a sense of freedom and virtually unlimited mobility, with a fast and convenient mode choice (barring traffic and costs). Suburban locations, in particular, cater to the automobile user with wide roads, residential areas that are isolated from services, and spread-out development. Youth and seniors, however, are two populations that often have restricted use of automobiles, due to age limit restrictions and financial constraints for youth, and declining health for seniors. In lieu of a driving option, mobility for these populations is dependent on other forms of transportation – transit, specialized transportation, getting rides, walking, or biking.

In Concord, several alternative transportation options are available, as outlined in Chapter 2. Despite these extensive local and regional services, however, transportation options in Concord can be somewhat restrictive for those who do not own a private automobile. Fixed-route and paratransit services are limited on evenings and weekends, with especially restricted Sunday service. Furthermore, many seniors and youth in Concord live in residential areas not well served by transit – areas either far from stops or along bus routes that run infrequently and require transfers to access popular destinations.

Understanding the alternative transportation options available to seniors and youth, and their perceptions of the availability of each option, is valuable in developing actions to support future mobility needs. This chapter presents an assessment of barriers that limit mobility on each of the existing transportation modes in Concord, as perceived by seniors and youth. The barriers, as indicated by stakeholders in this task, are summarized in the following table:

Mode	Mobility Barriers	Seniors	Youth
Driving	Safety and declining ability to drive, stress of driving at night and with aggressive drivers, stress of giving up a driver's license.	X	
	Driving limited by age restrictions (16 years), and availability of an individual or family vehicle.		X
	Prohibitive operating cost.	X	X
Getting Rides	Potential ride givers (family, friends, parents) are not available to give rides or can give them only on a limited basis.	X	X
	Potential ride givers do not have insurance that covers passengers, or sometimes have no insurance at all.	X	X
Transit	Transit service can be unreliable and too infrequent. Lack of service on evenings and weekends. Service to/from the Monument Corridor, Clayton Boulevard, and Treat Corridor, particularly, have limited routes that require one or more transfers to many destinations. Distances from bus stops to homes or destinations can be too long.	X	X
	Lack of evening transportation to the Senior Center for activities.	X	

Mode	Mobility Barriers	Seniors	Youth
	Lack of bus stop furniture and lighting -- few bus stops have seating, many have insufficient lighting.	X	X
	Lack of timed transfers.	X	X
	Limited direct service to medical facilities.	X	X
	Fares are too expensive for many (no reduced daily fares for youth). Fare media (summer youth passes, punch cards) not publicized enough or available for purchase only in a few places.	X	X
	Parking costs are negligible at most high schools, creating a disincentive to take transit and an imbalanced transportation subsidy to drivers.		X
	School bus costs are due in one large payment, service is not provided for "zero" periods, and eligibility is based on distance from home and age.		X
	Drivers can be insensitive.	X	
Walking	Lack of pedestrian infrastructure. Many streets have no sidewalks or only on one side, or have limited places to cross with not enough time. Weather, darkness, and personal safety concerns can also make walking unpleasant or unsafe.	X	X
Land Use	Housing in Concord is often located beyond walking distance from shopping and services.	X	X
Paratransit/ Specialized	LINK service is limited to those with ADA eligibility, it requires advanced planning, reportedly can be unreliable, can be too costly, and does not connect with other regional paratransit providers. Eligibility process reported to be intimidating.	X	
	Specialized transportation can be limited, both in hours of operation and frequency, as well as the eligible population.	X	
	The City of Concord has vans available for specialized transportation, but has a shortage of available, licensed drivers, and does not have funding to support extended operation.	X	X
	Taxis can be costly, there are few accessible vehicles, and many residents do not know about the Scrip coupons.	X	
All modes	Language barriers can inhibit getting a driver's license, ability to give/get rides, get transit information or publicity about LINK, specialized transportation options, and special fares.	X	X

Methodology/Data Sources

The information presented in this document was collected through several means. For seniors, data was gathered in three ways:

- **Literature review:**
 - Senior Transportation Report, the Concord Commission on Aging – 1999
 - MTC's Bay Area Older Adults Transportation Study (OATS) – 2002
 - Notes from the American Society on Aging focus groups of Concord seniors on the topic of barriers to driving – January 2003

- **Focus Groups**

Concord seniors described barriers they perceive to their mobility during four focus groups – two for English speaking seniors and two for seniors within the Spanish-speaking community. Each focus group had between seven and 16 people, and lasted one to two hours.

Barriers to senior mobility that were identified in the 2002 MTC OATS study were used as a point of departure for discussion in each senior focus group. Known mobility barriers for Bay Area seniors were presented for each transportation mode (such as driving, getting a ride, paratransit), and focus group participants were asked which barriers they identified with and why, in what ways the barriers were specifically present in Concord, and what was missing from the list. Responses from each focus group were compiled and are reported in the “Senior Barriers to Mobility” discussion included in this chapter.

- **Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with individuals from professions directly related to seniors and transportation, including:

- Kitty Barnes, representing County Aging and Adult Services, Area Agency on Aging, Advisory Council on Aging
- Oni Caloynan, Filipino American community member
- Cindy Dahlgren, Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority (CCCTA)
- Eizo Kobayashi, Concord Senior Center/ Senior Club
- Kathy Lafferty, Cambridge Community Center
- Sandy Maldague, American Society on Aging
- Anne Perridge-Heavey, Commission on Aging, City of Concord

Information on barriers to youth mobility followed a similar methodology, including the following three approaches:

- **Focus Group**

Members of the Concord Youth Council participated in a focus group on their perceptions of public transit, common origins and destinations, and the mobility challenges that youth face. Youth were presented with a series of questions focused primarily on their perceptions of transit and main mode of transportation.

- **Youth Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

- Gabby Arroyo, Sophomore at Mt. Diablo High School
- Fred Confetti, Director of Transportation, Mt. Diablo Unified School District
- Dennis Costanza, Director, Concord Youth Center
- Bruce Stanley, City of Concord Department of Parks and Recreation

- **Survey**

Members from the Concord Youth Council circulated a survey to over 80 of their peers that inquired about youth transportation habits and attitudes towards transit. A copy of the survey format and the tabulated results are shown in Appendix A.

Data from these sources are presented in the following sections. Barriers for each group are presented separately, and are broken down into the following categories:

- Driving
- Getting Rides as a Passenger
- Transit
- Walking
- Land Use
- ADA Paratransit and Specialized Transportation (i.e. shuttles and taxis)

It should be noted that, in a number of instances, the barriers have been identified by an individual or a small number of individuals, and may not necessarily indicate a systemic problem faced by a whole class of residents. These barriers have nevertheless been included in order to reflect the input received in the outreach process.

Senior Barriers to Mobility

As adults age, declining health such as impaired vision, slower reaction times, and other ailments can hinder, if not totally arrest, the ability to safely drive an automobile. Many seniors, particularly those in minority or low-income segments of the population, have never had a car or driver’s license to begin with. These individuals must deal with both the issue of forfeiting a license, as well as finding alternative modes of getting around. Barriers to mobility for seniors in Concord, however, are more extensive than just restricted driving abilities. Some older adults feel they have no means of transportation because they are ineligible for paratransit, unable to afford cabs, or afraid to use the bus because of safety concerns or lack of transit infrastructure. Others find that existing service does not get them where they need to go, or within a reasonable amount of time.

Concord’s senior representatives and stakeholders discussed many different barriers, covering the full spectrum of modes that seniors use to travel. These are presented in the discussion below.

Driving

Most seniors eventually must forfeit their driver’s license due to limited sensory perception or health concerns. This act in itself is often the central barrier to senior mobility. However, many older adults continue to drive well into their senior years and experience mobility barriers while they continue to use driving as a mode of transportation. There are also some seniors who have never driven.

Bay Area-wide, the MTC OATS study reported that there is an increasing tendency for seniors to rely on personal autos as their primary means of transportation. Figure 4-1 shows the driving rates among people 60 years of age and above, which have significantly increased, particularly for those in the oldest age brackets. Not all seniors with licenses drive, however. Many retain the driver’s license as a symbol of independence or freedom, but do not use their vehicles. An American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) survey referenced in the OATS study found that many adults (75 and older) who still drive limit their driving, either by avoiding driving at night (63%) or during rush hour (51%).

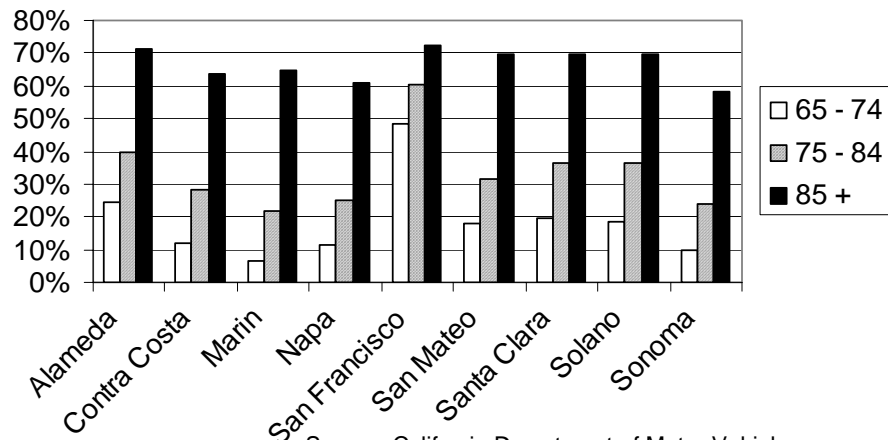
Figure 4-1 Percentage of Drivers Among Older Age Groups

MEN	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
1983	93%	91%	79%	78%	65%	48%
1996	94%	93%	93%	89%	82%	69%
WOMEN	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
1983	75%	62%	60%	38%	31%	12%
1996	84%	81%	75%	70%	52%	28%

Source: 1983 and 1995 Nationwide Passenger Transportation Survey, in Burkhardt, et al.

Figure 4-2 shows the percentage of seniors who do not have driver’s licenses in each county of the Bay Area. In Contra Costa County, approximately 12% of seniors aged 65 to 74 do not have a license, compared to 28% of 75-84 year olds, and 63% of those 85 or older. Compared to other Bay Area counties, a higher proportion of seniors in Contra Costa County hold driver’s licenses, likely due to a greater emphasis on auto-oriented land development that creates more dependence on the automobile for mobility.

Figure 4-2 Percentage of Seniors Who Do Not Have a Driver’s License, Bay Area Counties



Source: California Department of Motor Vehicles

The barriers to senior mobility identified by stakeholders and Concord seniors in the focus groups are discussed below.

Barriers to Driving

Barriers from the OATS study that Concord seniors identified with were:

- **Safety and declining ability to drive.** Seniors often suffer from limited vision, reaction time, and stamina, as well as other impairments.
- **Aggressive and unsafe drivers.** Other drivers on the road make many seniors feel less safe behind the wheel.
- **Stress involved with driving in traffic.**
- **Difficulty driving at night.** Because of limited vision problems, driving at night can become daunting and unsafe for seniors. As a result, many feel stranded at nighttime without mobility options.
- **Operating cost.** Cost of insurance/maintenance is prohibitive for many people.

Additional barriers to driving for seniors in Concord included:

- **Language Barriers.** Those who do not speak English well, or who are not legal immigrants, find it difficult or dangerous to obtain a driver’s license. Anecdotal

information suggests that this applies to a substantial population in Concord. This can also limit the ability of non-English speaking seniors to get rides from younger friends and relatives who cannot get a driver's license.

- **Stress of giving up a driver's license.** The act of giving up a driver's license due to aging or associated ailments can be emotionally upsetting. People can feel a loss of dignity or independence, reduced self-image, or loss of freedom. Self-testing was suggested by a stakeholder as an activity that helps with the process – those who tested themselves were more willing/able/happy to give up their driver's licenses, than if they were tested by others and told to forfeit them. The stakeholder indicated, however, that many older drivers are still “not willing to let go and risk losing their independence.”

