



WHITE PAPER #1

BY THE BEVERLY FOUNDATION

Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors (STPs)

Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors (STPs) introduces the general purpose and approach of STPs, summarizes the STAR Search and STAR Awards programs, and discusses why STPs are being developed and what they look like.

The STPs Approach

The STPs approach is being used widely throughout the country. There are currently 302 Supplemental Transportation Programs in the STPs database. It is expected that by the end of 2003, there will be more than 400, and more than 500 by the end of 2004.

STPs have the purpose of providing much needed transportation to seniors who need rides but cannot access usual transportation services. They are being organized by a variety of organizations and groups, including congregations and interfaith communities. However, theirs is not a competitive agenda. Rather, the STPs approach recognizes the diversity of transportation options that are available in communities, and at the same time emphasizes the need for specialized options for some seniors who find it difficult to access traditional options that do not fit criteria for “senior friendly” service.

Why is the STPs approach being operationalized in so many communities? One reason is that such programs can support efforts to encourage seniors who need or want to give up their keys. As we know, it is difficult if not impossible for them to do so if they do not have other options for getting where they need to go. Another is that they can complement traditional transportation – public and para transit – services in a community. A third reason is that they can reach what might be called a hidden population of seniors who have special mobility needs. These are the seniors who might not be able to remain in the community without a specialized transportation option.

STAR Search Program

In the course of two recent studies by the Beverly Foundation in partnership with the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, the problem of senior transportation was explored and innovative responses to the special transportation needs of seniors by communities throughout the country were identified and studied. A major activity in this partnership has been an on-going STAR Search program.*

* STAR Search stands for Senior Transportation Action Response (STAR) Search.

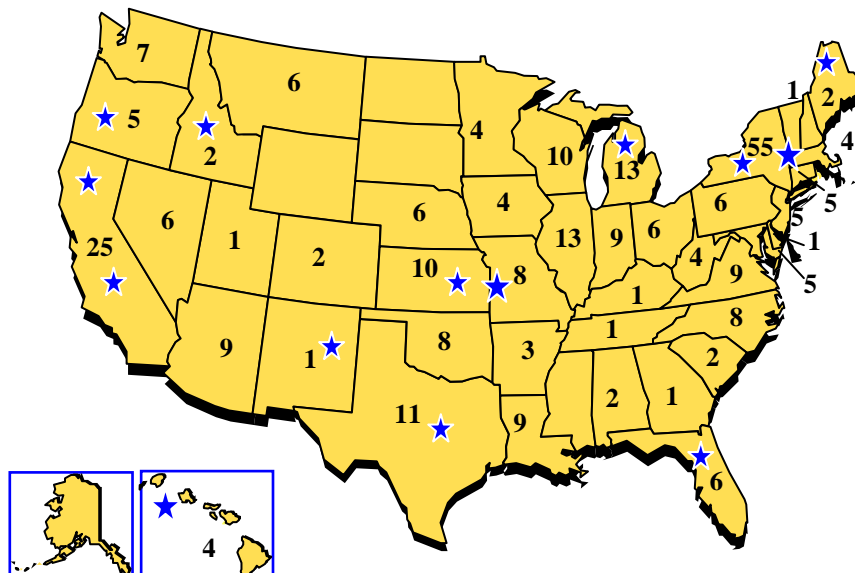
STAR Search has, to date, undertaken national surveys in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The effort has produced considerable data related to Supplemental Transportation Programs for seniors. Each program has been included in a comprehensive database with information on its history, location, organization, services, finances, risk management, and its problems and solutions.

Data relevant to how STPs are organized, what they do, who they serve, and the mechanics of how they actually provide transportation are delineated below.

