## WBA Job No. 17-248

April 2017

Focus Group Discussion Guide

1. **INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)**
   1. Purpose of meeting: We are going to talk about some of the issues facing seniors in the Arlington area, specifically with respect to transportation. We are going to talk about your experiences and get your opinions about transportation in the region. Let me assure you once again that this is not a sales meeting of any kind. I don’t have anything to sell you. This is a form of research conducted with area residents and we’re interested in your opinions.
   2. About this focus group session
      1. Form of market research, not selling anything
      2. Discussion will last about 2 hours
      3. Audio/Video Recording (if applicable)
      4. Associates viewing in another room, notes may come in
      5. All comments will be kept anonymous and confidential
      6. Have courage of convictions; don’t let group sway you
      7. No right or wrong answers, only your opinion
      8. Don’t have to raise hands; but speak one at a time
      9. Work for independent market research company
      10. Turn off cell phones
   3. Respondent introduction
      1. Name
      2. Where live?
      3. How long lived in the area?
      4. Something about self (work/activities/etc.)
      5. Ice breaker
2. **CURRENT TRAVEL MODES (15 minutes)**

Now. I would like to turn to the topic of tonight’s discussions. First, let’s discuss transportation in Arlington.

* 1. What types of places do you do to when traveling in the area?
     1. Work?
     2. Volunteering?
     3. Social?
     4. Errands? Medical?
  2. Where in the area are you going?
     1. Arlington?
     2. Alexandria?
     3. DC?
     4. Outer VA suburbs?
     5. Maryland?
  3. What modes of transportation do you typically use to get around?
     1. Do you use any other modes of transportation?

Driving a car yourself Getting a ride in a car

Carpool/Vanpool Walk

Rail (Metro) Taxi

Bus (WMATA/ART/etc.) Bicycle

STAR/MetroAccess Uber/Lyft

Zipcar Shuttles from work or home

* + 1. Which of these modes do you consider your primary mode of transportation?
    2. Why is … your primary mode?
    3. If you use different types of modes, how do you decide which mode to take on a given trip?

1. **USAGE OF DIFFERENT MODES (25 minutes)**

Now, I’d like to discuss some modes of transportation in the area.

* 1. First, let’s talk about cars
     1. How many of you drive yourself?
        1. Why do you use it? Where do you take it?
        2. How long do you expect to continue driving?
     2. How many do not drive yourself?
        1. Why don’t you use it?
     3. What are the pros of driving?
     4. What are the cons of driving?
  2. How many of you are familiar with **Metrorail**?
     1. How many use it?
        1. Why do you use it? Where do you take it?
     2. How many do not use it?
        1. Why don’t you use it?
     3. What are the pros of Metrorail?
     4. What are the cons of Metrorail?
  3. How many of you are familiar with **bus services in the area**?
     1. Are you familiar with…?
        1. Metrobus
        2. ART
        3. Circulator
     2. Are there any differences in these modes in terms of service? Availability?
     3. How many use buses?
        1. Why do you use them? Where do you take them?
     4. How many do not use them?
        1. Why don’t you use them?
     5. What are the pros of buses?
     6. What are the cons of buses?

1. **BARRIERS TO TRANSIT (15 minutes)**
   1. Thinking about public transportation in general, what would make you more likely to take it in the future?
      1. Are you familiar with the modes of public transportation in your neighborhood?
         1. Do you know where your closest bus stop is?
            1. If not, do you know how you would get that information?
            2. Do you know what bus routes serve your neighborhood?
         2. Do you know where your closest Metro stop is?
            1. If not, do you know how you would get that information?
            2. Do you know what Metro line serves that Metro stop?
         3. Do you know how fares work on area transit modes?
            1. Do you have/know how to use a SmarTrip card?
            2. Are you aware if senior fares are available?
            3. If not, do you know how you would get that information?
2. **TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION (15 minutes)**
   1. Let’s talk about gathering information about transportation options in the area.
      1. If you wanted to try a public transportation mode in the area that you had not used before, how would you get the information you need to know how to complete this trip?
      2. Have you gone online to look up information about transit options in the area?
         1. If so, which websites?
      3. **EXPLAIN COMMUTER STORE.** How many of you have been to a commuter store?
         1. If so, how was your experience there?
      4. Have you gotten any print materials like brochures, maps, or schedules for transit systems in the area?
         1. Where did you get these materials?
   2. Now let’s discuss technology use.
      1. How many of you have a smartphone?
         1. What do you use your smartphone for?
            1. Do you use apps to help with transportation? Google maps? Waze?
         2. Would you feel comfortable paying for trips through a smartphone app?
   3. How many of you have a credit or debit card?
      1. How would you feel about paying for trips with a credit or debit card?
3. **INITIATIVES TO INCREASE TRANSIT (15 minutes)**
   1. Now let’s talk about different initiatives Arlington County could undertake to promote transit in the area.
      1. If there were ambassadors at transportation hubs to help show area seniors how to use transit, would that make you more likely to consider riding?
         1. Why/Why not?
      2. What about if there were “try transit” days, where customers could travel at no cost?
      3. Why/Why not?
   2. What about if there were travel trainings, where volunteers would teach area residents what service is available to them, and how to use it?
      1. Why/Why not?
   3. Are there any other initiatives you can think of that might make you more likely to consider using transit?
4. **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE (15 minutes)**
   1. Looking to the future, have you planned for what you will do if the time comes when you are no longer able to drive?
      1. What is your plan?
         1. Will you use transit? /Rely on rides from others?
      2. Thinking about your friends and relatives who are seniors in the area, do you think they have planned for their future transportation needs?
         1. What is their plan?
      3. Have you used/Are you familiar with MetroAccess or STAR (Specialized Transit for Arlington Residents)?
         1. **EXPLAIN PARATRANSIT as an option for those who qualify**
         2. Would you be likely to consider using MetroAccess or STAR if you could not drive?
      4. Have you used/Are you familiar with Uber or Lyft?
         1. **IF NO -** Would you consider using Uber of Lyft?
         2. Would you consider using Uber or Lyft if these services were subsidized by the county as part of an on-demand transit that would replace certain bus routes in the county and be subsidized by the county?
      5. Are you familiar with driverless vehicles, which are being developed?
         1. How would you feel about riding in a driverless vehicle as a passenger?
5. **CLOSING (10 minutes)**
   1. Before we wrap up, I would like you to complete an activity as a group. Pretend you are part of a committee tasked with increasing public transportation usage among residents of Arlington County. As a group, please list your top five recommendations for what you would do to achieve this.
   2. Closing comments