Getting rides as a passenger

Getting rides as a passenger is a viable transportation option for many seniors who can no longer drive, but who have friends or relatives willing to take them places from time to time. One of the main barriers to this mode of transportation is that not all seniors have friends or relatives in the area. Even if people are available to give rides, seniors often feel uncomfortable asking for rides, or feel unsafe in the vehicles. Some agencies in Concord offer the service of caregivers who can give rides to seniors, but again, not all seniors have access to these services.

One issue that was not stated in the Concord focus groups, but that has been identified in the MTC OATS study, is that seniors are concerned about the driver's driving skills, and thus feel unsafe getting a ride.

Barriers to Getting Rides

- **Potential ride givers have busy lives and riders must travel at the convenience of the driver.** Participants feel very aware of not wanting to impose on their “ride-giver.” Reasonable frequency of asking for rides is perceived as not more than one time per week. Consequently, this is not a feasible solution for frequent trips (i.e. grocery shopping).
- **Passengers feel under an obligation.** To compensate the ride-giver, informal “tipping” for gas and time often occurs, but can be costly. Without compensation, riders can feel uncomfortable or guilty about taking time out of the other person's day.
- **Some people don't know many potential drivers to ask.** There is an informal ride system by caregivers who give “in-home” services to people in the Heritage Plaza apartments (and are paid by the County). These caregivers offer transportation to most residents, are paid for their gas and time, and will set up appointments in advance. This service is limited to a very discrete population, however – only those who live in the Plaza Apartments.

- **Potential ride givers do not have insurance to cover a passenger.** Participants of the Spanish-speaking focus groups, particularly, reported that many potential ride givers (friends, family, neighbors) purchase only insurance for the driver to keep costs of vehicle ownership and use low. Without insurance for a passenger (or sometimes, no insurance at all), those with vehicles cannot safely or legally give rides to others.

Transit

Conventional transit service is the most cost-effective alternative to driving in areas where the system works well. A transit-friendly environment may be characterized as one where funding is adequate, land uses are compatible with transit routes, and the population density supports a range of route options and adequate frequency. In addition to being cost effective, transit service works for a broad range of society and has widespread support. Transit service generally works for seniors who are in relatively good physical and mental condition, and who live within ¼ mile of transit stops.

Some participants in the workshops were avid users of transit service – most of them live in accessible areas such as downtown apartments. One of the main limitations of the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) public transit is the limited service to outlying areas. Although there are several downtown senior housing developments, the remainder of the large senior population in Concord is relatively spread out (see Figure 3-8 on page 3-9). Furthermore, those seniors who are most transit dependent – such as lower income and minority populations in the Monument Corridor – often have few route options and must face infrequent service or multiple transfers. Even in locations with extensive transit service and stops nearby, many seniors do not ride because of lack of familiarity or reliance on personal automobiles as the most convenient mode of travel.

It should be noted that in a recent (September 2002) report released by the Transportation and Land Use Coalition, the Monument Corridor was rated the worst low-income neighborhood of the fifteen Bay Area communities included in the study, in terms of transit access to medical facilities. The study found that only 1% of residents in the corridor had access to community clinics and 0% had access to a hospital. The study defined “adequate transportation access to health care” as 30 minutes travel time or a half-mile walk. Even though Mt. Diablo Medical Center is less than a mile away from the edge of the neighborhood, “residents cannot reach it in a reasonable time because the two bus routes that traverse their neighborhood stop at the BART station.” This finding impacts both seniors and youth, although the latter group presumably would be more able to walk to the facility. The main route through the corridor, Route 114, is also one of the highest ridership routes in the system. It is unclear what impact route modification would have on the existing ridership. It would appear that the problem with accessing the hospital in reasonable time is largely a function of the need to transfer from Route 114 to other routes that have less frequent service. The solution to this problem may well lie with improving the frequencies of those routes that feed into the Corridor, rather than realigning Route 114.

Crowded or dirty buses – barriers identified in the OATS study – were not reported as important barriers for Concord seniors.

Barriers to Mobility Using Transit Service

- **Unreliable service.** Because of fluctuations in traffic, buses often arrive at stops early or are considerably behind schedule. Drivers reportedly often do not adhere to the bus paddle (scheduled times for each stop) when they arrive early, and leave before the scheduled time. With many routes running hourly frequencies or less, missing a bus can result in extremely long waits.
- **Lack of service in evenings and on weekends.** Participants were generally concerned about the lack of transit options during evenings and weekends, when many buses have no service, or run less than once per hour on limited schedules. They particularly cited the bus from Pleasant Hill BART to the Kaiser Medical Center on Lennon Lane, which has 45-minute headways all day, and the limited weekend hours on Routes 110 and 115 (Note: Route 110 operates every 40 minutes between 7:30 AM and 9 PM on Saturdays, Route 115 every hour between 9 AM and 7:45 PM).
- **Lack of evening transit service to the Senior Center.** Many seniors felt that there was limited public transit service to the Senior Center during the evenings, when they would like to go out and participate in activities.
- **Long distances to bus stops.** This barrier was emphasized by seniors who live in private residences and have aged in place. There are several residential areas of Concord that are not well served by transit (accessibility for seniors would involve stops within ¼ mile of residence).
- **Lack of bus stop furniture.** Participants unanimously agreed that there is an acute lack of bus shelters in Concord. According to Commission on Aging focus groups participants, there are only five citywide. Bus shelters are perceived as very important for a comfortable transit experience, due to the protection they provide from summer heat and winter rain. Participants reported that, in addition to a lack of shelters, very few stops provide any seating. With waits of up to an hour on some routes, participants felt it was unreasonable and difficult for seniors to wait without a place to sit.
- **Lack of lighting.** Participants reported that a significant number of bus stops in Concord have little or no lighting. This presented several problems. Transit riders felt unsafe and vulnerable waiting in the dark or walking from the stop to their destination. The lack of lighting at stops also reportedly caused bus drivers to not see people waiting at the stop but instead continue driving without picking them up. With frequencies of 45 to 60 minutes on most routes in the evenings, missing one's bus carries significant consequences in waiting time for the next one.

- **Routes do not go where people need to go.** This is a significant issue for seniors in Concord, particularly those who are in lower-income brackets.
 - Clayton Road and Monument Corridors, in particular, were reported to have service that is not well coordinated with other lines. One single bus line runs along Monument Boulevard that serves BART. For other destinations, such as the library and senior center, a person has to transfer, often waiting up to 30 minutes for the next bus. Participants agreed that this kind of trip takes a lot of energy for seniors. Transferring also takes a lot of planning, since there is added time waiting for the other bus or time traveling on more than one circuitous route to get to the desired destination.
 - Taking the bus to Martinez was also noted to be extremely time consuming. It took one person two hours to ride the bus for what otherwise would have been less than a 20 minute drive.
- **Medical facilities are very hard to access using transit.** Again, Monument Corridor was said to be particularly underserved in this area. There are no direct routes from the area to any of the health facilities. Getting to medical facilities on transit requires at least one transfer, and long bus trips. The low frequencies of some connector buses (45 minutes or more) make it difficult to coordinate with appointments.

Six medical centers were identified as being frequent destinations for Concord seniors, and needing better direct transportation:

1. County Hospital in Martinez – the main hospital for lower-income people or those with limited health insurance
 2. Mt. Diablo Hospital in Concord
 3. John Muir Medical Center on Ygnacio Valley Road – the main trauma center for the area
 4. Shadelands, a Kaiser Facility in Walnut Creek
 5. Kaiser Facility in Martinez
 6. Rossmoor Clinic for the elderly, in Walnut Creek
- **Fares are expensive for many.** Several participants felt that seniors on fixed incomes could not afford daily bus fares or passes, forcing them to stay home and creating the feeling of being stranded and immobilized. This was particularly true for Spanish speaking seniors, who had limited alternative options for transportation (no family members with cars or unaware of specialized transportation).
 - **Hard to get easily understood information.** Seniors reported that the only place to get information on buses and schedules is at the parking garage kiosk near the Heritage apartments – many bus stop schedules have been taken down due to vandalism. Participants generally felt there were not enough signs and maps with route information, and that it was not easy to distinguish the signs for different

routes, especially at BART. Written text on the schedules was also felt to be too small for many seniors, or the brochure confusing.

- **Language barriers make it difficult to get bus information, particularly about free fares.** Many of the participants of the Spanish-speaking focus groups were not aware of the free fare hours for seniors on CCCTA, nor did they perceive that many others in the Concord Latino community were aware. Even if participants knew of the program, most did not know where to obtain the \$3 identification card needed to ride free during senior hours. Language barriers while riding on the bus are reportedly also an issue for passengers who speak foreign languages, who felt there were few or no bi-lingual drivers who can give directions. Some Spanish speakers felt this was not true for their population because so many Spanish speakers ride the bus and can help one another out.
- **Unwillingness of other passengers to offer seats.** Some people in the focus group found that seats are not readily given up for seniors, and that riders would benefit from more signage about this.
- **Discourteous drivers.** Many seniors felt that drivers do not wait for them to get into their seats before moving the vehicle. This can cause accidents or make seniors nervous when they board. Drivers have also reportedly been known to complain or get angry when asked to deploy lifts for non-wheelchair riders.
- **Buses are uncomfortable or hard to use for seniors and wheelchair users.** Wheelchair lifts on the buses can shake back and forth, and are reportedly scary and dangerous for people without wheelchairs or walkers. Steps up to the bus are hard for seniors to get up. All CCCTA buses kneel, but many passengers do not know this feature is available or that they can request drivers to lower the bus.

Walking

Walking is an important part of taking transit, since most access/egress trips to/from the bus stop are on foot. Also, in areas where senior housing is conveniently located, walking to stores nearby is a viable option. Lack of pedestrian infrastructure resonated strongly with Concord seniors — there are many wide arterials in the city, often with small or nonexistent sidewalks alongside, or not enough signal time for elderly pedestrians to cross.

Barriers to Mobility as a Pedestrian

- **Lack of sidewalks and poor sidewalks in many areas.** For users of wheelchairs and walkers, the curb cuts in Downtown are very problematic—the lips are reportedly ½ to 1 inch high, rather than flush with the street, making them very difficult to navigate for wheelchairs with small wheels. Many streets in Concord do not have sidewalks, or they are located only on one side. Some sidewalks are not consistently on the same side of the street, requiring seniors to cross the street frequently to remain on a sidewalk.

- **Concord has many busy, wide streets with limited places to cross.** Concord streets are very wide, especially Concord Avenue, Clayton Road, Treat Street, and Monument Boulevard. Many of these streets have pedestrian lights that are too short for seniors to cross safely. Many streets have crosswalks on only one side of the intersection, or have none at all.
- **Some seniors have limited stamina.**
- **Weather and darkness can make walking unpleasant or unsafe.** The lack of lighting along many Concord streets cited under the “Transit” section creates a feeling of danger or vulnerability for pedestrians.
- **Personal Safety.** Walking, particularly in areas of Concord with perceived higher risk of crime (no specific neighborhoods were mentioned) can make seniors feel particularly vulnerable.
- **Long distances to services and shopping.** Because of Concord’s land use patterns, many residential areas are isolated from shopping and service areas, creating long distances between the two.

Land Use

For many stakeholders and focus group participants, the location of senior housing near Downtown Concord or other service-rich areas was identified as the most important factor in assuring a high level of mobility for older adults. Participants felt that new senior housing should be located only in areas with shops, stores, and public transportation options in close proximity. The combination of a high residential density of seniors and accessible transit, they perceived, would allow the transit system to be more comprehensive and would provide a high level of mobility to residents, ultimately helping seniors remain more independent. Participants felt strongly that seniors who live in homes located more than a few blocks from transit stops were much more likely to feel stranded and isolated, or drive even if their ability to safely operate a vehicle was compromised.