KEY INFORMATION ON STPs

Location:	36% target rural areas; 18% urban; 11% suburban; 33% mixed
Longevity:	50% established since the mid-1980s
Organization:	83% nonprofit
Purpose:	56% medical; 40% social; 13% religious; 42% any purpose
Availability:	55% daytime; 44% weekdays
Service:	77% door-to-door service; 20% curb-to curb; 10% fixed route
Escorts:	46% provide (or can provide) escort services
Vehicles:	45% use autos; 50% use vans; 28% use buses; 6% use taxis
Rider Fees:	59% no fees; 20% flat rate fee; 10% mileage rate; 8% sliding fee
Drivers:	36% volunteers only; 38% paid only; 22% mix of volunteer and paid
Funding:	68% grants; 40% fees (or donations) from riders; 20% tax revenue
Problems:	46% finances; 7% marketing, 5% insurance

The location of the more than 300 STPs that have been identified in the STAR Awards program are indicated on the map below. All states, with the exception of Alaska, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Wyoming and North and South Dakota, are represented in the database.



The fourteen programs from the STAR Search effort that have been given STAR Awards for Excellence are listed below and are identified on the map with a STAR ★

- (1)Project DANA – Honolulu, HI;
- (2)Shepherd’s Center of the Northland – Kansas City, MO;
- (3)Rensselaer County – Troy, NY;
- (4)Area IV Agency on Aging Senior Transportation Program – Twin Falls, ID;
- (5)Gadabout Transportation Service – Ithaca, NY;
- (6)Gold Country Telecare, Inc. – Grass Valley, CA;
- (7)Independent Transportation Network (ITN) – Westbrook, MN;
- (8)Jefferson County Service Organization - Oskaloosa, KS;
- (9)Lauderhill Transportation Program - Lauderhill, FL;
- (10)Ride Connection – Portland, OR;
- (11)San Felipe Elderly Transportation Program - San Felipe, NM;
- (12)Shepherd’s Center Escort Transportation - Kalamazoo, MI;
- (13)Transportation Reimbursement & Information Program (TRIP) – Riverside, CA;
- (14)West Austin Caregivers – Austin, TX.

The awards have ranged from \$500 to \$1,500 and have been conveyed to organizations via personal telephone calls and mail. While some of the STAR Award Winners have generated local publicity for their accomplishment, limited effort has been undertaken by the sponsors to generate publicity. Interestingly, the STAR Award winners say that the recognition is much more important to them than is the cash award.

Questions and Answers on STPs

What Is Their Purpose? In general, an STPs has the purpose of providing much needed transportation to seniors who need rides but cannot access usual transportation services. The problem is especially acute for those in the 85+ age group. This age group is more likely than other older adults to be at risk for disability and chronic conditions and have a greater need for medical care, rehabilitation, social services, and physical support. Moreover, the health and mobility conditions of this age group may not only affect their ability to drive, but may result in a greater need for transportation assistance and support. In many instances, such conditions also may negatively affect their ability to access public transportation options. STPs can complement traditional transportation options in important ways:

- (1) They often meet the needs of or target the 85+ population.**
- (2) They often provide escort services.**
- (3) They often provide both quantity and quality of life rides.**

Who Sponsors Them? STPs are sponsored by a variety of organizations and groups for a variety of reasons. For example, an Area Agency on Aging may sponsor an STPs to provide transportation to aging and social services. A health program may sponsor an STPs to transport patients to and from services. A senior center may sponsor an STPs to transport senior members to exercise and education programs. A Meals-on-Wheels program may sponsor an STPs to provide essential transport to clients as a spin-off from its meals delivery programs. An RSVP program may sponsor an STPs as a means of mobilizing its volunteers to provide transport seniors. An Adult Day Service program may sponsor an STPs to provide transportation to clients of the program and thus more fully support their caregivers. A transportation provider may sponsor an STPs as a means of having a more complete mix of transportation services. A shopping center or grocery store may sponsor an STPs in order to promote

business. An insurance program may sponsor an STPs as a means of mobilizing senior members to volunteer for members who cannot drive their cars. And, a church or interfaith group may sponsor an STPs as part of their social action agenda.

Why Do Seniors Need Them? STPs fulfill the needs of many seniors who need rides for a variety of purposes, rides at a variety of times, rides to get to a variety of places, rides that enhance quality of life, rides to remain in the community, and rides that are “senior friendly.” And, they need to be able to pay for their rides and to have some control over when and how they occur.

What Are Their Similarities and Differences? The STPs database has information on STPs throughout the country. As a group, they include a wide range of organizational and service features.

