Arlington County
Senior Citizens Transportation Study

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Background and Purpose

Arlington County Commuter Services (ACCS) is a bureau within the Transportation Division of the Arlington County Department of Environmental Services that promotes and supports transportation demand management (TDM) in Arlington County, Virginia. TDM programs and services aim to influence whether, where, when, why and how people travel. The mission of ACCS is to provide Arlington residents, employees, businesses, and visitors with transportation information and services to support a vibrant and livable community. Through innovative programs and tools, ACCS has been able to change travel behavior by making it easy for residents, employees, and visitors to use all available transportation options, other than driving alone, to meet their travel needs.

With this mission in mind and given the success of its programs, ACCS was interested in exploring transportation issues around the growing Senior Citizen population. Senior Citizens (65 years and older) make up 9.3% of Arlington County's population of 216,700. According to AARP, "nearly all older Americans say they want to live independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible." Having access to transportation options and understanding how to use them is crucial for seniors to stay connected to family and friends, pursue day-to-day activities and maintain their quality of life.

In order to develop programs and services that will be effective among Senior Citizens, ACCS commissioned WBA Research to conduct focus groups among the target market. The goal of this study was to learn from focus groups how to drive an education and outreach campaign among the Arlington County Senior Citizen market. This project will also have an opportunity to impact Arlington County transportation and land-use policy, as well as transportation access for Senior Citizens.

What follows is WBA Research's report on the focus groups conducted for the Arlington County Senior Citizen Transportation Study.

Methodology

On April 26th and 27th, 2017, six focus groups were conducted in Rosslyn, Virginia at Mobility Lab facilities among Senior Citizen residents of Arlington County. The focus groups took place at 10:00am, 12:30pm and 6:00pm each day. A total of 65 people participated in the research.

Participants were recruited by WBA Research using a variety of sources and methodologies from among the Senior Citizen residents of Arlington County. All focus group participants were compensated for their time. The focus groups were audio and video recorded, from which written transcripts were created. The recruitment screener and discussion guide for these sessions can be found in the Appendix of this report. The focus group discussions were moderated by Steve Markenson of WBA Research.

The chart below provides counts of participants for each group:

Date	Time	Participants
April 26th	10:00am	11
April 26th	12:30pm	11
April 26th	6:00pm	13
April 27th	10:00am	11
April 27th	12:30pm	10
April 27th	6:00pm	9

Respondent Profile

A wide range of Arlington County Seniors were included in the research.

- The groups consisted of a roughly even mix of males and females.
- Roughly one-half (31 of 64) of the participants had used public transportation in the past week.
- Almost one-third (19 of 64) of the participants are still working, full- or part-time.
- While most of the participants are married (36), some are single or divorced (24). A few were widowed (4).
- Participants' ages ranged from 65 to several in their 80s.

Gender	
Male	31
Female	33

Transit Usage	
Transit Users	31
Non-Users	33

Employment Status	
Employed Full- or Part-time	19
Retired	45

Age	
65-69 years old	23
70-74 years old	26
75 years old or older	15

Marital Status	
Married/Partnered	36
Single/Divorced	24
Widowed	4

NOTE: One participant did not provide demographic information

Respondent Profile

Specific modes of transportation used in the past week by the 64 Arlington County Seniors who took part in these focus groups are shown below.

Types of Transportation Used in the Past Week	
Driving a car alone	56
Walking	45
Riding in a car as a passenger	34
Driving with passengers	33
WMATA MetroRail	31
WMATA MetroBus	14
ART Bus	8
Taxi/Uber/Lyft	8
Bicycle	4
Carpooling/Vanpooling	2
Fairfax Connector	1
STAR/MetroAccess	1

Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

1. The Arlington County Seniors who took part in these focus groups are very active and strategic multi-modal transportation users.

2. Driving oneself is still the primary mode of transportation for most of these Seniors. While there are definite downsides to driving, most like the convenience and independence.

3. For most of these Seniors, there is an openness to using public transportation. Many are regular users of public transportation. Those who are not regular users are supportive of public transportation in the region.

4. MetroRail is the most commonly used public transportation mode among these Seniors. While they have experienced and are well aware of MetroRail's issues, they are mostly supportive of and optimistic about MetroRail in the future.

5. While there are Seniors who will likely never use a public bus, some are regular users. Users, and even some non-users, praise the bus service in Arlington County as "underrated" and an "unsung service."

6. While many Seniors are aware of the Senior Fare and have a general idea of what the discount is, a significant number are not aware of Senior Fares. When informed about the discounted fare, responses were positive and many called for a campaign to spread awareness. Furthermore, many did not know (including some current transit users) that you could use a SmartTrip Card on the bus system and expressed that they are more likely to use the bus now that they have this information.

7. Walking is a viable and preferred option for some Seniors. Some have even selected where they live because of the ability to walk to desired destinations. Walking serves the dual purpose of being both a means of exercise and transportation.

Key Takeaways

8. Arlington County Seniors, by their nature or sheer necessity, are strategic travelers, considering a number of factors when deciding between transportation modes. These factors include time of day, parking options/availability, destination, mood, time constraints, planned activities, etc.

9. With all these factors being considered by these Senior travelers when choosing a mode, it is important to understand that the mode decision is made prior to leaving the home. Seniors need to feel comfortable and confident with a mode before they will ever consider using it. They want to know exactly where the routes go, where to stand while they wait, and how to pay for it before they ever leave the house. This concern even influences driving habits, as some seniors mentioned that they like to do a trial run and scout out a destination the day before they plan to go there.

10. Surprisingly, personal safety when using public transportation was not raised as a concern by these Seniors. They are mostly worried about system safety and reliability. Many shared fears of being stuck in the Metro or planning to use public transportation only to be left stranded. However, a number of these Seniors did express fears regarding personal safety when discussing Uber/Lyft drivers.

11. For the most part, Arlington County Seniors are fairly tech savvy. They are generally comfortable with technology ranging from utilizing the internet to search for information to actively using a variety of apps on their smartphones. These Seniors by no means consider themselves old. In fact, many of their behaviors are not dissimilar to those of millennials, as they have very active and full social calendars, are willing to consider new ways of doing things (including modes of transportation) and, to a reasonable extent, are willing to embrace the latest technology.