Focus group participants identified NIMBY-ism (Not-In-My-Back-Yard sentiments) as an additional barrier. The process of suggesting new transit on existing streets, particularly on those with privately owned residences, was perceived as a challenge. Residents in Sun Terrace, particularly, were said to fight against bus service on their neighborhood streets.

ADA Paratransit and Specialized Transportation

Eligibility for ADA paratransit service is based on whether the applicant has a disability that prevents use of fixed route transit – age alone does not qualify a person for paratransit. Nonetheless, paratransit can be a valuable service for improving mobility of older adults, particularly those in the oldest age brackets.

Many of the paratransit riders in the participant groups were satisfied with the existing LINK service. Others reported barriers to using paratransit, such as the eligibility process, cost, and unreliable service.

Barriers to specialized transportation options are also discussed in this section, and include modes such as shuttle services, taxis, and other transportation services limited to specific populations – senior housing residents, for example, or low-income seniors.

Barriers to Mobility Using Paratransit Service

- **Unreliable service.** Focus group attendees reported frequent wait times of two hours or more. Some participants reported having to endure long waits outdoors at nighttime.
- **Not all seniors are eligible for service, but still have limited mobility.** Because of ADA eligibility requirements, many seniors feel they need paratransit for adequate mobility but are not eligible for the service. Insufficient paratransit funding was cited as a major reason that the service is not available to all seniors who need it – the providers simply do not have adequate funds to provide service for those not mandated by federal law. Participants felt that the exclusion from service left many older adults stranded in their homes without access to driving or too far from fixed route transit stops.
- **Riding paratransit carries a social stigma.** Some older drivers avoid signing up for paratransit service because they want to avoid looking needy or helpless.
- **No regional coordination between services.** There are four paratransit providers in Contra Costa County that typically do not overlap service areas. If a passenger needed to reach a destination in another city or county in the Bay Area, it is very difficult to coordinate paratransit services. Provided that reservations for several different providers could be made, timed transfers between providers are reportedly not currently available. A multi-provider trip could potentially entail long waits in public “transfer” locations for several hours or more between trip segments.
- **Advanced planning required.** For a guaranteed seat, some participants stated that reservations must be called in at least two days in advance. Many paratransit riders found it difficult to schedule return trips, particularly when they were unsure of the duration of their appointment.
- **Eligibility process can be difficult and unpleasant.** Participants described the experience of an applicant who was interviewed by two people, which she found very intimidating. The applicant reported that she was not informed of the process in advance, nor that a companion to the interview is allowed. This person suggested that interviewers were inexperienced, insensitive, and accusatory. Other participants felt that the eligibility process is time-intensive and laborious to go through.
- **Language barriers.** Although focus group participants do not necessarily serve as a representative sample of the entire Concord senior population, the majority of Spanish-speaking focus group participants did not know about the LINK service. Participants generally felt there was a lack of awareness in non-English speaking communities about the existence of paratransit service, as well as other specialized

transportation options. Paratransit service was perceived by all groups as difficult to use for non-English speakers, as well as for non-verbal riders.

- **The cost of paratransit is prohibitive for many.** The fare was recently increased from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per one-way ride.

Positive Feedback

- **Many who take paratransit lauded the service.** Participants especially felt that the Accessible Services Committee of the CCCTA and the Paratransit Committee are helpful and responsive.

Specialized Transportation

- **Limited availability.** Specialized transportation tends to run on limited schedules or requires advanced planning.
- **Limited to people who travel to particular programs or for certain purposes.** The county has special services through the Department of Health and Social Services, but recipients of this program must be receiving social work services, and the hours and destinations of the service are limited. Some senior apartments and assisted living residences reportedly have limited services, but they are offered only to residents. Many of the apartments offering transportation options reportedly are priced for seniors in the mid- to high-income bracket.
- **Limited specialized transportation to medical facilities inhibits level of care.** The County Health Services Department is apparently unable to provide health services to many older adults because of lack of transportation. To address this concern, the County has tried to provide transportation to clinics using excess funds from other programs, but reportedly with limited success.¹
- **Cambridge Community Shuttle is highly valued but offers limited service.** The Cambridge shuttle service was highly valued among focus group participants, as it provides a lifeline for low-income seniors to access grocery stores. However, the reduction in service in 2002 to three days per week and the elimination of the Grocery Outlet as a destination for low-cost purchases represents a hardship for participants. One person mentioned that occasionally the driver is late, and once did not arrive at all (with no advance notice given to riders).

Taxis

- **High cost.** Taxi Scrip is available in coupon books at discounted rates, but is accepted by Sal's Taxi only. Many seniors do not know about the program and for those who do, even the discounted scrip rates can be too expensive.
- **Fixed fares are available informally, but are not guaranteed.** One focus group member pays a \$5 fixed rate for her rides. This option takes initiative on the senior's

¹ American Society on Aging Focus Group Notes, Concord.

part and is dependent on the drivers' willingness to accept a fixed rate. If the driver is not willing and the rider is under time pressure, the option presents a problem in arranging for an alternative ride. Some seniors perceived the potential for denial as too embarrassing to risk.

- **Drivers may be unreliable, discourteous, dishonest, or not understand the rider's language.** Some participants reported that drivers are unhelpful, particularly getting walkers into the cab. Alternatively, some thought that Concord cab drivers were pleasant and helpful. Participants reported that some drivers wait outside the grocery store while passengers shop. Many perceived language barriers between drivers and passengers, which could adversely affect a taxi voucher or subsidy program.
- **Few accessible vehicles for those with mobility aids.** There are very few accessible taxis serving the City of Concord. AmbioCab is accessible but considerably more expensive than other taxi services.

Youth Transportation Barriers

Youth face many of the same challenges to mobility as seniors, although for different reasons. Youth are generally more mobile than seniors, and can explore a wider range of options such as walking, biking, and skateboarding. Barriers to the conventional mode of driving are more likely to center on age limitations and cost, rather than the physical barriers experienced by seniors. There are fewer options in terms of specialized transportation and paratransit that are available to youth as a daily option, although some school- and activity-related transportation options are available. Youth mobility tends to be strongly dependent on family resources – income and language barriers appear to strongly impact youth's access to a family vehicle for driving or getting a ride, and consequently increase the dependence on transit as a primary mode of transportation.

The barriers to youth mobility discussed during the focus group, stakeholder interviews, and from survey results are summarized in the sections below.

Driving

Many factors limit the option of driving as a transportation mode for youth.

- **Age.** The ability for youth to drive is most directly linked to age restrictions – individuals must be at least 16 years old to obtain a driver's license.
- **Cost.** Cars are expensive not only to buy, but to maintain, insure, and fuel. The high cost of owning a vehicle is often prohibitive not only for youth, but also for many families that would make a vehicle available for youth to drive.
- **Family vehicles are not available for youth to drive.** Participants reported that even if a family owns one or more vehicles, many families have two working

parents (or one in single-parent households) that are dependent on the vehicle(s) for work.

- **Language Barriers.** If youth have parents or extended family members who do not speak English, they are less likely to obtain a driver's license and be able to transport their children.

Getting Rides

The ability for youth to get rides from parents or from friends is largely a function of family income. Focus group participants reported that youth from more financially stable families often have a parent at home during the day or night who can give rides. Youth from families without vehicles or with parents who must use the car for work do not have the option of getting rides. For many youth, most rides are provided by friends with cars, but this is also often a function of the friends' family income levels.

Transit

Input from youth stakeholders suggests that many Concord youth are at the extreme ends of transit use – either they have never used transit or they are dependent on it as their primary mode of transportation. Transit use seems most prevalent in youth from families with working parents, lower incomes, or minority populations (reportedly with the exception of Asian youth). There appears to be a large number of youth from lower income groups, however, that do not ride the bus to school due to the high fare, but walk or skate-board instead.

The survey conducted by the Concord Youth Council asked several questions about youth perceptions of transit. While the sample was distorted by the high proportion of respondents at bus stops, the results do provide valuable qualitative information. Over half of the respondents reported taking the bus at least once a week, while 15% had never used the service. One-third of respondents felt safe taking public transportation, while the remainder felt only "sort of safe" or "not safe at all." Three-quarters (75%) of respondents reported living within 3 blocks of a bus stop. For after-school activities (participants were asked to check all that apply), 36% replied that public transportation would get them from their neighborhood to activities, 33% reported that public transportation would not run from activities to their neighborhood, or that they were not sure about availability of transit, 23% reported having access to a car, and 8% reported that they did not have access to either a car or public transportation. The most common reasons why youth did not use transit were, in order of frequency, "Takes too long to get to destination" (25%), "Have access to a car" (24%), "Transit doesn't go to desired locations" (14%), "Transit doesn't run during desired hours" (13%), "It doesn't seem safe" (10%), and "Transit doesn't run often enough" (8%).

Participants from the focus group felt that infrequency of the bus schedule and the lack of timed transfers were the largest barriers to using the bus. Limited service in the evenings and on weekends were also a concern.

The following is the complete list of barriers to transit that surfaced in discussions with the focus group and stakeholders:

- **Fares are expensive.** CCCTA has no discount fares or passes for youth, with the exception of the half price summer youth pass. Youth reported that many students at Mt. Diablo High School walk to school from the Monument Corridor – a 30-minute walk – because they cannot afford the bus fare. A roundtrip bus fare to and from school costs \$3.00 each day.
- **Youth are not aware of summer bus passes.** Many youth, even those who ride the bus everyday and use it as their primary mode, are not familiar with the discounted summer youth pass.
- **Punch cards are difficult to buy.** Some youth felt that CCCTA punch cards are not well publicized, or could only be purchased at a few locations. Youth felt it was difficult to find time to take an extra bus trip to buy the punch cards between school, work, and other activities.
- **Buses are infrequent.** Bus trips between school and home often require one or more transfers. There was strong consensus that infrequent headways and the lack of timed transfers were a major deterrent from taking transit. Youth transit riders reported waits of 30 to 60 minutes at bus stops—many of them without shelters or lights—when transferring between routes.
- **Limited service hours, particularly on weekends.** Many youth were dependent on the bus because their parents used the car for work or did not own a vehicle. Many youth live in areas without Sunday bus service, which restricts their weekend activities. The Solano corridor, for example, does not have bus service past 6 pm on weekdays, which makes it difficult for youth to get home following after-school work or other activities. For many students, the first bus is scheduled to arrive at their school only 5 minutes before class. The same routes do not provide service should the student want to arrive early to school to study or work on projects before classes begin.
- **Unreliable service.** Most youth felt the bus was unreliable. Many buses run hourly, so missing a transfer can mean a long wait for the next bus. Some have experienced problems with morning buses to school that are timed to arrive minutes before classes begin. Late buses in the morning, even if by a few minutes, can cause students to be tardy and miss school class time.
- **Safety.** Youth reported that many bus stops in Concord have limited or no lighting. Youth have expressed concerns about walking from bus stops down unlit streets. However, in general the survey suggested that safety was not a key deterrent to using the bus.
- **Bus stop infrastructure.** According to youth participants, most of the bus stops in Concord have no shelters or seating, and many are located in areas with no sidewalks. The stops without sidewalks are often adjacent to fast moving traffic, with no barrier that would prevent an errant car from driving into waiting transit

riders. In wet weather, passing cars can splash water and mud on those waiting at bus stops. Some youth reported having to wait on the opposite side of the street to avoid getting wet and muddy, then darting across several lanes of moving traffic when they see the bus coming, which can obviously create a very dangerous situation. Other stops have no poles or ones that are falling down.

- **Parking costs at schools are very low.** Yearly parking permit costs are negligible (e.g., \$5 per year at Concord High School) or free at most high schools. This produces a significant disincentive to finding alternatives to driving, such as getting a ride or taking transit. In this case, schools subsidize almost entirely the cost of the land and maintenance for the parking spaces for the students who use them. Students taking other modes of transportation, for example transit, to school do not generally get any subsidy.
- **Distances from transit stops to destinations are long or unsafe.** The pedestrian trip from the closest bus stop to the Concord Youth Center, for example, is long and circuitous, especially for younger children. In an industrial area, it is not well-lit and appears unsafe in the dark. Access to schools can also require long walks from some bus routes or from BART stations. Again, however, the survey indicated that most youth live within three blocks of a bus stop, so coverage appears to be less of an issue than frequency of service.
- **The school attendance areas often do not correspond well with the bus routes.** Neighborhoods that particular schools draw students from often do not have direct public bus routes to those schools.