- Some have no budgeted expenses while others have budgets in the million-dollar range.
- Some have a large staff while others operate solely with volunteer support.
- Some provide service in urban areas, others in rural areas, or a mix of areas.
- Some provide transportation just for seniors, others serve a more varied clientele.
- Some have paid drivers, others use volunteer drivers, and still others have both.
- Some reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage, others do not.
- Some provide rides for specific needs (e.g., medical appointments), others for any purpose.
- Some provide escorts, others do not.
- Some transport single riders, others offer only ride-sharing.
- Some use passenger vehicles only, others use a mixed fleet of vehicles.
- Some provide thousands of rides each year, others provide hundreds of rides.
- Some pay close attention to risk management issues, others do not.
- Some require no rider fees but accept donations, others are fee-based, receive tax support, and/or grant funding.

What Is Their Target Audience? In some instances an STPs may target only seniors, while in others they may target seniors as well as disabled, other adults, and even children. They tend to target those in the “old old” population, those who have major mental or mobility problems, and those who need the assistance of escorts. These are seniors who need special care and support, but at the same time, also need to experience a quality as well as a quantity of life.

How Are They Financed? STPs are financed from a variety of sources. Some of these sources include Federal Government funding from legislation such as the Older Americans Act and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). State and county funds and city funds from departments such as transportation and offices on aging, County funds, City funds from City Hall, Foundations including, family, private and independent, community funds from groups such as the United Way, community service organizations such as Lions and Junior League, resources from sponsors such as endowment funds, and funds from private individuals. Tax revenue is also a source of funding for STPs. Sources of tax funding include county tax levies, property taxes, city tax dollars, general town tax, senior taxes and levies, local option gas tax, county match for other funding, county mill levy, and state cigarette tax.

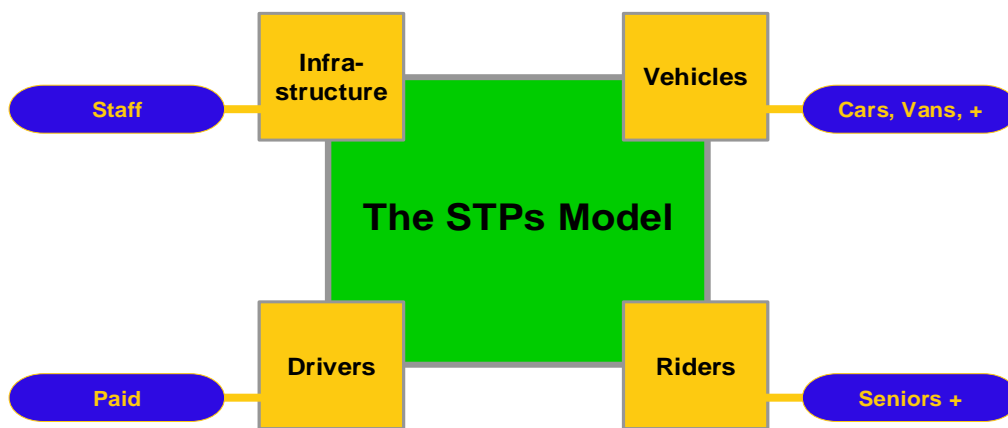
The Importance and Organization of STPs

STPs are important to seniors, and to the community, because they support efforts to encourage seniors who need or want to give up their keys to do so. As we know, it is difficult if not impossible to stop

driving to if other options do not exist for getting where you need to go. Additionally, STPs can complement traditional transportation – public and paratransit – services in any community. STPs also reach what might be called a hidden population of seniors who have special mobility needs, which make it impossible for them to access traditional transportation services.