12. Whether it be from the internet, their smartphone, the Commuter Store or just from their experiences living in the area, Arlington County Seniors do not lack awareness of the transportation options available to them. And, they are familiar with the resources available to obtain any needed transportation information.

Key Takeaways

13. The concept of providing ambassadors at transportation hubs to help show Seniors how to use the system was met with mixed reviews. While many thought this could be a helpful service, they also thought this program would be unlikely to attract new users to public transportation. The bigger barrier to usage is perceived to be getting non-riders into the system. There were also concerns raised over the cost of such a program. Offering "try transit" days (riders could travel at no cost) was also seen as a nice idea but still limited in its ability to attract new users.

14. A travel training program, where volunteers would teach area residents/Seniors what service is available to them and how to use it, was a very popular idea. This was seen as a highly effective way to reach non-users. Seniors also offered a number of suggestions as to how to get this type of program in front of the appropriate audience, including locations to offer the program (senior centers, community centers, libraries, civic/citizens associations, local businesses, farmers markets, etc.), platforms for wider distribution (online videos, local cable stations, etc.) and ways to promote the program (mailers, AARP, local magazines/newspapers, listservs, at grocery stores, etc.).

15. Driverless cars are a concept that virtually all the Seniors were aware of. However, openness to actually riding in a driverless car covers the spectrum from those eager to try today to others who would never consider it. The biggest concerns are safety and the newness of the technology, but most acknowledge that this will be part of the future.

16. Many of the Arlington County Seniors who attended the focus groups preferred to avoid discussing the idea that there may come a time when they cannot or should not drive. Many see this time as being 10 years or more away. When pushed, some say they will move to senior communities that offer walkable amenities and transportation services. Others plan to increase their use of public transportation or other modes, such as Uber, taxis, volunteer drivers, or even driverless cars.

Detailed Findings

Senior Travel Habits

Types of Places:

- Arlington County Senior Citizens who attended the focus groups tended to be very active and on-the-go, often going to multiple locations in a given day.
  - Some of these Seniors are still working either full- or part-time, while others are regularly volunteering at performance venues, churches and in their community.

    "We volunteer to help our elderly neighbors to their appointments."

    "I spend my time with different women's groups and I usher at three different area theaters."
  - There are many errands that these Seniors attend to that involve them traveling to the grocery store, drug store, store/shopping center, bank, library, church, etc.
  - Various medical appointments are also destinations for these residents as part of their regular routine.
  - These Seniors are trying to stay active by participating in a wide range of exercise activities, including going to the gym, swimming, dance classes, golf, walking in their neighborhood or in local parks and, of course, walking to a destination.

    "I play softball in a league that does two double headers every morning on Tuesday and Thursday."

    "I used to swim. I used to run. Now I am down to walking, but I do a lot of walking."
  - These Seniors also have active social lives that include regular trips to restaurants, theaters, museums, stadiums/arenas, sports bars, movies, music venues, casinos and various other entertainment complexes.

    "I'm into the District fairly frequently taking advantage of the museums."

    "I go to museums and galleries and the archives and the Library of Congress and that sort of thing a lot."

Senior Travel Habits

Area Destinations:

- In taking part in this broad range of activities, Arlington County Senior Citizens who attended the focus groups tended to travel throughout the metropolitan area.

  "I go all over the area. I mean really all over."

  - These Seniors, many of whom have lived in the area for years, certainly travel throughout Arlington County and know the main and side streets very well.

    "When I drive within Arlington I stay off the big highways because I'm not in that much of a hurry and I enjoy driving through the neighborhoods."

    "I know back ways to everywhere."

  - Almost all of these residents travel into the District of Columbia without reservation, though the frequency of these trips does vary.

    "I think what I like about Arlington, at least, is the access to DC."

  - Many also travel to other areas of Virginia regularly, including places such as Leesburg and Tysons Corner.

    "But I also go west like out to the vineyards, the wineries and stuff."

    "I'm driving out to Fairfax for different meetings and luncheons and that sort of thing."

  - While some travel to Maryland, this tends to be far less common or frequent. In fact, a few of the Seniors consider Maryland difficult to get to and a few even joked that it was like "*a foreign nation*."

    "For me, Maryland is seriously going to another state."

    "Maryland not so much. It is very difficult to get to Maryland besides driving."

    "Well I only do because I've got family, a number of family members in Maryland."

  - Many of these Seniors are also traveling outside the region fairly regularly, either by car, rail or airplane.

Senior Travel Habits

Modes of Transportation:

- Arlington County Senior Citizens can best be described as multi-modal travelers. These area residents rarely rely on only one mode of transportation to get to their various destinations.
  - Almost all of the seniors that attended the focus groups are still driving themselves (and others) to destinations throughout the area.
  - About one-half of the focus group attendees report that they use some type of public transportation regularly. MetroRail is the most commonly used form of public transportation, but some of these seniors also use MetroBus and ART.
  - Many also walk to destinations for errands and to achieve the dual objective of exercising and completing a task/errand.
  - Taxis are used by many as a way to get to and from the airport and occasionally for medical appointments. Red Top taxi cabs have a particularly positive reputation.
  - Uber specifically and Lyft on occasion have been used by some of the Seniors. Most often the usage of these services has been requested by someone else, like their children. However, a few did report having an App for these services on their smartphone. Perceptions of Uber were mixed among those who had and had not used this service.
  - Arlington County Seniors are aware of Zipcar and other similar services, but few have used them.
  - Bicycling was not very common as a form of transportation among these Seniors, but there was at least one avid biker in each group.
  - STAR/MetroAccess services were not used by these Seniors and did not tend to have the most positive reputation.
- Driving themselves in a car is the primary mode of transportation for most of the Arlington County Senior Citizens that participated in these focus groups. However, there were some Seniors that considered public transportation to be their primary mode.

Senior Travel Habits

Mode Selection:

- As previously mentioned, Arlington County Seniors are multi-modal in their choice of travel options. When deciding on a mode option, there are some key factors that impact mode selection.
  - Time of day – Seniors are strategic travelers, avoiding driving or public transportation during peak times. Seniors, unlike other citizens, tend to have more flexibility to plan their schedules.

    "When I have tasks to do during the day, I just plan it so I'm out after rush hour and back before lunch hour."

    "I try to do a lot of it during the weekday too, because the weekend is when everybody else is out and have the traffic and everything else."