School bus transit presents its own set of barriers:

- **Eligibility** for school bus transportation is based on the distance that a student lives from school and his or her grade. Many are not qualified for the service.
- **Cost prohibitive.** School bus service costs \$250 for an annual pass, and must be paid in full at the beginning of the Fall semester. This lumped cost can be prohibitive for those with limited expendable income.
- **The bus service also does not provide transportation for “zero” periods,** or classes and activities that start before or end after official school bell times.

Figure 3-11 on page 3-17 shows the breakdown of youth population densities by census tract, as well as the frequencies of bus routes that serve each area. This map suggests that existing transit services are providing relatively good coverage compared to the distribution of youth population. As discussed in barriers above, however, there may still be transit gaps in route alignments (requiring one or more transfers to reach a destination), and hours of service, which youth have reported are not early or late enough in some corridors.

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Walking is a viable mode of transportation for many young people who are fit and non-disabled. However, without the proper pedestrian infrastructure, there are significant barriers to choosing walking as a mode of transportation:

- **Lack of sidewalks.** There was strong consensus among youth that one of the greatest barriers to walking was a lack or inadequacy of sidewalks in Concord. Many schools, particularly, do not have sidewalks directly adjacent to the buildings, or have sidewalks that span only a few blocks on one side.
- **Lack of street lighting.** Some areas around the Monument Corridor in particular have little street lighting. Those getting off at stops along the street felt in danger walking from the bus stop to their destination.
- **Safety.** Youth reported that many areas, particularly those surrounding bus stops, have no or very poor lighting. Personal safety is a concern for youth in Concord, and contributes to a sense of insecurity for many pedestrians, particularly females.

Summary

Despite many transportation options in Concord, those without easy access to a car face substantial mobility barriers. The barriers identified in this chapter relate to transit service, paratransit, specialized transportation programs, taxis, driving and walking.

Chapters 2 through 4 of this report have combined qualitative and quantitative data on the population characteristics, residential densities, and anecdotal “perceived” barriers to mobility facing seniors and youth. These will be used as a basis for developing transportation strategies to address these gaps, presented in the next section, Chapter 5.

Chapter 5. Action Plan: Strategies to Address Transportation Gaps

In March 2003, the consultant team presented to the Advisory Committee the transportation barriers identified in the previous chapters, in addition to potential strategies for addressing these needs.

Based upon input received at this meeting and at three public meetings with seniors, Spanish-speaking seniors, and youth representatives, we have developed an Action Plan that incorporates strategies best suited to addressing mobility barriers in the City of Concord. The Action Plan is intended to provide strategic direction to the City in its efforts to address the mobility needs of seniors and youth, rather than provide an Operations Plan with sufficient detail for direct implementation. The City will need to evaluate each of these measures in terms of funding viability and administrative/political constraints, and determine which are most appropriate for short-term implementation. The team fully understands these constraints, and expects that the City will likely initiate very limited measures and build on these as funding becomes available. The team also recognizes that the City has already completed a number of improvements to the infrastructure that address the accessibility and mobility needs of seniors, such as: constructing over 250 wheelchair ramps (“curb cuts”) on sidewalks in the past five years; retrofitting curb ramps at two intersections with truncated domes; installing audible pedestrian signals; and reprioritizing projects in the sidewalk repair program in response to individual complaints.

The selection process used to identify the strategies in the Action Plan is described below. A table summarizing the strategies can be found in Figure 5-1 on page 5-4. Following the matrix, each of the proposed strategies is discussed in greater detail. The strategies have been separated into four categories, based loosely on mode of transportation. The categories are:

1. Existing Transit and Paratransit Service Strategies
2. Pedestrian Infrastructure and Urban Design Strategies
3. Strategies Addressing Barriers to Driving and Getting Rides
4. New Services or Programs

Strategy Evaluation

The Advisory Committee established a number of evaluation criteria to assist in prioritizing proposed strategies. The list below describes the criteria, generally in order of importance to the Committee:

Evaluation Criteria for Selection of Transportation Strategies

- Cost
- Easy to use/understand/implement
- Provides a solution for multiple barriers and serves multiple trip purposes
- Do-able within reasonable time-frame (Short-Term – one year or less; Immediate – 1-3 years; Long term - 3 plus years)
- Support from community
- Number of residents who benefit from the strategy (high scores for benefiting both seniors and youth)
- Serves communities with the greatest need
- Effectiveness of solution: reliability, frequency/span of service, safety, employment opportunity, likely to produce results
- Funding availability

Prioritization

The consultant team presented initial strategy recommendations to the Advisory Committee and the Senior Center focus group in May 2003. At this time, each participant was asked to rank the two strategies in each category that they would most like to see implemented, keeping in mind the evaluation criteria listed above. Feedback from the Spanish-speaking focus group and youth group was more informal, but their opinions on prioritization are included in the summary. It should be noted that the following strategies were prioritized by community members without taking into account factors such as financial or administrative feasibility:

- County Connection service additions on Sundays
- Greater frequency on some transit routes
- Bus stop infrastructure improvements
- Pedestrian street design improvements
- Improved medical facility transportation
- Extended Shopping Shuttle

- Transit buddy/trip planner for seniors
- Design/Development guidelines for senior housing
- “Older Driver Wellness” program

Not all the strategies described in detail below were presented to the focus groups. The consultant team used the feedback from the public and Advisory Committee meetings, the evaluation criteria listed above, as well as internal expertise to determine which strategies should be recommended. We have compiled a list below of strategies that could be implemented in the short-term, either because of relatively low funding requirements or other factors that enhance feasibility. The remainder of the strategies in this chapter are important to enhancing senior and youth mobility, but will require more time or may be dependent on the infusion of funds from a significant source such as the successful passage of Measure C.

The strategies determined most feasible in the short-term are:

1. Expand the scope of the existing Shopping Shuttle.
2. Improve bus stop infrastructure. Installment of Simme bus stop seats or collaboration with local high schools to design and build shelters (cost of materials and installment only) would provide a relatively inexpensive but very visible and community-supported improvement.
3. Promote youth ridership through a partnership between CCCTA and local schools. Making transit passes available at schools, creating an unlimited monthly youth transit pass, or increasing transit education through schools have significant potential to increase youth ridership at relatively little cost.
4. Establish development guidelines for new senior housing and medical facilities, to ensure location along existing transit lines and near retail and services. Requiring that developments likely to attract transit-dependent populations locate along transit routes and within walking distance of services is one of the most effective ways to ensure future mobility for residents.
5. Subsidize youth transit fares. Recommend to the Mt. Diablo Unified School District that the cost of yearly parking permits at high schools is increased to equalize the schools’ transportation subsidies; use the revenue to provide discount transit passes for students not driving.
6. Establish formalized Casual Carpool programs at senior housing facilities. A low-cost strategy, this would require establishing a bulletin-style “ride board” at senior housing facilities, promoting use by residents to put up notices for rides needed and rides to give.
7. Conduct “Older Driver Wellness” workshops for drivers to stay safe as they grow older. The program would educate seniors who are “giving up their keys” about other mobility options.

Figure 5-1 Recommended Strategies Matrix

Proposed Strategy	Primary Beneficiaries: Seniors (S), Youth (Y)	Estimated Cost	Lead Responsibility for Implementation	Advantages/ Disadvantages	Administrative and Political Considerations	Short-(S), Medium-(M) or Long-term (L) Priority
TRANSIT AND PARATRANSIT SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS						
Bus service additions on some routes: Sundays, earlier in morning, later in evening.	S, Y	Moderate to High	CCCTA	Costs primary concern, some operational constraints due to existing long runs, tight schedules	Needs of different geographic and demographic communities will need to be weighed County-wide	M - L
Greater frequency on some routes	S, Y	Moderate to High	CCCTA	Costs primary concern, some operational constraints due to existing long runs, tight schedules	Ditto	M - L
Timed Transfers. Establish more timed transfers between buses, as well new timed transfer areas.	S, Y	Moderate to High.	CCCTA, City of Concord	Primarily cost concerns. CCCTA has already explored Todos Santos feasibility	Ditto	M - L
Consider implementing supplemental school service, one or two runs per day, coordinated with school bell times.	Y	Moderate to High	CCCTA	Costs primary concern, some operational constraints due to existing long runs, tight schedules	Subject to CCCTA financial situation	M- L
Promote a formalized Safe Routes to School Program in local middle schools. Program facilitates walking, biking, and carpooling to school through education, community programs, and infrastructure improvements.	Y	Low to High (Low cost to City, most costs potentially covered by other funding sources)	City of Concord	Requires commitment of staff and application for funding grants. Can be very effective strategy to improve youth mobility, quality of life	Would be greatly enhanced by pending federal legislation	S
Improve transportation to the Concord Youth Center. Options include re-routing Route 118, creating pedestrian connection to Concord Ave, expanded shuttle service, formalized carpool program	Y	Low to High	CYC, CCCTA, Dept of Public Works, neighboring property owners	Existing run has no schedule slack time for deviation. Passage through to Concord Blvd costly	Subject to CCCTA financial situation	M - L
Enforce schedule adherence by CCCTA drivers. Increase supervision, increase focus on schedule adherence, revise schedules if run times are not realistic.	S,Y	Low	CCCTA	Can be easily integrated into existing driver training courses or small campaign launched internally with CCCTA.	May be resistance from training personnel if assumed already part of the course, additional work for enforcement.	S - M

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Proposed Strategy	Primary Beneficiaries: Seniors (S), Youth (Y)	Estimated Cost	Lead Responsibility for Implementation	Advantages/ Disadvantages	Administrative and Political Considerations	Short-(S), Medium-(M) or Long-term (L) Priority
Promote youth ridership through partnership between CCCTA and local schools. Sell transit passes at schools, create an unlimited youth pass, education and outreach	Y	Low to Moderate	CCCTA, City, School Districts, School Principals, Teachers, student groups	Will help educate youth about transportation options	Will require coordination between a variety of stakeholders	S - M
Inclusion of Spanish translations when brochures are updated or reprinted.	S, Y	Low to Moderate	CCCTA	Need to be regularly updated.	May be concern from other Contra Costa County cities that don't receive same enhancements	S - M
Partner with Senior organizations to familiarize seniors with transit service (field trips, bus buddies and escorts, joint promotions with merchants). Train transit trip planners at senior activity centers to assist their peers in planning travel by transit.	S	Low to Moderate	Senior Center, Commission on Aging, CCCTA	Seniors will be better informed about the range of mobility options. Could address fears of using transit, address needs of non-English speaking seniors, increase fixed-route ridership.	Need staff person or Commissioner who will take on coordination role. Could be difficult to recruit volunteers willing to be available regularly	S
DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE						
Bus Stop Infrastructure Improvements: Seating and/or shelters (Simme Seats), lighting, establish curbs, improve sidewalks. Partner with local high school shop classes to design/build bus shelters.	S, Y	Low to High	City of Concord Public Works, CCCTA	Overall improvement of city environment, could provide excellent opportunity for city youth involvement. Could be subject to vandalism.	Competing City program and infrastructure needs	S - M
Incorporate design guidelines to accommodate older pedestrians in street and intersection design: Sidewalks; Pedestrian paths to BART; Add crosswalks; Fix lips on curb cuts; Crosswalk technology	S, Y	Moderate to High	City of Concord/ Public Works Dept/ Engineers	Improve pedestrian safety. Primary concern is cost and physical constraints. Enhance pedestrian safety and likelihood of usage by mobility impaired	FHWA has published such guidelines and Caltrans is currently developing them	M - L
Establish and enforce development guidelines for senior housing and medical providers. All new development be located along transit lines, near retail/services, along safe, walkable streets.	S	Low to High	City staff	Profitability will weigh heavily against perceived/real constraints on development. Limited amount of land remains for development	May meet opposition from construction trade/developers	S - M
Walkable City Workshops for seniors	S	Low to Moderate	Senior Center, City of Concord	Direct practical input from those most impacted by barriers.	Could raise expectations about infrastructure improvements that aren't fundable	S

Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study

CITY OF CONCORD

Proposed Strategy	Primary Beneficiaries: Seniors (S), Youth (Y)	Estimated Cost	Lead Responsibility for Implementation	Advantages/ Disadvantages	Administrative and Political Considerations	Short-(S), Medium-(M) or Long-term (L) Priority
NEW PROGRAMS AND SERVICES						
Improve service to Medical Facilities. Several shuttle service options.	S	Low to High, depending on stakeholders	Medical Facilities, CCCTA (planning), Commission on Aging, Senior Center	Would reduce the long waits/transfers for frail seniors, improve access by all to medical facilities	Requires coordination between a number of stakeholders	M
Flexible Transportation Options, such as community bus, route and point deviation, where CCCTA is considering cutting service or for low density areas currently underserved	S,Y	Moderate to High	CCCTA, City	Could result in service continuation where fixed-route no longer sufficiently productive	Will require strong support from City and willingness to work with CCCTA to develop local solutions	M
Include older pedestrian issues in driver education	S	Unknown	DMV	Will promote sense of safety among older pedestrians	DMV may need to be convinced of need for expanded education	L
Shopping Shuttle. Expand Cambridge Community Van (or similar type) service.	S	Low to Moderate	City	Only service of its kind already in existence. Serves vulnerable element of senior population. Current program limited in availability of hours	Can be operated either by Cambridge Community or other community-based organization	S
Paratransit Fare Assistance. Create fund for subsidizing low-income senior paratransit fares.	S	Low to Moderate	City, CCCTA, local Merchants/ Developers, Senior Interface Organizations	Directly benefits those most needing assistance, particularly given high paratransit fares.	Would take time to solicit interest, negotiate agreements with merchants & developers, and also to create the assistance fund, but precedents do exist	M
Youth Fare Subsidies. Increase cost of parking at high schools to equalize school transportation subsidy. Increase parking fees to \$100 per year, use percent of revenue to provide discount transit passes for other students.	Y	Free/Low	Schools, CCCTA	Would balance the subsidy available to youth car drivers and transit users	Expect strong resistance from students who drive. Would need political support of school administrators	M
BARRIERS TO DRIVING AND GETTING RIDES						
"Older Driver Wellness Program" for drivers to stay safe as they grow older. Include a program to educate seniors who are "giving up their keys" about other mobility options.	S	Low to Moderate	Commission/City in partnership with AARP, DMV	Allows older drivers to make informed decisions about when to stop driving. Targets seniors at critical moment in loss of mobility.	American Society on Aging currently piloting workshops - could be a candidate pilot site. Requires a lot of leg work with the different agencies	S - M

Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study

CITY OF CONCORD

Proposed Strategy	Primary Beneficiaries: Seniors (S), Youth (Y)	Estimated Cost	Lead Responsibility for Implementation	Advantages/ Disadvantages	Administrative and Political Considerations	Short-(S), Medium-(M) or Long-term (L) Priority
Formalized senior housing facility Casual Carpool program. Could include a "Ride board" at housing facilities where seniors put up notices of rides needed and possible rides to give.	S	Low	City with senior housing complexes	Would formalize practice of seniors "hitch hiking". Housing complexes may not want to take on additional responsibility	Was considered but not yet implemented in Huntington Beach, would need to design to fit local situation	S
Expand/ promotion of SchoolPool program. Contra Costa County's program provides ridematch lists to help parents set up carpools, also offers 20 free bus tickets for each student signed up.	Y	Low	Traks, local Schools, City.	Program helps improve mobility of youth to school, reduce traffic; free bus passes valuable for low-income families/youth. Liability concerns.	Some school principals resistant to help outreach; liability concerns.	S
Volunteer-based senior driver program. Fuel reimbursement for ride-givers, seniors recruit their own drivers.	S	Low to Moderate	City, Senior Center	Challenging to recruit volunteers. Potentially much cheaper than alternatives, depending on admin. costs.	Requires administrative structure. Has appeal of using volunteers	S
Subsidized taxi service. Set up city-subsidized vouchers for seniors to use for taxi rides.	S	Moderate to High	City and Senior Interface/Outreach Organizations	Uses lower cost alternative than paratransit. No accessible taxis in town, service quality can be an issue	City could administer through Parks and Rec.	M - L

Strategies

Transit and Paratransit Service Improvements

Greater frequency on specific CCCTA routes;

Adding more frequency on CCCTA routes is a costly strategy that should be considered long-term, dependent upon improvements in the agency's financial situation which will allow for scheduling improvements. As shown in Figures 3-8 through 3-10 in Chapter 3, two geographic areas currently experience transit service gaps that have a particular impact on seniors:

- The area bound by Cowell Road, Clayton Road, Babel Lane, and Treat Blvd is one where low frequency service coincides with high density of senior residents (1001+ persons per square mile). This is also a low-income area among seniors – average annual income of \$15,000 or less per year.
- The area around Concord Blvd between West Street and Ayers Road has low-frequency service and moderate senior density (751-1000 persons per square mile). This area is expected to grow to a high-density senior population (1001+ pop/sq mi) by 2010, further necessitating service additions in the long-term.

Timed transfers, Additional transfer locations

One approach to improving transit service without the costly addition of service frequency, is to increase coordination between routes and the number of timed transfer locations. In the Monument corridor there is reasonably frequent existing service, but in order to access many Concord destinations riders are required to transfer one or more times. With relatively few timed transfers and locations established, multi-route travel can be both long and circuitous.

County Connection buses currently provide timed transfers at the Concord BART station, in addition to limited transfers at Diablo Valley College (DVC). Transfer locations work best where there are retail services nearby and ample places to sit. Potential transfer locations that would work well in Concord include downtown (Todos Santos Plaza), shopping malls, or more timed transfers at DVC, which would provide transfer points in the opposite direction of BART, potentially alleviating circuitous routes for those with destinations in western Concord.

Bus service additions, particularly on Sundays, early in the morning and later in the evening.

Lack of Sunday service is one of the biggest barriers to mobility for seniors and youth alike: service is available only on Routes 121, 314, 308 along Concord Blvd., Clayton Road, and to Martinez.

The addition of Sunday service on any routes would likely be costly, however, and as a strategy should be considered part of the long-term recommendations. When funding is made available, addition of Sunday service should be prioritized on corridors with high-density population (to maximize ridership) and/or lower-income residents (largely transit-dependent populations).

The map in Figure 3-11 suggests that existing transit service provides very good geographic coverage to the youth population. There are relatively good frequencies and high-density populations are well served. However, service extensions by one or two hours early in the morning and later in the evening would particularly benefit Concord youth, who have reported long travel times, on-time performance problems, and multiple transfers when using transit to get to school, and limited service in the evenings to return from work or after-school activities.

Promote a Safe Routes to Schools Program in local middle schools.

Safe Routes to Schools Programs are currently making great strides in places like Marin County and New York to encourage transportation alternatives for middle school students. The program combines education, community organizing, and engineering improvements to promote walking, bicycling, and carpooling. Through a series of classroom exercises, incentive programs for students to ride bikes or walk, community workshops, and engineering improvements, the program improves individual health and street safety, reduces traffic congestion, and fosters a cleaner environment and stronger neighborhoods.

The City currently provides some elements of a Safe Routes to Schools Program on an as-needed basis. A more formalized program could tap myriad funding sources, including congestion management agencies, the State Department of Health Services, non-profits, Caltrans, federal TEA-21 funding, or private foundations. Of note is a House Safe Routes to School bill that was introduced on June 18, 2003 by Congressman James L. Oberstar (D-MN). If passed, the Pedestrian and Cyclist Equity Act of 2003 (PACE) would create a national Safe Routes to School program, providing states with a total of \$250 million a year to fix unsafe conditions on roads near schools and encourage children to walk and bike to school.

Improve transportation to Concord Youth Center

With a draw of over 1000 youth from within Concord and neighboring cities, the Concord Youth Center (CYC) has expressed the need for better transportation options for the youth

in their programs. Currently CCCTA Route 118 runs past the center on Concord Ave, but the location of the stop requires a long, circuitous walk to the center through an industrial area. The City Parks and Recreation Department's RAP program also operates a van service taking youth from three Concord elementary schools to the CYC five days per week during the school year. It is limited, however, by driver availability and funding.

There are several potential strategies that could improve transportation for youth to and from the center:

- Re-route a portion of Route 118 to Galaxy Way (via Commerce Ave and Via De Mercados) on weekday afternoons to provide more direct access to CYC. Potential problems with this strategy are that Route 118 already has a tight schedule and long route. Additionally, re-routing the line would leave a portion of Concord Ave unserved, including a public health facility located along the street.
- Create a pedestrian connection from CYC to Concord Ave for more direct access to the bus stop. This would require travel over privately owned land – current land uses include a storage facility and an auto dealer – requiring collaboration and permission from neighboring businesses. Cost is also an issue.
- Create a driver program and/or funding to expand the current RAP transportation service.
- Establish a formalized carpool program with program participants, on the model of the SchoolPool program (see strategy details below).

Enforce schedule adherence by CCCTA drivers

Both seniors and youth repeatedly identified problems with County Connection bus drivers leaving a stop before their scheduled time or arriving very late at their scheduled stop. While the latter problem is often beyond the control of the individual driver, "running hot" (leaving the stop early) is more often within the driver's control. While we assume that CCCTA staff regularly review existing service schedules to determine if there is potential for tightening up a run or adding in more time to ensure on-time performance, this study can serve as another reminder of the impact of lack of adherence on the two target groups.

Promote youth ridership through a partnership between CCCTA and local schools.

Youth ridership could be significantly increased by making transit more visible, easier to use, and information more accessible. Strategies include:

- Create an unlimited monthly youth pass. Unlimited ride passes eliminate many of the perceived barriers to riding transit experienced with pay-per-use fares -- riders get the perception of "good value", do not have to hassle with correct fares, and do not have to worry about cost for each transit trip. CCCTA has already considered the feasibility of introducing an unlimited summer youth pass, at a cost of \$25 per

month or \$75 for the summer. Youth focus group participants were extremely receptive to the idea.

- Sell transit punch cards or other passes through student stores, student groups, or the front office at middle and high schools to make them more accessible for students
- Expand involvement with student groups to promote transit

Outreach and education

Several outreach strategies could increase public awareness of transit options and resources:

- **Better distribution of system information** at BART stations. CCCTA has recently received a grant to install self-standing kiosks at all BART stations. It is therefore anticipated that this strategy will be implemented within the coming year.
- **Include Spanish translations or wording on cover of System Map and on schedules.** When information is being updated or re-printed, include a phrase on the front that informs readers that there is information in Spanish inside (for example, "Informacion incluido en espanol"). While the CCCTA marketing budget has recently been cut, it would be advisable in the future when additional funding becomes available to provide instructions in Spanish on how to read timetables in each route schedule. This could be a relatively low-cost, effective strategy for improving mobility amongst the Latino community.

Mentor program for potential County Connection riders

Seniors who are already familiar with County Connection services can provide valuable peer support to those who are in the process of losing their drivers' licenses. The goal of a mentor program would be to attempt to reach these seniors early on in this process and help them make the transition to riding a bus. This program can also target non-English speaking seniors by working closely with local churches and community groups.

In addition, the following activities should be explored: Field visits to non-English language groups with many senior members to educate participants about transit use; train volunteer travel planners (especially non-English speakers) who can assist their peers in their own language; County Connection can also work with staff at social service agencies serving non-English speaking staff.