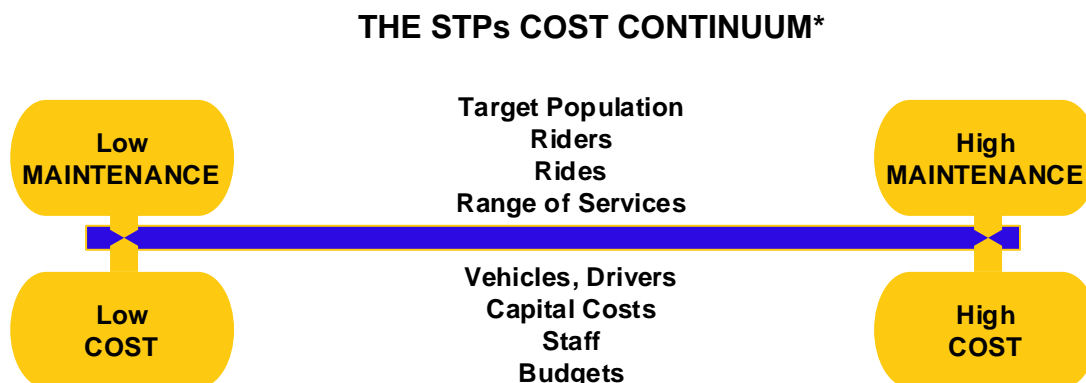
Perhaps the most important contribution of STPs is that they address quantity of life by providing essential transport as well as quality of life by providing non-essential transport. There is evidence that maturity encourages an STPs to provide both. In these contributions are what make it possible for a senior to remain in the community.

Basically, an STPs includes four features: riders, drivers, vehicles, and an administrative mechanism. Vehicles may include automobiles, vans, busses and may be owned by the STPs or provided by volunteers. Drivers may be volunteers or paid staff, or both. And administration may require a large office space and paid staff or a telephone staffed by a volunteer. The STPs model is illustrated below.



*Developed by the Beverly Foundation in 2000

The size, purpose, and costs of STPs vary. As was mentioned earlier, the basic features of any STPs are its riders, drivers, vehicles and administrative mechanisms. The target population, ridership levels, number of rides and range of services will determine the size and type of fleet, capital costs, driver and administrative requirements and on-going budgets. The illustration below indicates the continuum of low cost/low maintenance to high cost/high maintenance and the major variables, the combination of which will determine the location of an STPs program along the continuum.



*Developed by the Beverly Foundation in 2002

A variety of decisions must be made during the planning and start-up of an STPs. They include decisions about vehicle type and cost, rider and driver recruitment and driver training, the range of services, the target population and costs of service and delivery. Obviously one of the most critical decisions is related to vehicles.

The purchase of a vehicle will automatically place an STPs at the high cost/high maintenance end of the continuum. Why? Because not only does it result in capital costs, it generally creates expenses for on-going maintenance, and may create needs for paid drivers, paid schedulers, and paid administrative support. Alternately, a volunteer program that includes volunteer drivers, volunteer owned vehicles, volunteer staff and limited or no reimbursement for volunteer expenses would undoubtedly fall at the low cost/low maintenance end of the continuum.

Conclusion

In summary, an STPs can be part of the tapestry of a transportation system or senior service program in any community. It can meet needs of seniors for mobility. It can help seniors get to the essentials as well as enjoy quality of life experiences. It can provide special assistance that can help seniors access and use transportation. And, it can provide what might be considered “senior friendly” service.

The results of the first STAR Search study, which includes 237 STPs, have been published in the report, *Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors*. In addition to the considerable data that was developed on the individual and the group as a whole, the report includes lengthy profiles of 11 programs, 5 program reviews and 6 program case studies. This data is considered invaluable with respect to understanding the successful and not so successful elements of starting up and operating a senior transportation program. The report is available through the Beverly Foundation and the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in Washington, DC. It also is available on the websites of the partners at www.beverlyfoundation.org and www.aafts.org.

Located in Pasadena, CA, the Beverly Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote quality of life of America’s older population through research, demonstration and education that addresses long term care and transportation mobility.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a 501(c)(3) public charity located in Washington, DC that is dedicated to research and education about the causes of traffic crashes. It is funded by donations from AAA Clubs, AAA members, and other organizations associated with the American Automobile Association.

The Beverly Foundation
566 El Dorado Street, Suite 100
Pasadena, CA 91101
Tel (626) 792-2292; Fax (626) 792-6117
www.beverlyfoundation.org

**The STPs Mobilizer Project is a
partnership initiative of the Beverly
Foundation and the AAA Foundation for
Traffic Safety**

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety
1440 New York Avenue NW, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20005
Tel (202) 638-5994; Fax (202) 638-5943
<http://www.aafts.org>