    "I tend to go in DC off peak rush hour. Rush hour is pretty insane so I try to arrange things so that I'm not fighting that …"

  - Parking options – the stress and anxiety of finding parking, particularly in the District of Columbia, is often a factor that dissuades Seniors from driving. The cost of parking at their destination is also a consideration.

    "Parking could be very expensive, and a lot of times you cannot find meters."

    "Whether or not there is available parking influences me as well."

    "But if I'm going downtown parking is a huge thing. So, if I'm going to have to pay to park then I'll take Metro."

  - Destination – What the Senior knows about the destination of their trip also impacts mode choice. This may include parking options, lack of parking, public transportation options, past experience and other factors.

    "I never drive into DC."

    "I always take the Metro into the District."

    "It depends on where you are driving. You figure it out and then you do the best you can."

Senior Travel Habits

Mode Selection:

- Mood – This factor impacts decisions in personal ways. When considering driving, some enjoy the experience of driving while others are less enthusiastic. The same goes for public transportation, walking, bicycling and other modes.

  "It just depends on how I feel."

  "It's my time to listen to public radio."

  "I find driving myself or driving other people to be stress-free for me."

  "Driving is no pleasant thing."

- Time – While less of a concern for these mostly retired Seniors, time is mentioned as a consideration in mode selection.

  "I think for me time is a big factor. If I were to take public transportation to someplace local, I could drive it in 5 minutes or I could get there in 45 minutes with public transportation, I'm going to take the car."

  "Yeah, time has become much more valuable the older you get because you know you don't have that many more years so you try to cram in as much as you can."

- Activities – What a senior is planning to do during the trip is also a factor. If they are planning to shop, the ability to carry their purchases has an influence. If they are making multiple stops, the flexibility of a car makes these outings much easier. Some Seniors mentioned that if they plan to consume alcohol, they will consider options other than driving themselves.

  "And if you make multiple stops, it is easier, you can plan your day and put a lot of stuff in your car."

  "If you want to go for dinner and drinks, though, it is so much better to take Metro because you do not have to worry about getting stopped."

Senior Travel Habits

Walking as a Transportation Mode:

- As noted, many Arlington County Seniors walk to destinations for errands and to achieve the dual objective of exercising and completing a task/errand. While not for all Seniors, walking is popular and viable option for many Seniors.

  "We live between …. so there are lots of things we can walk to... We walk to the post office, the bank …"

  "I go to get the groceries because I want to walk. I go to the groceries, I got to the mall. I go different directions and it's to do errands."

  "If I'm going to walk, I have to have a destination."

  "It's easier to walk if you have a destination to walk to. Walking for exercise is just hard work."

  "We're a one-car family, so my wife still works, she takes the car every day. So, walking is my favorite mode of transportation and bike."

  "For example, this morning I walked from the house to the train station, 1.8 miles. I could have taken the bus, but I wanted to get some exercise."

  "We do a lot of walking. I would say we do a lot of our chores, in fact we purposely don't put letters in the mailbox. We force ourselves to walk to…"

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Attitudes Toward Driving a Car:

- As previously mentioned, almost all of the seniors that attended the focus groups are still driving themselves (and others) to destinations throughout the area. Other than limiting their nighttime driving, very few anticipate changing their driving habits in the coming years.
- The chart below summarizes what Seniors report that they like and dislike about driving.

LIKE	DISLIKE
Ease/Convenience/Independence	Parking – cost and access
Comfort	Traffic
Multiple stops easier	Other drivers/Road rage
Stress-free/Enjoyable	Stressful/Anxiety
Control/Flexibility	Cost – gas, parking, tolls, etc.
Quick/Fast/Direct	Speed/Red-light cameras
Listen to radio	Construction/Pot holes/Roads
Carry purchases	Pedestrians/Buses/Trucks
Cheaper	Night driving

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Positive Aspects of Driving a Car:

- Some quotes that illuminate what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the positive aspects of driving include:

  "It is easier. You go when you want to go, and you leave when you want to leave."

  "You're in control."

  "You can listen to the radio or tapes, or whatever."

  "I listen to NPR so I get my news."

  "I find driving and listening to music relaxing, so I don't mind doing it."

  "I just like driving my car."

  "One thing is the flexibility of it. You can sit in the car and you can leave at 2:30. You can leave at 2:41. You can leave at, whenever you want."

  "It is just kind of faster and more direct than a lot of things."

  "And if I'm driving, I know what time I need to leave and I know exactly what time I'm going to get there, but if I've got to depend on somebody else, I might not get there on time and I worry."

  "For me it's independence. I don't even like riding in someone else's car, because then I have to leave when she wants to leave and go when she wants to go. I like being independent."

  "I like driving. The cars we have are fun to drive and I like driving them."

  "It just seems to be more social to sit in the car and talk."

  "Sometimes, I get up early on the weekends while everyone else is still asleep and get in the car and just drive to neighborhoods that I would like to say I've never been to, see what's going on."

  "If you're going somewhere with three family members Metro can get expensive."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Negative Aspects of Driving a Car:

- Some quotes that explain what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the negative aspects of driving include:

"Again, parking. Do I know will it be fairly easy to park or not."

"If I am going to places I do not have parking, I may be more likely to get a public transportation ride."

"Parking is a huge thing for me."

"It doesn't matter whether you're talking about street parking or garage parking, it's cost prohibitive now."

"I avoid the Beltway, just figuring I will live longer the more I avoid it."

"Traffic is a big deterrent for me. I just hate driving in traffic, especially, since I am retired."

"I hate getting on the Beltway."

"And to me it depends on traffic, the prospect of bad traffic will just send me off to be on foot or on the Metro."

"Now here again, you can get stuck all the time, but if you don't have to drive in rush hour you don't do it."

"But all the bikers are in the middle of the road. They're not on the bike trails."

"You just never know when you're going to be in an accident."

"There's a certain anxiety level when you're in traffic that I'm aware of."

"I don't like going out at night. I don't even like walking at night, but if I have a place to go and it's dark out, I drive there. I'm not afraid to, I just prefer not to if I don't have to."

"I find I have to be more careful with myself because my eyes don't do well at night."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Attitudes Toward MetroRail:

- As previously mentioned, about one-half of the Seniors that attended the focus groups use public transportation, with virtually all of these Seniors using MetroRail. In general, attitudes toward MetroRail are positive and supportive.
- The chart below summarizes what Seniors report that they like and dislike about MetroRail.