Train transit trip planners

Another aspect of this strategy could include training "Transit Trip Planners" at senior housing residences in Concord. Senior housing residents themselves, these trip planners would have training in trip planning, knowledge of Concord routes and resources such as information phone numbers and timetables. The Trip Planners could be available at

certain times at their apartment building to plan trips for other seniors and answer questions (“I need to get to X from Y and back, how do I do that?”).

Paratransit service strategies

During the Needs Assessment phase of this study, stakeholders described a wide range of paratransit issues that present a barrier to their mobility. These included service problems such as on-time performance, long rides, high fares, etc. Since each of these service problems would require research and development of strategies that is substantially beyond the scope of the present study, we have not attempted to identify actions that should be taken in this regard. However, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) has recently hired the services of a consultant team that will focus specifically on paratransit issues in the County, and make recommendations for improvement of paratransit programs that will directly benefit Concord residents. The Commission on Aging and disability organizations in the City should be apprised of the study’s development and determine if there are any actions that should be taken at a local level to ensure that the needs of disabled Concord residents are included in the study’s recommendations.

One item that appears to have been addressed during the course of this study relates to the ADA paratransit eligibility certification process. A stakeholder had indicated that his client had felt intimidated by the process, particularly being interviewed by two professionals at the same time. Based on feedback provided to CCCTA, we understand that in the future interviews will normally be conducted by only one LINK staff person.

Pedestrian Infrastructure and Urban Design Strategies

Improve bus stop infrastructure

One of the most pressing concerns for both seniors and youth was the lack of bus stop infrastructure – for example, absence of shelters or seating, no lighting, and locations of stops in areas without sidewalks or adequate buffers from oncoming traffic. Seniors, in particular, felt strongly about the need for seating – with frequencies of less than one bus per hour on some routes, it can be particularly difficult for seniors to wait without a place to sit. Without lighting at stops, transit riders felt unsafe and vulnerable waiting in the dark or walking from the stop to their destination. The lack of lighting at stops also reportedly caused bus drivers to not see people waiting at the stop but instead continue driving without picking them up.

There are several barriers that the city faces in installing new bus stop infrastructure:

- High cost – a study by the Commission on Aging estimated a cost of close to \$9,000 per shelter.

- Vandalism – one of the major reasons for the lack of shelters in the city is the high vandalism rate that past shelters have suffered.
- Lack of physical space – in some areas, sidewalk width is insufficient to provide room for both a shelter/seat and the ADA-mandated pedestrian right-of-way.

All three are valid concerns, but can be potentially overcome with one of several approaches. One strategy that should be considered is the low-cost bus stop seat known as the Simme Seat. Currently used in several locations including Portland and Eugene, Oregon, and San Jose, this innovation consists of two durable seats mounted on the sidewalk at a bus stop, with a stop pole mounted in between. According to the manufacturer, the seat sells for approximately \$400 and has the following advantages:

- Allows for wheelchair access at the stop
- Less space is needed for the size of the stop and smaller sidewalk space is required
- More comfortable than traditional “park” bench
- Easier to see if a passenger is waiting, less chance for a bus pass-by
- Attractive, leading to a more positive perception of the system

Another strategy that could address all three constraints is a partnership with CCCTA, the City, and local High schools, whereby high school students would design, build, and install bus shelters in the community through semester- or year-long shop or construction classes. The City could pay for supplies, the class would work with CCCTA and the City to determine an appropriate site and go through the design review process, and the Department of Public Works/ Engineering Services could oversee installment of the shelter. The partnership could be beneficial to all involved in the following ways:

- Youth would learn valuable work skills, including the process of public works, public planning process, project management, budget management, design, and construction.
- The City could significantly reduce its cost compared to installation of a conventional bus shelter.
- Individual bus shelter designs would create a unique characteristic for Concord’s identity, and would establish a program for which Concord would be known and serve as a model for other cities (a “Best Practice”).
- Getting youth involved in the design and construction of the shelter would create a sense of “ownership”, likely to reduce the chance of vandalism.

Regardless of the mechanism for installing new shelters, bus stops improvements should be prioritized in locations frequented by high volumes of riders (particularly seniors), such as the Senior Center, Library, Downtown, schools, housing complexes, and at high ridership stops along the Monument Corridor.

Incorporate design guidelines to accommodate pedestrians in street and intersection design

Many streets in Concord are very wide – up to 6 lanes in one direction – creating an environment that is uncomfortable for pedestrians, is conducive to high driving speeds, and involves large intersections that are difficult to cross. Wide streets also create intersections that are very difficult to cross, particularly for seniors. Intersections that were identified in focus groups as particularly difficult to cross include:

- Oak Grove and Treat Blvd.
- Monument Blvd. and Lacy Lane
- Willow Pass Rd. at Grant Street

Concord youth also reported a lack of sidewalks in the vicinity of their schools, and streets where sidewalks change from one side to the other, requiring street crossings in often unsafe locations.

Improvements to make streets more pedestrian friendly generally require relatively significant infrastructure investments, although some may be less costly. Recommended improvements include (from lowest cost to highest):

- Striping crosswalks at intersections where they currently either do not exist or exist only on one side.
- Implementing traffic calming strategies for specific streets in downtown Concord and around BART to make them more pedestrian friendly. This could be achieved by allowing parallel parking on either side of the street, which would require a repainting of the curb, and/or painting parking space boundaries and adding or removing appropriate signage.
- Fix lips on curb cuts in downtown Concord to be flush with the street.
- Expand the installation of crosswalk technology such as crosswalk countdowns (a favorite among seniors), blinking crosswalk lights, truncated domes, and chirping or audio crosswalks for the sight-impaired. Some of these features already do exist in downtown Concord.
- Expand the sidewalk construction program, particularly on major streets and those adjacent to or near schools, medical facilities, and other common destinations.
- Create pedestrian “safe-havens” in the form of medians on wide streets.

Establish development guidelines for senior housing and medical providers

The City of Concord should consider establishing development guidelines for senior housing and medical providers, requiring that all new development be located along transit lines, near retail or services, and along safe, walkable streets. Recent projects

approved by the City have included conditions along these lines. However, guidelines would strengthen the requirements. Many issues associated with senior mobility can be avoided if seniors can walk easily from home to basic services (shops, cafes) or to transit stops. Locating medical facilities on existing transit routes and along walkable streets will contribute significantly to ensuring adequate access by all to medical facilities – seniors and low-income populations especially. For market-rate senior housing developments, the City could also consider ways of working with the developers to improve access to transit services through programs such as shuttle vans.

Walkable Community Workshops

Older adults are often reluctant to attend activities at senior centers or other community-based organizations in their neighborhood because of concerns about their ability to safely walk to these services. If other forms of mobility assistance are unavailable, these concerns can effectively keep seniors homebound and unable to access existing resources.

The goal of the proposed strategy would be to help seniors (and agency staff) assess the walkability of their neighborhood and provide them with the tools and knowledge they need to advocate and lobby for street improvements. The focus of this strategy would be on neighborhood locations that are in the vicinity of the Senior Center or senior housing complexes such as those along Clayton Boulevard or in the Todos Santos Plaza area.

As a first step, City staff or the Commission could identify an appropriate host for this workshop to learn to identify barriers and visualize potential solutions. Similar workshops in other Counties have resulted in consumers and policy makers applying for grants and securing street safety improvements. The objectives of those workshops were as follows (slightly adapted to be more senior-appropriate):

- Train participants in pedestrian-friendly design and traffic calming tools, including when and where to best apply them.
- Bring together a diverse set of senior stakeholders in each workshop, all of whom would be crucial in developing the type of broad-based support necessary to move project proposals forward.
- Allow citizens, civic groups, elected officials and agency representatives alike to voice concerns, support, ideas for different techniques, and above all to begin to develop a consensus on how best to respond to local pedestrian safety concerns.
- Empower participants with the knowledge of an inclusive process that gains support from other residents and stakeholders.
- Demonstrate to participants how to access local and regional funding sources, and the relevant decision-making processes.
- Develop the critical mass of support among local communities, agency staff and elected officials necessary to develop and fund successful pedestrian and traffic calming projects.

The success of this approach would be dependent upon the level of support received by the City's Transportation Manager and Public Works/Engineering Department. While most transportation projects are facing significant budget challenges, it appears as though State funding for pedestrian safety may be in a much more secure position.

Barriers to Driving and Getting Rides

Older Driver Wellness Program

In order to address the needs of older drivers, the American Society on Aging (ASA) is currently developing a toolkit for professionals working with older drivers. The toolkit will consist of two curricula, one for training professionals on how to counsel older adults and their families on older driving; how to locate resources for older drivers; the myths about older drivers; the real issues affecting older driver safety and how these can be addressed to maximize independence for older adults. Within these curricula, a second curriculum will be included for holding classes or discussions with older drivers. This curriculum will focus on increasing awareness of the effects of aging and health on driving abilities, self-assessment, and steps that can be taken to maximize driving abilities, such as strength training, medication assessments, and driver rehabilitation courses. Both curricula will also address the development of transportation plans, for older drivers to begin discussing transportation as another consideration for the future if and when they are no longer able to live completely independently.

The toolkit and the training classes will be provided at three sites across the U.S. during the second half of 2003. The ultimate goal of the classes would be that participants would make more informed decisions about their driving ability, take steps to enhance their driving skills should they continue to drive, and consider other options if they choose to give up their keys. As a city with a significant number of older drivers living in low density residential areas that are underserved by public transportation, Concord would be an excellent site for the implementation of these classes as a means of addressing the concerns of older drivers

Formalized Housing Facility Casual Carpool Program

Designated casual carpool areas provide a valuable means of transporting people who do not wish to, are unable, or cannot afford to drive themselves. This practice is an excellent means of enhancing transportation options that do not rely on public subsidies. In large housing facilities that primarily serve seniors, there are usually some seniors who drive, and others who rely on them for rides. Observers at other sites in the state have noticed that some people wait at particular locations in the hope that a resident will drive past and pick them up. There may be some value in formalizing this "hitch-hiking" activity into a "Casual Carpool" program.

If the facility staff could establish a specific location where both driver and prospective rider could wait, possibly erect a sign and publicize the location, this may be an effective way to match people in need of a ride with those who are driving. In order to minimize the time that seniors would have to wait for a ride, it would be advisable to establish a "Ride Board" where housing residents could put up notices of rides needed and potential rides available. Incentives for drivers could be considered in the evaluation of this alternative.

Expand or increase outreach of the School Pool program

There is currently a School Pool program in Contra Costa County, run by the Traks program, to facilitate carpool formation among parents for their children's school transportation. The program provides ride-match lists to parents with children attending the same school, from which parents contact each other and form carpools. The program also offers 20 free bus tickets for each student as an alternative to carpooling.

The program currently assists parents at 17 Concord schools. There are several schools where parents are not actively involved, or are not involved in comprehensive outreach. Outreach and education of the program could be increased by working with schools to champion the program, distributing literature at Back to School and Open House nights, or having a write-up in school newsletters. The most effective outreach, according to the program director, would be to get the principals and PTAs to champion the program and help distribute the materials to parents.

Volunteer Driver Program

While many seniors do have access to friends, relatives and neighbors who can provide them with rides, there are a variety of other reasons for not using this resource: not wanting to feel obligated or to impose, drivers may not have the time available, other commitments of the drivers may take priority in the last minute, or concern about the driving skills of the drivers.

The Transportation Reimbursement and Information Program, or "TRIP", in Riverside County is a model that has successfully addressed some of the concerns regarding the use of other drivers. In the program, seniors recruit their own ride-givers, and then are reimbursed for fuel (which they pass on to the driver). Through the use of a case management approach and strict eligibility screening, the program has been able to address concerns about individuals using the program as a way of getting rides that would have been provided anyway – riders are generally individuals who are referred by social workers at agencies serving seniors.

