

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

The U.S. Federal Transit Administration and The U.S. Administration on Aging

Introduction

It is national policy to help older Americans remain independent and participate fully in community. Affordable mobility providing access to community services is key to supporting this national policy. Affordable mobility is necessary for many older adults to access health care and other personal services, retail, business, recreation and social engagements. Unfortunately, older adults are at high risk of losing their mobility as a result of functional impairments and the lack of access to transportation services.

The Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides financial assistance to support the development of comprehensive and coordinated systems of home and community-based care for older persons and their caregivers. AoA's mission is to promote the dignity and independence of older people, and to help society prepare for an aging population. Created in 1965 with the enactment of the Older Americans Act (OAA), AoA is part of a federal, state, tribal and local partnership called the National Network on Aging. This network serves about 7 million older persons and over 250,000 of their caregivers each year, and consists of 56 State Agencies on Aging; 655 Area Agencies on Aging; 244 Tribal and Native organizations; two organizations that serve Native Hawaiians; 29,000 local service providers; and over 500,000 volunteers. These organizations provide assistance and services to older individuals and their families in urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the United States.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), an agency in the U.S. Department of Transportation, provides financial assistance to states, local governments and non-profit organizations to support the development and maintenance of public transportation systems that serve the transportation needs of the general public, and address the special transportation needs of specific components of the public including older adults. Public transportation systems provide basic mobility for millions of Americans, including older adults.

FTA provides financial assistance to approximately 600 public transportation entities in urban areas and approximately 1300 public and non-profit providers in rural areas. In addition, FTA provides funds to approximately 4,000 non-profit organizations for the provision of special transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities.

Purpose

Whereas, FTA and AoA administer significant programs that provide transportation services to older persons through multiple public and private organizations, FTA and AoA (the parties) enter into this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to assist their respective networks in the coordination of transportation services for older adults and to facilitate access to these services by older adults.

Background

The lack of accessible and affordable transportation has been identified as a key barrier for accessing community services. Both the Administration on Aging and the Federal Transit Administration not only support public transportation but also the coordination of transportation services targeted to older adults.

Through its Supportive Services and Senior Centers Program under Title III of the Older Americans Act, AoA provides formula funding to the State Agencies on Aging for a wide array of supportive services. Approximately \$360 million is appropriated annually for this program. State Agencies on Aging award funds to Area Agencies on Aging, most of whom use a portion of these funds to help meet the transportation needs of older persons. In FY 2000, over 40 million one-way trips were provided to older persons by 2,700 local transportation providers at a cost of \$65 million. In addition, approximately \$100 million was leveraged by State and Area Agencies on Aging to further meet the transportation needs of older persons.

The FTA provides assistance to private nonprofit organizations and certain public bodies for the provision of transportation services for the elderly and persons with disabilities. In FY 2000, \$140 million was used to help approximately 1,400 local providers purchase more than 1,800 vehicles and for contracted service for the provision of transportation services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities. In addition, the FTA provided \$229 million in FY 2000 to provide assistance for capital, operating, and administrative expenditures by state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and operators of transportation systems to provide public transportation services in rural and small urban areas (under 50,000 population). An estimated 36 percent of the ridership in nonurbanized systems is elderly, which represents nearly three times their proportion of the rural population.

The FTA also supports programs that enhance access to transportation services for older adults. As a result of the Americans with Disabilities Act, older adults have increased accessibility on the fixed route public transportation system. For those individuals who cannot access the fixed route service and are identified as eligible for ADA paratransit services, they can obtain curb-to-curb services for any trip purpose. In FY 2000, \$4 billion were used for capital and operating expenditures by transit agencies to provide public transportation services in urbanized areas. While these services must be open to the general public, a significant number of passengers served are elderly.

Objectives

Under this agreement, FTA and AoA will work together to achieve the following objectives:

Objective 1: Increase awareness of the transportation needs of older adults and the importance of developing strategies that can be used to address these needs.

Objective 2: Establish baseline data regarding transportation services addressing the needs of older persons, including existing transportation system characteristics, customer satisfaction and innovative service and transportation coordination models.

Objective 3: Develop and implement a joint plan to provide ongoing technical assistance and training to state and local agencies and organizations in an effort to promote and implement promising practices, including Intelligent Transportation Systems, related to the coordination of transportation services.

Objective 4: Work collaboratively with stakeholders at the national, state, and local levels to identify barriers and solutions to accessing transportation services, and to get their on-going input on the strategies and activities FTA and AoA will use to carry out this agreement.

Objective 5: Work together to better coordinate the provision of funding opportunities to the aging services and transportation networks to foster coordination of transportation services and the development of innovative service delivery models.

Administration of Memorandum of Understanding

AoA and FTA agree to:

1. Develop and implement annual work plans each calendar year to achieve the goals and objectives of this agreement;
2. Produce annual progress reports at the end of each calendar year; and
3. Designate staff to be responsible for administering all aspects of this agreement.

Period of Agreement

This agreement is effective upon signature and shall continue in effect until terminated by either party.

Authority

Older Americans Act, Title II, Section 203, Federal Agency Consultation.

Modification or Cancellation Provision

This agreement may be modified or amended by written agreement of both parties. Requests for modification and amendment of the agreement may be initiated by either party through written notification to the other party.

Costs

Parties agree to share costs to the extent practicable for specific action items related to training, technical assistance and dissemination activities and /or research and demonstration projects, subject to appropriations and other factors.

Acceptance and Signature of Each Approving Party

_____	_____
Jennifer Dorn	Date
Administrator	
U.S. Federal Transit Administration	

_____	_____
Josefina G. Carbonell	Date
Assistant Secretary	
U.S. Administration on Aging	