LIKE	DISLIKE
Fast (when working)	Breakdowns
Senior Fares	Lack of coverage
Roomy/Comfortable (non-rush)	Disrepair
Reliable	Lighting
Fairly clean	Signage
Relax/Read	Fares/Cost
Special events	Hours (not late enough)
Safe	Poor PA System
Keeps cars off the road	Anxiety about getting stuck
New Manager	Passenger seat etiquette
Seeing/Meeting people	No parking at stations

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Positive Aspects Of MetroRail:

- Some quotes that illustrate what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the positive aspects of MetroRail include:

"The trains come very, very quickly. It's really, really fast."

"When it works well, it's really very, very helpful."

"Sometimes it's faster to take the Metro because of rush hour traffic."

"It really works. There is no question about it. I do not care where you go, peak time or all times, it works."

"Usually it's roomy. If you're not traveling rush hour there's room to sit and you're not crowded in."

"Once or twice a year you have problems with this Metro system, but generally it's very reliable."

"But my point is I like the fact that Metro seems fairly clean. I don't see a lot of stuff mashed on the floor, because they have the no eating."

"It's just more convenient for me to do that and more relaxing."

"If you're going into the urban part of the world, I think Metro just makes a lot of sense, both for convenience, comfort, ease of getting there, no hassle to park. It makes sense."

"It's clean. It's so much nicer than New York or Philadelphia."

"I think what I like about Arlington, at least, is the access to D.C. Especially with Metro. If I have to go to DC, I almost always use Metro and it works pretty well for me and I do get them."

"I've got to say I use Metro quite a bit now but it's not during rush hours usually so it's a lot easier."

"I went to the Women's March and I have to say the experience on Metro was absolutely terrific that day."

"I think with the new cars they have these 7000 Series cars. They're much more comfortable. Spacious."

"For me, Metro has potential."

"I like being exposed to the diversity of people because people all over the world, just people watching."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Negative Aspects Of MetroRail:

- Some quotes that explain what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the negative aspects of MetroRail include:

"And even Metro, well, if Metro ever becomes reliable again, even Metro isn't as easily accessible as you might think, depending on where you want to go and what you want to do."

"It was allowed to fall into disrepair and now we are trying to dig ourselves out."

"What you're talking about with the danger and the kinds of things that have happened because of neglect or faulty management, mismanagement. They've begun to rectify with the new general manager."

"I need the bus to connect to the nearest Metro."

"We had to use the bus to get to the Metro."

"Yeah, but coming from a suburb, it's just not convenient. Even though I live in Arlington, I'd either have to walk a little over a mile to get to Metro or take a bus to get to Metro and once I have to change my form of transportation, car wins every time. Get in one mode and go."

"But, other than a point-to-point in an urban environment, it's hard, for me, to put it at the top of my list."

"It's the worst Metro Rail system in the world."

"It has the potential to be something great, and it has not lived up to it."

"Maybe people who live like where she lives the Metro is very convenient. Where I live it's not doable."

"Metro, and this is my opinion, is run by politicians from a lot of different jurisdictions and they've been playing politics for the last several decades. It's that process which never worked and finally hit them in the butt."

"I honestly believe the Metro will never get better until they get their funding straight."

"The lighting is horrible, and the signage is very, if you have to, if you are transferring, horrible."

"I won't ride it at night. No way, I'm not riding it at night."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Attitudes Toward Bus Service:

- As previously mentioned, about one-half of the Seniors that attended the focus groups use public transportation. However, only about one-half of these Senior public transportation users (one-fourth overall) say that they use MetroBus, ART or other bus services.
- The chart below summarizes what Seniors report that they like and dislike about the area's bus service.

LIKE	DISLIKE
Variety of options	Uncomfortable
Senior Fares	Slower
Cost/Cheaper	Breakdowns
Runs frequently	Exposed to weather
Reliable	Unreliable/Traffic
Drivers	Limited service off-peak
Coverage	Negative stigma
"Green"	Physical limitations
Closer to home	Lack of awareness

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Positive Aspects of Bus Service:

- Some quotes that illustrate what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the positive aspects of the area's bus service include:

"There are two systems that are good, Arlington Transit and Metro."

"It is closer to more places."

"I think it's really good and it's underrated. People don't realize you really can get a lot of places on the bus."

"It's kind of an unsung service in my mind. I always think, "Hey, this is nice," but you never hear about it."

"It's not like I have to go a long way to even catch the bus. I get right on the bus at the corner and right off the bus at the corner so I like that."

"There's a lot of bus choices here in Arlington. I mean I just didn't appreciate it before, although I used buses, but it's really extensive between the ART bus and the MetroBus, and they are interchangeable. You don't pay an extra fare."

"I kind of like the dynamic or the exchange with my drivers. I see them every day."

"During rush hour, the bus schedule is very, very good, and if you're going to take it going in and out of town, it really works well, and it's quick."

"I think it's real good that they're running on natural gas."

"We live on a busy street where the buses go and the switch to natural gas is a marked improvement in noise, and quality, and shaking your windows. A lot of quality of life has gotten better with the upgrade."

"I have been using the buses and the buses are clean. They are not dirty. There's not trash."

"The buses here provide you with better timing and you can go more places than on the Metro."

"If I have to go downtown at rush hour, the bus stops in front of my house."

"The buses are on schedule. If it says it's going to be here at 8:32, it's going to be here at 8:32."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Negative Aspects of Bus Service:

- Some quotes that explain what Arlington County Seniors see as some of the negative aspects of the area's bus service include:

  "I guess I just have this built in, white middle-class prejudice about buses and where I came from, the bus was your last resort."

  "I always wonder why more people, including me, don't use the bus and I think it's just, it's kind of foreign. It's foreign to me. I don't know what the schedule is."

  "Sometimes it's faster to take the Metro because of rush hour traffic. Other times, it's faster to take a cab, and it's always longer to take a bus."

  "On the off hours, the service is very sparse. The other problem is a lot of the bus stops do not have benches. I'm not talking about shelters, I'm just talking about some place to sit, and there are times when I really need to sit. I can't just stand there and wait for a bus for 20 minutes."

  "I just had two hip replacements so it's not as though it's easy to catch a bus."

  "There is a bus a half a block from my house, but I just have no idea where it goes."