Subsidized taxi service

Concord currently has a taxi scrip program with Sal's taxi, but many seniors either do not know about the program or cannot afford the fare. A program offering subsidized taxi fares comparable to a paratransit or transit fare would make the option more affordable, and

likely operate at lower cost than the paratransit program. Two of the limitations on this type of program are that there are currently no accessible taxis in the city and the taxi scrip is not valid for pick-up service outside the city limits. Another concern that often emerges in cities that have subsidized taxi service is the level of service quality provided, due to the lack of training of drivers and competition with other trip requests.

New Services/Programs

Improve service to medical facilities

One of the barriers most vociferously identified by both seniors and members of the low-income and Spanish-speaking communities was the lack of direct, efficient transit to medical facilities. Anecdotal evidence from public outreach revealed transit trips of often two hours or more along certain corridors, and dangerous pedestrian connections (i.e. under Highway 242) to access health facilities.

Strategies to improve service could include several outlined above, such as timed transfers and additional transfer locations, increased frequency or hours of operation on some routes, and pedestrian improvements to build or widen sidewalks and add crosswalks. Additional strategies might include:

- Shuttle service linking medical facilities to one another, helping those who have several medical visits in one day or who need to get to referral/lab appointments. Could be sponsored by the medical facilities themselves.
- Shuttle service from BART stations to medical facilities (such as the Walnut Creek Kaiser Permanente model).
- Shuttle service for seniors and low-income community bringing them from home or a central pick-up point in the neighborhood to medical facilities or doctor's appointments.

Flexible Transportation Options

Future transportation demand patterns in Concord may in some cases be better served by means other than extensions of existing County Connection fixed-route service. These services, which are generally more flexible than conventional service, may be considered as intermediate forms between conventional fixed-route and dial-a-ride. Because they generally incorporate some degree of demand-responsive operation, they typically carry fewer passengers per vehicle hour than conventional service. However, in certain situations, especially in lower-density areas and at night, they can provide a useful level of transit access at *much* lower cost than fixed-route service. They can also help reduce the cost of ADA complementary paratransit. Following are two examples of non-traditional service options that could be appropriately applied in the City of Concord. Determining

which is the most appropriate option would be dependent on planning activity by the CCCTA or CCTA, and may be part of the scope of CCTA's upcoming study.

Community Bus service is based on a route that is specifically designed to appeal to elderly riders by focusing more on their particular needs than a conventional route. Similar routes can also be designed primarily to serve students and young people. Community Bus services are open to the general public. Some of the characteristics include door-step service (going into parking lots and driveways etc.), small vehicles, routes which provide direct access even at the expense of circuitous routing, drivers specially trained to provide assistance to elderly riders, including help with boarding and alighting the bus, help with packages, and ensuring that passengers do not feel pressured for time and are comfortably settled before the bus begins moving.

If the service is designed to facilitate travel by elderly riders, many people who would otherwise require paratransit can make their trips on the Community Bus service.

A **point deviation service** makes designated stops according to a published schedule; between the designated stops, the vehicles may make pick ups and drop offs anywhere within a corridor as requested by passengers. The designated stops have wider spacing than is typical for conventional fixed-route service. Many point deviation services have been implemented in rural areas or small cities. They may deviate for any rider, but only riders with disabilities are assured of a vehicle coming to their doorstep. Other riders are usually requested to meet the vehicle at a convenient location between their house and the so-called centerline, i.e. the path the bus would take between stops if there were no deviation requests. To allow for flexibility in scheduling, passengers catching the bus at designated stops are advised to be at their stop five minutes early, but reservations a day in advance are also available for those who need service at their doorstep.

A point deviation route can serve a much wider corridor than a fixed-route. This is particularly relevant in those areas in Concord that may experience cuts in County Connection service, and are too far for seniors to walk to the main corridors, such as the segment of Route 124 along Concord Boulevard.

Include older pedestrian issues in driver education

City representatives should contact the management of the local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to discuss the possibility of including older pedestrian issues in driver education programs. Generally these programs do not focus on the special care that is required of drivers when traveling in areas where there may be many senior pedestrians who cross the street slowly or whose visual impairments may impact their ability to see turning vehicles. These issues should be explored in greater depth to determine if there are driver education programs that do explicitly address the needs of older pedestrians.

Shopping Shuttle

The existing Cambridge Community Van program serves a critical need in the community. According to information provided by the agency, the service is both productive and extremely cost-efficient by industry standards. It is, however, rather limited in scope, providing service only on certain days of the week and to a limited proportion of Concord's low-income senior population. This service could be expanded to provide regular shopping trips to seniors in other parts of the City and on a daily basis. Given that a shopping shuttle has the potential for alleviating the paratransit responsibility of a portion of LINK's service to Concord seniors, CCCTA may be willing to share the costs of an expanded shopping shuttle with the City. Alternatively, with the assistance of Cambridge Community Center or whichever entity is operating the service, there may be an opportunity to coordinate shopping trips for seniors in the Monument Boulevard corridor in order to increase the productivity of LINK service.

Paratransit Fare Assistance

The high fares on the County's LINK program effectively serve as a barrier to low-income seniors with disabilities. Round trip fares are \$6 on LINK. One means of addressing this concern would be to consider approaches used at other transit agencies: the low-income fare assistance program at SamTrans (San Mateo County) and the Helping Wheels Fund at Muni. In San Mateo County, registrants who can prove through a simple administrative procedure that they are low-income pay a lower fare than other riders. The District has absorbed the difference in fares. Given the budget shortfalls at CCCTA, this is unlikely to occur in the LINK service area in the short-term.

The Muni Helping Wheels Fund combined initial fund raising that occurred a few years ago, through a one-time solicitation in San Francisco residents' utility bills, and planned giving. Until recently, very few riders have availed themselves of this funding source, probably due to the relatively low Muni paratransit fares, which generally ranged from \$0.40 to \$1 per trip. If and when they are increased (expected September 2003), it is expected that there will be greater use of the fund.

Two of the approaches towards planned giving that have been used in San Francisco to generate funds for the Helping Wheels Fund have been through a gift in the donor's will or a gift of life insurance, in which the fund is named as a beneficiary.

It would not require a significant infusion of cash for the Paratransit Fare Assistance Fund to make a substantial difference in individuals' mobility, particularly if the assistance was geared towards specific/urgent trips rather than routine service.

The fare assistance could be available to all low-income individuals riding ADA paratransit, but should be targeted for urgent or immediate needs situations, such as when an applicant cannot wait the 21 days legally allowed for the application to be processed and needs to travel by taxi, or for cancer treatment or dialysis trips. Given the limitations

on City staff members' time, the City may want to approach a local civic organization to take this project on as a charitable activity.

Youth Transit Fare Subsidies

Most high schools in Concord charge a minimal fee – \$5 per year in most cases – for students to obtain a parking permit. Although permits are provided at almost no charge to the user, there is always a significant if unrecognized cost associated with parking. Even if one does not attribute any value to the land (when in fact schools often use excess land for new buildings, or sell or lease it to earn revenue for programs), the cost of constructing and maintaining parking on school lots is not without high costs. According to Bay Area industry standards, estimated construction costs for one parking space range between \$2,500 for a surface space (slightly less for gravel), to upwards of \$20,000 per space in a parking structure. Adding yearly maintenance costs (not including costs for permit enforcement) brings the total cost for the school to provide *one space per year* from \$220 to almost \$2,000 per space (assuming amortization of construction costs over a 40 year life span).

The magnitude of this subsidy is significant when considering the number of students who receive the subsidy each year (between 6% and 25% of Concord high school students drive to school). On the opposite end of the spectrum, Concord youth reported that significant numbers of students, particularly at Mt. Diablo High School, walk over 30 minutes each way to school because they cannot afford the bus fare. With no youth discount, a one-way fare on CCCTA is \$1.50 – at \$15.00 per week for round-trip transit to school each day, this is unaffordable for many youth.

The team proposes the following strategy to address this imbalance in subsidies: work towards equalizing the transportation subsidy to high school students by increasing the fee for parking permits to \$100 per year. The increase in permit cost would provide revenue that could be primarily used to provide discount transit passes to other students.

Appendix B shows a series of calculations that justify the case for increased parking permit costs, including annual costs of owning a vehicle, estimated cost to schools to provide parking, and potential uses of increased parking revenue. Assuming an average of 10,000 miles driven per year at a rate of \$0.36 per mile (federal standard), the average annual cost of owning a vehicle is \$3,600 per year, *not including* purchase of the vehicle. At \$100 per year, the increased parking fee would comprise less than 3% of the total cost of owning a car, or less than \$0.70 per day. The proposed fee increase is sufficiently low that it should not result in students having to give up driving to school because of cost. The key issue here is that most drivers are unaware of the full cost of driving their vehicles. Based on feedback from youth in this study, establishing a payment system or breaking the permit cost into smaller quantities (\$25 per quarter or \$50 per semester) would make the payment manageable even for low-income car owners.

Because Concord high schools have between 150 and 420 parking spaces each, parking fee revenue generated each year could be up to \$42,000. Ten percent of the revenue

could go to the ASB (Student Body association), which is a doubling of the \$5 per space they currently receive. The remaining 90% could be used to purchase discounted transit fare media for other students, made available through the school. The discounted fare media could be transit punch cards currently sold by County Connection, or schools may be able to form a relationship with CCCTA to provide unlimited semester or school-year passes for an agreed-upon price. This would depend on parking revenue at each school, as well as the number of students wanting the discounted passes.

Benefits of increasing the parking fee could extend to many populations in Concord. In sum, positive impacts could include:

- Affordable transit options for all students
- Transit passes easier to purchase and more widely known through availability at the school
- More money for schools to use on other programs in need of funding
- Parking fee cost is insignificant compared to the cost of owning a vehicle, and therefore unlikely to force students to stop driving due to limited funds
- Health benefits – students who don't wish to drive will be more likely to walk, bike, or walk to a bus stop
- Potential to free up land for higher and better use for schools, potential for additional revenue by leasing or selling land
- Potentially less traffic on city streets and in neighborhoods near schools if less youth drive to school
- Higher ridership among students with discounted pass creates more revenue for CCCTA, which could facilitate service improvements in the future
- Educating youth on the real costs of car ownership and the infrastructure costs to driving, increasing awareness of transit and other options, allowing youth to make more informed decisions about their mode of transportation

While this proposal has very significant benefits as outlined above, we anticipate that there may well be serious opposition from current student drivers, unless there was a concerted campaign to explain the economics of parking and the current inequities in subsidy between drivers and non-drivers.

Another strategy would be to allow school bus service fees to be paid in installments, rather than in one lump fee at the beginning of the school year. The \$280 fee for service per year is unaffordable in one amount for many families in Concord, but could be managed in smaller monthly dues.

The study also recognizes that the City would need to gain the support of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District Board of Education in order to implement this proposal. Given the potential benefits and history of collaboration between the City and the District it would

seem appropriate to seriously consider proposals that would generally reduce congestion and support the mobility needs of lower income students.

Chapter 6. Funding and Implementation

The issue most critical to successfully implementing a mobility support system in Concord is the acquisition of ongoing funding sources. This is of particular concern as the main transportation provider in the county, CCCTA, is currently facing major budgetary constraints in supporting existing services.

The approved \$25,000-per-year fund set aside for senior transportation does provide a guaranteed resource to implement strategies. This allocation could be used to fund more modest short-term strategies, or could be used as seed money to pursue some of the longer-term goals. Within the greater context of shrinking available revenues and impending financial shortfalls, few of the more ambitious components of the Strategic Plan are likely to be implemented unless aggressive efforts are made to tap every available public and private funding source. Creative funding arrangements using a combination of federal, state, regional, and local monies would provide the greatest opportunity for maximum implementation. The following section summarizes the key funding sources available at all these levels and identifies the major qualifications needed for a program to receive an award.

Federal Funding Sources

Older Americans Act

The Older Americans Act was signed into law in 1965 amidst growing concern over seniors' access to health care and their general well-being. The Act established the federal Administration on Aging (AoA), and charged the agency with advocating on behalf of an estimated 46 million Americans 60 or older, and implementing a range of assistance programs aimed at seniors, especially those at risk of losing their independence.

