Trends in Older American’s Travel

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Why study the travel behavior of older Americans?

- Quantify older people’s travel rates for safety analysis (including pedestrian)
- Examine vehicle type and use by older drivers
- Outline Livability and walkability programs/policies
- Inform public transit operations
- Plan community initiatives (e.g. to increase physical activity)
- Estimate needs for services (such as at-home service providers)
- Forecast long-term trends for policy and planning initiatives
What influences travel behavior in older Americans?

- Workforce participation and volunteer activities
- Drivers licensure rates and availability of vehicles
- Access to transit and other modes (such as taxi)
- Location factors (such as nearby shopping and restaurants or high crime rates)
- Family obligations and household characteristics
- Health/mobility status of the individual

Older people move in and out of mobility

- Fully Mobile: Driving/Walking/Transit
- Limited Mobility: Reduce driving, Drive only in daytime, Ask other for rides, Use Taxis/Paratransit
- No Mobility: Temporary disability, Permanent ‘shut-in’
Selected Findings: Overall Trends in Travel

Overall, travel rates seem to be leveling off after decades of increases.

Travel by people 65 and older still shows small but significant increases.

Possibly due to higher workforce participation in older age groups, especially whites.

Traditional roles in driving persist, but men’s travel may be declining while women’s stays the same or increases.
Selected Findings: Mobility and Un-Met Mobility

- Currently many older non-drivers live in the suburbs, far from alternatives and depend on family and friends.
- Older drivers have high disability rates, and both disability and non-driving rates increases with age.
- Many older citizens who have given up driving would like to get out more.
- As important as mobility trends are these growing un-met mobility needs.
Overall, travel indicators such as person and vehicle miles, are leveling off:

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of NHTS data series
While travel rates overall may have peaked, driving by 65+ is still increasing…

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of NHTS data series
As a result of declines in men’s travel, women are driving closer to men’s rates...

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of 2009 NHTS, Men and Women 16+
Historic high workforce participation by 55 and older…

Percent Workers within Age Group

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of NHTS data series
Older Whites are more likely to continuing in the workforce than African Americans and Hispanics.

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of NHTS data series
The population of drivers and workers in the future will be more diverse…

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of 2009 NHTS
Traditionally, when a married couple travel together the man is more likely to drive…. 

Who Drives When a Couple Travels Together?

MAN DROVE 78%

WOMAN DROVE 22%

You would think that might differ by age….  

Source: McGuckin and Nakamoto, 2011 Base: Married couples on vehicle trips
But even younger women ‘let’ their husbands drive…

Who Drives When a Couple Travels Together?

Source: McGuckin and Nakamoto, 2011 Base: Married couples on vehicle trips
As people age they are more likely to have a disability that makes it hard to travel…

Percent with a Disability that makes travel difficult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 and older</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As age increases, the percentage of women with a disability that makes travel difficult also increases.
With increasing longevity many seniors will age past driving...

Percent Non-Driver within Age Group

- Men Non-Driver
- Women Non-Driver

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of 2009 NHTS
Currently, about 22 percent of people over 65 are non-drivers.

Number of Non-Drivers

Total = more than 7.5 million

Source: McGuckin's analysis of 2009 NHTS
Suburbanization + Aging in place + Cohort growth = Massive planning challenge

Cohort Growth in Drivers and Non-Drivers 65+

Drivers | Non-Drivers
---|---
2000 | 40,000,000 | 20,000,000
2010 | 60,000,000 | 30,000,000
2020 | 80,000,000 | 50,000,000
2030 | 100,000,000 | 70,000,000
2040 | 120,000,000 | 90,000,000
2050 | 140,000,000 | 110,000,000

33 million non-drivers

Source: McGuckin's analysis of the 2009 NHTS and US Census projections
Over a quarter of older women do not drive…

- Nearly half live with no other driver in the household, inc. 40% who live alone

- These women are highly dependant on family and friends for rides

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of 2009 NHTS
Non-driving older men are much less likely to live alone than comparable women…

One Person Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Non-Driving Women</th>
<th>Non-Driving Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent within age group and sex
The majority of older non-drivers live in the suburbs...

Where Older Non-Drivers Live

- Suburban: 58%
- Urban: 26%
- Rural: 16%

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of 2001 NHTS
Many older non-drivers do not have access to transit...

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of the 2001 NHTS
Many older non-drivers have mobility impairments and become ‘shut-ins’

- About 5 million people aged 65 and older have stopped driving (of 7.5 million total non-drivers)

  - More than half did not go out ‘yesterday’ for any reason (43.6 percent of those who ceased driving)

  - One-third have not been out for more than a week (33.5 percent of non-travelers who have ceased driving)

  - More than eight out of ten have a transportation handicap (83.7 have a ‘medical condition that makes travel difficult’)

Source: McGuckin’s analysis of the 2009 NHTS
What to do? Some ideas…

- Plan for non-drivers as part of the built environment
- Include providing transport to non-driving elders as part of high school community service hours
- Use existing carpool matching systems to match non-drivers to drivers
- Expand taxi voucher systems to help provide door to door service
- Special demand-response 24-hour ‘senior shuttle’ in suburban communities
- Extending driving years through in-vehicle and ITS technology