  "That always kept me from getting too excited about the bus. I thought you had to have exact change and all this other stuff."

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Differences Between MetroBus and ART:

- The Arlington County Seniors who attended the focus groups were asked what they saw to be the differences between MetroBus and ART bus service. Both bus services have generally positive perceptions, but are seen as having some differences.
- The chart below summarizes what Seniors note as the differences between the area's bus services.

ART	MetroBus
Neighborhoods/Local	Serves MetroRail
Smaller buses	Serves main arteries
Feels nicer	Bigger buses
Goes where MetroBus will not	
"Green" (natural gas)	

Attitudes Toward Transportation Modes

Differences Between MetroBus and ART

- Some of the comments about MetroBus and ART bus service include:

  "The MetroBuses are generally much larger. They're not as environmentally friendly, I think. I think the ART buses, a lot of them are natural gas, if not all of them."

  "Metro may be a little bit better bus because they seem to be newer ones."

  "I think the ART is in the local communities and the Metro are the like the main arteries."

  "ART tends to go through all the neighborhoods and stuff, so it is a bit slower to get from X to Y, and MetroBus is the main ones."

  "The ART is more local, and Metro does a little longer routes."

  "ART is the feeder. ART seems better for some reason."

  "I don't know. I just have a more positive feeling towards ART than MetroBus."

  "I'll tell you what my impression is, that you can go places on ART that you can't necessarily go, the MetroBus routes don't…"

  "They (ART) run in neighborhoods and things rather than main streets."

  "I think ART seems very plain. It's just seating. You sit there. There is no padding on the seats that, I think it's just very plain, utilitarian service. "

Barriers Toward Transit Usage

Awareness of Bus Stops:

- There was almost universal awareness of where the closest bus stop is to these Seniors' homes – "*Mine is right across the street."* However, not everyone is familiar with the actual bus service from that bus stop.
  - Those who used public transit regularly were obviously more knowledgeable, while others had some knowledge about the bus service in their neighborhood from their experiences in the community.
  - Those who did not know the specifics of the bus service knew that they could go online, use an app (Google), call the number on the sign at the bus stop or even ask a bus driver. The ability to find information about bus service was not a barrier to usage.

    "If you are at a bus stop and want to know when the next bus is and you don't know, on your phone each bus stop has a number, an ID number, and you can plug-in the ID number and it will come up and say, "The next bus is due in three minutes.""

    "My app right here."

    "You could just Google how to go."

    "Actually I think Google Maps gives you public transportation."

    "If you do it on Google Maps you can see where the bus stops are. There is a little icon in there."

    "Call Metro's phone number."

    "Or go into a Metro stop or ask a bus driver."

    "You could go on the website of the place you're going."

Barriers Toward Transit Usage

Awareness of MetroRail Stations:

- As with bus stops, there is almost universal awareness of where the closest MetroRail Station is to these Seniors' homes. Despite the fact that only about one-half of the Seniors were users of the system, virtually all know where the closest station is, how they would get there and what lines serve that station.
  - ➢ The ability to get information about service, schedules, fares, etc. is not a barrier to using MetroRail. These Seniors offered a myriad of ways to get the information they needed, including apps, online, calling WMATA, in station displays, asking a friend/spouse, asking a station attendant, etc.

    "Usually if I'm going to take the Metro I use the Metro App that tells me what time the trains are going to be leaving…"

    "I think the website, they have changed the trip planner, and it used to give, in my opinion, better information than it does now."

    "There is a website app for Metro. One thing I'm impressed with, how accurate it was. It's not static, it's very dynamic. You can plug in the time that you want to leave, and when you have to be somewhere, and it will give you the appropriate connections."

Barriers Toward Transit Usage

Awareness of Fares:

- While not always knowing specific details, Seniors have an idea of what fares are for either MetroRail or the various bus services. Many, particularly when using MetroRail, just swipe their cards without knowing what the exact fare is for their trip. Awareness of the specific fares is not in any way a barrier to the use of public transportation.
- Seniors generally know where to go to find information about fares if they need it. The sources they mention range from online resources ("google it", trip planner, WMATA web site, etc.) to on-site resources (bus driver, station manager, chart in station or on bus, etc.).
- Most of the Seniors are aware of the SmartTrip card system used to pay fares on public transportation, particularly for MetroRail. However, some were not aware that the SmartTrip cards can be used on buses.
  - ➢ As would be expected, those who regularly use public transportation have SmartTrip cards. But, many who are not regular public transportation users also have a SmartTrip card.
- Surprisingly, many of the focus group participants, even those who are regular public transportation users, were not aware of special fares for Seniors. This tended to foster a great deal of discussion among the participants. Those who were aware and had a Senior SmarTrip card quickly informed others as to how and where to obtain one.

"I think even the senior fare needs to be better publicized because not all of us in here knew about it."

Use Of Technology And Information

Information Resources:

- When it comes to looking for information about public transportation, many Seniors would start by going to the internet/online. WMATA's web site and the Trip Planner were mentioned by some, while others mentioned Google maps.
  - While most are fairly up-to-date with technology, there are some that still prefer more traditional methods of getting information, such as calling on the telephone, picking up a paper schedule, asking a friend or neighbor, or asking a bus driver or station manager.
- Awareness of the Commuter Stores was mixed among these Arlington County Seniors. Those who have Senior SmarTrip cards or are more regular public transportation users tend to be more likely to be aware of the Commuter Stores.
  - When those who had experienced the Commuter Store explained what it was to the others in the group, reactions were positive.
  - Interestingly, many of the Seniors would like to see the paper schedules and information continue to be made available.

"There's five of them in Arlington. They're dispersed around the county for convenience. There's a bus that travels. It's a traveling commuter store. It stops in different neighborhoods, and they have information, not only transit in Arlington, but regionwide, and brochures, and they sell tickets."

"And so I went down to the commuter store and got myself a map and I realized I could get almost any place I wanted to go with a bus, from right here."

"There's also a thing called the Commuter Store which is run by Arlington County. It is not run by Metro. And it has all of the route maps. It has the computers. It has the schedules. It has everything for everything."

"They are also good for newer arrivals, people who don't know anything about what the systems are. They go in there and they get a general overview. "Here is where the Metro trains go. Here is where buses are.""