Transportation is a major service under the Act, providing needed access to nutrition and other services offered by the AoA, as well as to medical and other essential services required by an aging population. No funding is specifically designated for transportation. However, funding can be used for transportation under several sections of the OAA, including Title III (Support and Access Services), Title VI (Grants to American Indian Tribes), and the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) program.

Title III Access Services: Transportation is the second largest service element (after congregate and home-delivered meals) funded under Title III of the Act. In FY 2000, nearly 44 million rides were provided to program participants, at an estimated cost of \$69 million, 9.6% of the agency's Title III budget of \$719 million. These OAA resources were matched by an additional \$108 million in state and local transit assistance funds.

Much of the transportation available under the Older Americans Act is specialized, i.e., designed to assure that seniors can get to meals, nutrition and other program services offered by AAA, as well as to medical and other outside community services.

Medical Transportation

The two large federal medical programs, Medicaid and Medicare, are both significant providers of transportation. The transportation provisions under the two programs are quite different, but both have significant impacts on older adults. Although Medicaid and Medicare are separate health insurance programs, there is an overlap between them. Medicaid covers about 42 million people, of whom 4.6 million are age 65 or older and therefore eligible for Medicare. Medicaid covers some 13% of the population in this age group. Medicare covers 34.4 million adults age 65 or older, nearly the entire senior population, plus some 6 million people with disabilities or with permanent kidney failure.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a jointly-financed and run federal/state partnership to provide health care coverage for low income and disabled individuals. It is administered by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), formerly the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The federal government covers a minimum of 50% of basic health care costs in each state program. To make the program affordable in poorer states, the federal share increases up to a theoretical maximum of 83% in states with the lowest per capital incomes (Social Security Act, Section 1905(b)).

Types of Transportation Provided under Medicaid

Medical Transportation: Transportation to medical services was not included in the original legislation creating the federal Medical Assistance Program (more commonly known as “Medicaid”) in 1965. The Medicaid transportation program that exists today is the result of an evolutionary process, reflecting a succession of federal court decisions and administrative rulings mandating that states guarantee recipients access to covered medical services. Today, federal Medicaid regulations require all states to “ensure necessary transportation for recipients to and from providers” and pay the cost of that transportation. These regulations establish so-called “access-rights.” Transportation is provided for emergencies and for routine or non-emergency treatment.

Non-medical Transportation: Medicaid permits states to offer a range of non-medical services designed to assist older and disabled individuals in receiving care in their homes and communities, rather than in nursing facilities and other institutions. Known as the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program, this initiative grew out of efforts to deal with skyrocketing long term care costs in the Medicaid program. Non-medical transportation is one of the services authorized under the HCBS program since individual mobility is recognized as an essential element in maintaining one’s independence. Travel

to groceries, pharmacies and other destinations can be prescribed and paid for under HCBS as it cannot be under traditional Medicaid provisions.

U.S. Department of Transportation

Section 5307

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes grants to public transit systems in all urban areas. Funds authorized through Section 5307 are awarded to states to provide capital and operating assistance to transit systems in urban areas such as Concord, with populations between 50,000 and 200,000.

Section 5309

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes discretionary grants to public transit agencies for capital projects such as buses, bus facilities and rail projects.

Section 5310

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes capital assistance to states for transportation programs that serve the elderly and people with disabilities. States distribute Section 5310 funds to local operators in both rural and urban settings, who are either nonprofit organizations or the lead agencies in coordinated transportation programs.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The CDBG program is a federal program of grants to local governments, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established CDBG as a replacement for a variety of federal urban renewal, housing, and neighborhood development programs. CDBG was the first of the federal block grant programs. Both government agencies and nonprofit organizations are eligible for funding. Although a large portion of Contra Costa County's CDBG funding is designated for affordable housing development, a portion of the county's allocation can be used for public services including transportation for special needs populations.

State Funding Sources

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

TDA monies are generated from the state sales tax and are earmarked for transportation purposes. The first priority for TDA funds is to support unmet transit needs. In compliance with state legislation (SB 325, enacted in 1971), each county in California has a local transportation fund (LTF) that is funded with 1/4 of one percent of the base statewide sales tax. Revenue is collected by the state and redistributed back to Contra Costa County through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

State Transit Assistance (STA) Program

The STA fund was created by the California State Legislature as part of the Public Transportation Account (PTA). Funds are appropriated to this fund annually by the legislature. Revenues to the PTA are derived mainly from the sales tax on the price of diesel fuel and the sales tax on the 9 cent gas tax created by Proposition 111 of 1990. The funds are dedicated only to public transit operation and capital expenditures.

MTC has allocated \$3 million in STA funds to supplement funding from its LIFT program. However, up to \$2 million of the STA funds has been earmarked to support AC Transit's free/reduced student bus pass pilot program.

Local And Regional Funding Sources

County Measure C Funds

Measure C is the transportation half-cent sales tax initiative that was approved by the voters in 1988. Measure C sales tax receipts support transportation improvement projects and growth management in Contra Costa County. The current tax expires in 2009 and a "renewal" proposal to extend the sales tax is planned for the November 2004 ballot.

If the half-cent sales tax for transportation projects is approved by voters in 2004, this could have a significant impact on the feasibility of many of the strategies mentioned in this Action Plan. This is particularly true due to the increased proportion of funds that would be allocated to projects specifically targeting seniors and people with disabilities

Transportation for Livable Communities

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission created the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) fund to strengthen the links between transportation investments and community needs. Initially, the program provided planning grants, technical assistance and capital grants to help cities and nonprofit agencies develop transportation-related projects fitting the TLC profile. In November 2000, the program was expanded to include a Housing Incentive Program.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a philanthropy organization that seeks to "improve the health and health care of all Americans", providing grants in a variety of areas from basic health care access to creating communities that foster healthier habits.

Grant opportunities for projects listed in the Concord Senior and Youth Transportation Study include funds through the Active Living by Design program, which focuses on creating walkable physical environments, particularly in low-income communities, to

encourage healthy and active lifestyles and pedestrian access. Other funding may be available to improve transportation access to medical facilities.

Other Potential Sources

Other potential funding sources that have been suggested as part of this strategic planning process include Medi-Cal Care Providers, insurance companies, neighborhood or community groups, local businesses (bringing in customers), and increasing residents' DMV registration or license renewal fees.

Implementation Steps

Following are the implementation steps that will need to take place in order to ensure that the study's recommendations do not remain simply discussion items in a lengthy document, but rather are used to achieve improved mobility for the City's underserved population:

- Refine the designation of Short-, Medium- and Long-Term Strategies.
- Determine which of the Short-Term strategies are the most likely to be implemented.
- Ensure that items requiring further research will be brought back to the Commission on Aging, Youth Council or other appropriate committee to determine who will be responsible for follow-up activities.
- Ensure that those items that have an educational or publicity component will be included in the educational strategies that are developed.
- Ensure that the study's transit recommendations are integrated into CCCTA's long-term planning efforts.
- Ensure that appropriate staff at CCCTA, the City of Concord, and other agencies are designated to coordinate evaluation and implementation of the plan's recommendations.
- Develop a timeline for implementation of the initial strategies once the most promising strategies have been selected.

APPENDIX A

YOUTH SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Youth Survey Questions and Responses

1. I take public transportation (Check one)

- 34 Daily
- 12 Weekly
- 5 Monthly
- 15 Less than once a month
- 12 Never

2. I take public transportation (Check ALL that apply)

- 31 To school
- 17 To movies or other entertainment
- 22 To work
- 25 To appointments
- 11 I don't take public transportation

3. WHEN would you most need/want to use the bus? (Check One)

- 27 Weekdays only
- 21 Weekdays and weekends
- 18 Weekends only

Times:

- 24 Early AM (before 8 am):
- 19 Morning (8 am to noon)
- 13 Mid-day (12-3 pm)
- 35 After school/afternoon (3 to 6 pm)
- 18 Evening (6 to 9 pm)
- 7 Night (after 9 pm):

4. When I take public transportation I feel (Check one)

- 24 Very safe
- 27 Sort of Safe
- 17 Not safe

5. I don't take public transportation because (Check ALL that apply)

- 11 It doesn't go WHERE I need to go
- 10 It doesn't seem safe
- 10 It doesn't go WHEN I need to go
- 3 My parents won't let me
- 6 It doesn't run often enough
- 19 It takes me too long to get where I need to go
- 18 I have access to a car
- Other _____

6. For most after-school/summer jobs or recreation: (Check ALL that apply)

- 28 Public transportation WOULD get me from my neighborhood to the job
- 17 Public transportation would NOT get me from my neighborhood to the job
- 9 Not sure about the availability of public transportation
- 18 I have access to a car to get to a job
- 6 I don't have access to either a car or public transportation

7. The closest bus stop to my home is

- 34 Within 1 block
- 22 2-3 blocks away
- 12 Over 3 blocks away
- 7 I don't know

8. How would you feel if bell times at school shifted so that bus service could coordinate with when you need to be at school in the morning and when you leave?

- 31 I would like that.
- 10 I could live with it, but would rather they stay the way they are
- 11 I would not want the bell times to change.

9. Age:

- 3 under 13
- 8 13-14
- 28 15-16
- 17 17-18
- 19 over 18

10. Sex:

- 30 Female
- 35 Male

11. Race:

- 8 African-American/Black
- 24 White
- 18 Asian
- 9 Latino
- Other _____

APPENDIX B

CALCULATIONS TO MAKE CASE FOR
EQUALIZING YOUTH TRANSPORTATION
SUBSIDIES THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL
PARKING FEE INCREASE

Calculations to Make Case for Equalizing Youth Transportation Subsidies through High School Parking Fee Increase

Figure B-1 Cost of Owning a Vehicle

	Estimated Annual Costs of Owning a Car
Operating Cost per year, according to Federal Guidelines for Mileage Reimbursement (\$0.36 per mile, assuming 10,000 miles per year) ¹	\$3,600
Percentage of total cost used for \$100 Parking Permit (paid by the semester)	2.8%

¹ Includes gas, oil, maintenance, tires, insurance, registration, taxes, license, etc, but does not include cost of buying the vehicle or finance charges

Figure B-2 Estimated Parking Subsidy, per space

	Parking Lot Costs to School, Gravel Lot	Parking Lot Costs to School, Surface Lot	Parking Lot Costs to School, Parking Structure
Costs			
Cost of Land	\$0	\$0	\$0
Paving/Construction ¹	\$125	\$200	\$1590
Maintenance ²	\$100	\$100	\$250
Total Costs per Space per Year	\$225	\$300	\$1,840
Revenue			
Permit Price per year	\$5	\$5	\$5
Subsidy			
Subsidy for each parking space	\$220	\$295	\$1,835

¹ Annualized cost per year based on 40 year lifespan, 7.5% interest; assuming construction costs of \$1,600 per gravel space, \$2,500 per surface lot space, \$20,000 per structure space (industry standard)

² Includes repairs, maintenance, cleaning, lighting, property taxes, insurance, administration, access control, and enforcement. Source: Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, <http://www.vtpi.org/parking.xls>

Figure B-3 Estimated Parking Revenue and Transit Subsidy

	Scenario 1: Concord High School	Scenario 2: Ygnacio Valley High School
Permit Price per year	\$100	\$100
Estimated parking spaces	220	420
Estimated Revenue	\$22,000	\$42,000
Number students in school	1,400	1,520
Estimated number of students needing transit passes ¹	210	225
Transit pass subsidy (90% of revenue)	\$19,800	\$37,800
Estimated annual subsidy per transit pass	\$95	\$170
10% revenue to ASB	\$2,200	\$4,200
Transit Subsidy Per Student (90% revenue)	\$95	\$170
Parking Subsidy Per Student	\$295	\$1,835

¹ Estimates that 15% of students take transit (others carpool, get rides from parents, walk or bike)