"Arlington produces a map that's comprehensive. It has all the bus and rail systems, and it shows connections and where each of those things go. Pretty useful."

Use Of Technology And Information

Information Resources:

- Most of the Seniors who participated in the focus groups have smartphones and use them for a range of their capabilities, such as email, texting, internet searches ("Google it"), photos, weather, etc. They also have a variety of apps on their phones, ranging from games to travel apps (Google maps, Waze, Uber, etc.) to some doing banking/financial transactions.
- Reactions to paying for transit fares with a smartphone was mixed, with some concerned about how they would be able to get their senior fare.

  "Yeah, I have an issue with that because I want to get my senior discount and I'm not sure I would get it."

- Credit/Debit card ownership was universal among these Seniors. However, there was some skepticism of using a credit or debit card to pay for transit fares (in place of SmarTrip cards). Some were concerned about security and identity theft, while others were concerned about their senior discount. After being prompted, a few thought it might be nice to have one less card in their wallet.

  "I just do not like to let my personal credit card out. "

  "Security would come into my mind. If I had this versus my credit card and there's fraud going to go on somewhere in the system, I know you can only get so much out of this instead of getting the card back."

  "I would prefer to have that card separate from the credit card because it's like a separate entity that if somebody hacks into the Smartcard I don't lose much. But if the MasterCard…"

Initiatives To Increase Transit Usage

Ambassadors at Transportation Hubs:

- Seniors generally react positively to the idea of having ambassadors at transportation hubs to show riders how to use the system.
  - However, this is not seen as an approach that will actually increase transit usage but as one that would be helpful to those already using the system, particularly visitors/tourists. As some Seniors mentioned, the bigger barrier to usage is getting non-riders into the station.
  - Some express concerns over the costs of such a program and its impact on fares.

"I actually think that would be something that Metro should try because you do have people who believe in the system and might be willing to be volunteers. I mean they could be like me who helps people and they would just do a couple afternoons a week."

"I think it is a great idea. It would obviously be expensive to do. It would be a great volunteer opportunity."

"You put people who are volunteers, retired, no cost, to volunteer to help tourists or volunteer where ever they are needed. It would be a wonderful idea."

"Also it is an excellent way for a student to meet their community service hours."

"If they made the people in the booths a little bit, one, they would be there, two, they would actually talk to you, and three, they would be able to answer your questions. That would help, because maybe they are supposed to be doing a lot of things, but I find them very surly…"

"I would talk to them, but it wouldn't get me to use transit more because the decision to use transit comes in my house that I'm going to use transit. I'm already there. I'm going to use transit."

"You're saying to increase use. I don't know if it would necessarily increase usage, but it would make it easier for people."

"I think it's a good idea because I think it's not so much the cost that's the problem as some people don't know how to use it."

Initiatives To Increase Transit Usage

"Try Transit" Days:

- Seniors react positively to the idea of having a "try transit day" where travelers could use the system at no cost. However, some note that this approach may not help overcome some non-riders' hesitation about using public transportation.

  "Have a day for free for seniors to ride or something."

  "But my point is I think people who don't ride the buses aren't going to ride the bus just because it's free today. They don't know where the bus is. They don't know where it goes. They don't know what time."

  "It seems to me we've heard convenience and ease as being one of the chief factors that is the obstacle. And so whatever it is that's offered has to address convenience and ease of getting to where…"

  "The clientele that you want to get down there aren't going to go because it's free."

  "The question is would they continue going when it's not free? I'm not sure they would."

  "You're going to get on and this is expected, it's going to be your first time so everybody else is going to know. This is your first time and be patient."

  "You have to be motivated to go ahead and to use the system to begin with. If you were motivated, that would be a big help. I'm not motivated to use the system. I'd much rather drive."

  "Try it out and then once we get John on the bus he'll probably ride it all the time."

Initiatives To Increase Transit Usage

Travel Trainings:

- These Seniors reacted most positively to the idea of having travel trainings where volunteers would teach area residents what service is available and how to use it. This was seen as the most effective way to reach non-users. While senior centers are seen as a good location to offer these classes, others recommended offering them at or through libraries, community centers, civic/citizen associations and local businesses. In addition, several thought videos of the travel trainings should be developed and offered on local television stations and online.

  - Promoting the travel trainings was seen as important for their success. A range of suggestions were offered, such as television ads/PSAs, newspapers ads/articles, local listservs, farmers' markets, grocery stores, handouts/brochures, etc.

    "Arlington County has all these wonderful adult education classes, and you should teach a class in public transportation here because people do not know, and it would increase the usage, and there are all these options…"

    "Yes, travel planning and how to use the system… on a rotating basis at various community centers, to have the course or whatever."

    "I was going to say, in Arlington, I don't know if they still do, but they used to at the community centers, workshops. One of the things that they would do is teach people about Metro, what lines came through, and how to use it."

    "You could have it at one center one month and another center…"

    "Arlington has a TV station where they can put it up on the TV station."

    "Well, I think that there should be videos that could be accessed online, and then I like the idea of going to senior centers."

    "Not only that, not only learn how to use it, but there is a certain amount of etiquette to all public transportation and airports. If you are going to be slow like I am get over to the right."

Initiatives To Increase Transit Usage

Travel Trainings (continued):

"What about multiple free service announcements? They're one minute long, first message is - so you're the new Metrobus rider? This is how it works and you demonstrate how you put your money in and you can get your card out. That's one complete message."

"Actually, that kind of communication (television) is probably one of the more effective ways that you can reach a large number of people in a very non-threatening way. They don't have to go anywhere. It's brought to them. It's expensive but I think it's probably worth it."

"In Arlington too there is a channel, I don't know if it's a government channel or what, but they were showing how you could ride the ART buses and they talked about how convenient they were, showing people getting on and off and just what activities they were going to after they…"

- Several thought that offering training attendees a SmartTrip card loaded with funds would be an attractive incentive for attendance would encourage people to apply what was learned in the training.
- A few Seniors also suggested that the travel training be offered in multiple languages.

Planning For The Future

When Can No Longer Drive:

- When asked what they might do when they can no longer drive themselves, the Arlington County Seniors that attended these focus groups fall generally into three groups.
  - The first reaction among many of these Seniors is to avoid the discussion. Despite experiences with parents, friends and even spouses, this is an uncomfortable subject for these Seniors who generally think this time will be more than a decade away for them.
  - When pushed, some conceded that they would look to move to senior or assisted-living communities that offer walkable amenities or transportation services such as shuttles or volunteer drivers.
  - Many say they chose their current homes due to the ability to use a range of transportation modes. As result, many expect that they will use the options available to them other than driving, including Uber, public transportation, volunteer drivers, taxi cabs, and even self-driving cars.

    "I think the smartest thing is to move close to, ideally, a Metro station."

    "Really, about the kinds of organizations that exist to help seniors age in place, here in Arlington it is Arlington Neighborhood Village. You join, and then you have access to people who will drive you, and it does not have to be to a doctor's appointment, it is to anything."

    "If I may, the one thing about deciding to give up your car is that, I think in the back of your mind you are giving up your independence."

    "I would move closer to some place that has easy access to public transportation …"

    "It's something in the back of your mind because we've had parents…"

    "My husband and I have already decided that if one of us can no longer drive, we're going to move to a retirement community."

    "We're hoping self-driving cars will become a reality."

Planning For The Future

MetroAccess/STAR:

- The Seniors were asked about the role services like MetroAccess and STAR might have in their future travel plans. Very few of these Seniors are familiar with either of these services, and those that are generally have less than positive perceptions. As a result, these services are not seen as viable options for future transportation needs.

> *"Yes, people who use it to the doctor, it can be an all-afternoon process of waiting for it to pick you up, then dropping you off at the doctor, doctor is running late, and then getting home, and if somebody is in a wheelchair, both people are just near death at the end of the day, but it is cheap and doable, and sometimes it is the only option those particular people have."*

> *"That's what I'm doing later today. We're taking a lady that has to go to the doctor and she has no good luck with the STAR system in Arlington. She says the drivers won't drop her off where it's convenient for her to get into her doctor's office."*

> *"They were waiting, sometimes, for two hours, for them to come by and pick them up. And, I think that's a real big problem, because these people are disabled to begin with."*

> *"All of those kinds of things are somewhat difficult to use. They are not timely. They are not on time. You wind up getting to your doctor and then you have to wait for God knows how long until they come back and get you."*

> *"I would do anything except take that system."*

Planning For The Future

Subsidized Uber/Lyft:

- Seniors were asked to react to the concept of using Uber or Lyft if these services were subsidized by the County as part of an on-demand transit service that would replace certain bus routes. The initial reactions to this concept were somewhat skeptical, particularly with respect to the cost. When explained that this concept was not more costly and could reduce the number of buses running under capacity, the seniors were more open to the idea.

  "And that would work for me because it gets rid of the I've got rush hour only service so I would have better service."

  "That would be marvelous."

  "I think … a great idea, but Metro was built so that they didn't need drivers out there."

  "As soon as someone puts the app on my phone."

  "No because it's more accountability for the bus drivers right now than there is for the Uber-Lyft."

  "I don't think that would be very efficient."

  "Our tax rate just went up."

  "I have a hard time with people in this government here that say revenue neutral. I just want to put my hand on my wallet when they say revenue neutral."

Planning For The Future

Driverless Cars:

- The concept of driverless cars frequently was broached unaided by these Arlington County Seniors. Virtually everyone was familiar with the concept. However, openness to riding in a driverless car varied from willingness to try today to those who never would try. Across all of the focus group participants, most were willing to try riding in a driverless car. The overarching concern is the safety and the fact that it is not a proven technology yet.

  "It is a new world."

  "You have got to think young."

  "That's true, but you'll find that most of the problems are human error and the machines do a lot better job than the humans do."

  "As an experience, yeah, I'd like to see how it works and see what it feels like to be in a driverless vehicle. Am I ready to buy one? I don't know about that."

  "It's like to me, that's for another generation. It's like for the generation behind us. You know?"

  "What happens to us now when we go someplace, the technology isn't working, the computer isn't working."

  "If you have a transportation system and things go wrong, something doesn't gear into that thing on the road to make you turn the right way, you have massive collisions. It can be catastrophic when it happens."

  "One thing you know about any computer system in this modern day, it's going to get hacked."

  "I don't trust them yet."

Final Group Exercise

Increasing Public Transportation Usage:

- As a final wrap-up, each focus group session ended with a group exercise. As a group, the participants were asked to provide recommendations for actions that can be taken to increase the use of public transportation among Seniors in Arlington County. Below are the recommendations from each group.

Group 1

1. Educate: Senior Centers, Newspapers, County Website, TV, Schools, Libraries
2. Ambassadors at Metro Stations
3. Tax Incentives (personal and business)
4. Promote Environmental Asset of Public Transit
5. Uber and Lyft to Take Over Certain Bus Lines

Group 2

1. Subsidize "on demand" public transportation (uber/taxi)
2. Make it easier for seniors to get cards
3. Multi-lingual brochures
4. Better metro maintenance for all and special needs
5. Promotional day to use metro bus, etc and giveaways (travel training)

Group 3

1. Free travel day
2. More buses available
3. Tax credits for service
4. How to use service classes
5. "Dollar a week" days

Final Group Exercise

Group 4

1. Travel training online, senior centers, libraries, schools (multi-lingual)
2. Benches at bus stops and other safty/comfort features
3. Subsidized car services (uber/lyft)
4. Try Travel Days
5. Human Ambassadors – maybe at a farmers market

Group 5

1. Training – how to use; live video; station ambassadors
2. Kiosks – google traffic for Metro; Metro alerts; training; more parking availability
3. Discourage free parking/ subsidized parking

Group 6

1. Travel training
2. Senior discount awareness – senior centers, libraries, day trip somewhere
3. Use 55+ catalog to promote
4. Pricing for older citizens during off peak hours flat rate
5. Places of worship know the people who have needs or are more housebound

Appendix

APPENDIX

WBA
Job No. 17-248
April 3, 2017

DS&MG ARLINGTON COUNTY SENIOR STUDY
RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME:_____ **ID:**_____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:**_____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( )_____

DATE/LOCATION OF GROUP: _____ **TIME:**_____

INTERVIEWER: _____ **DATE RECRUITED:**_____

LEAVE MESSAGE: Hello, my name is _____from _____. We're inviting people to participate in several group discussions among seniors in the Arlington area to get their opinions of transportation services in Arlington County. Please be assured that this will not be a sales meeting. It is a part of a market research study. We think that you will find the discussion very interesting and we'd very much like to include your opinions. If you qualify and are interested in participating you will be compensated $100 for your time and opinions. Please call _____ if you are interested in joining a group discussion in late-April. Thank you and have a nice evening.

(ASK TO SPEAK TO THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD.)

(READ:) Hello, my name is _____from _____. We're inviting people to participate in several group discussions among seniors in the Arlington area to get their opinions of transportation services in Arlington County. Please be assured that this will not be a sales meeting. It is a part of a market research study. If you qualify for and attend the discussion you will be compensated $100 for your time and opinions.

Q1. What is your home ZIP code?

_____

99998 Refused → **THANK & TERMINATE**
99999 Don't know → **THANK & TERMINATE**

IF HOME ZIP CODE IS NOT IN ARLINGTON COUNTY, THANK & TERMINATE. [IF Q1(NOT 20330,22042,22201,22202,22203,22204,22205,22206,22207,22209,22210,22211,22213,22214,22215,22216,22217,22219,22225,22226,22227,22230,22240,22241,22242,22243,22244,22246,22246,22350], T&T.

Q2. How old are you? **READ LIST IF NECESSARY.**

01 Younger than 65 → **THANK & TERMINATE**
02 65-69
03 70-74
04 75-70
05 80 or older
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused → **THANK & TERMINATE**
99 **DO NOT READ:** Don't know → **THANK & TERMINATE**

Q3. Do you or does anyone in your immediate family work for…? **SELECT ONE ANSWER PER ROW. RANDOMIZE KEEPING A & B TOGETHER.**

	Yes (TERMINATE IF ANY SELECTED)	No	Don't know/Refused (TERMINATE IF ANY SELECTED)
a. A local transit agency including WMATA, Arlington Transit, or Fairfax Connector	01	02	98
b. Arlington County government	01	02	98
c. A market research or advertising company	01	02	98

APPENDIX

Q4. What types of transportation have you used in the past week? Please think about all trips you have taken or all purpose **(IF ONLY ONE MODE MENTIONED, PROBE:** Any others? ***INSERT BASED UPON RESPONSE TO Q1. READ LIST IF NECESSARY. ACCEPT ALL THAT APPLY.)**

FOR EACH MODE USED TO COMMUTE IN Q4, ASK:

Q4A. In the past week, how many one-way trips did you take **[INSERT MODE]**? Please count each round trip as two one-way trips. If you are unsure, please use your best guess. **(READ LIST. *INSERT BASED UPON RESPONSE TO Q4. RANGE=01-97. USE 0 FOR LESS THAN 1. USE 98 FOR 98 OR MORE.)**

	Q7	Q8	
		# of Trips/Week	DK/RF
Driving your car alone	01		99
Driving your car with passengers	02		99
Riding in a car as a passenger	03		99
Carpooling or vanpooling	04		99
WMATA Metrorail	05		99
WMATA Metrobus	06		99
Arlington Transit or ART Buses	07		99
Fairfax Connector	08		99
STAR or Specialized Transit for Arlington Residents	09		99
MetroAccess	10		99
Taking another public transportation service **(specify)**	11		99
Taking a taxi, Uber, Lyft or limousine	12		99
Riding a motorcycle	13		99
Riding a bicycle	14		99
Walking	15		99
Other **(specify)**	95		99
DO NOT READ: None, have not traveled	98		
DO NOT READ: Refused	98		
DO NOT READ: Don't know	99		

THOSE WHO USE TRANSIT [Q4(05-10], CLASSIFY AS TRANSIT USERS.

ASK EVERYONE.

Q5. What is your employment status? Are you…? **(READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)**

01 Employed full-time,
02 Employed part-time,
03 A student,
04 Retired,
05 A homemaker, or
06 Not currently employed?
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused

THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME [Q5(01-02], CLASSIFY AS EMPLOYED.

THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME [Q5(01-02], ASK Q6.

Q6. What is your occupation and where do you work?

THOSE WHO REFUSE COMPANY: In what type of industry do you work?

(SPECIFY BOTH ANSWERS BELOW.)

OCCUPATION **COMPANY/INDUSTRY**

98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused ➔ **THANK AND TERMINATE**

ASK EVERYONE:

Q7. **RECORD/DO NOT ASK:** Gender

01 Male **GET A MIX**
02 Female

These next few questions are for background purposes only, and to ensure that we include a mix of different types of people in the discussions.

Q8. Are you of Hispanic or Latino descent?

01 Yes **GET A MIX**
02 No
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused

APPENDIX

Q9. What is your race? Are you…? **(READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)**

01 Caucasian, **GET A MIX**
02 African-American,
03 Native-American or Alaskan native,
04 Asian-American or Pacific Islander,
05 Multi-racial, or
95 Something else **(specify)**_____
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused

Q10. What is your marital status? Are you… **(READ LIST.)**

01 Married or Partnered,
02 Single,
03 Divorced, Separated, or
04 Widowed?
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused

Q11 What is the primary language spoken at your home? **(DO NOT READ LIST.)**

01 English
02 Spanish
03 Chinese/Mandarin/Cantonese
04 French
05 Arabic
07 Vietnamese
08 Tagalog
09 Korean
95 Other (specify) _____
99 **DO NOT READ:** Don't know/Refused

Q12. Please stop me when I reach the category which includes your total annual taxable household income. **(READ LIST.)**

01 Less than $35,000,
03 $35,000 to less than $50,000,
04 $50,000 to less than $75,000,
05 $75,000 to less than $100,000,
06 $100,000 or more
98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused

INVITE QUALIFIED RESPONDENT TO FOCUS GROUP

Number	Date	Time
1	**Wednesday, April 26th**	10:00 AM
2	**Wednesday, April 26th**	12:30 PM
3	**Wednesday, April 26th**	6:00 PM
4	**Thursday, April 27th**	10:00 AM
5	**Thursday, April 27th**	12:30 PM
6	**Thursday, April 27th**	6:00 PM

As mentioned in the beginning of this call, we're inviting people to participate in several group discussions among seniors in the Arlington area to get their opinions of transportation services in Arlington County. Please be assured that this will not be a sales meeting. It is a part of a market research study. We think that you will find the discussion very interesting and we'd very much like to include your opinions.

You will be provided with $100 and refreshments for attending as a token of our appreciation for your time and opinions. The discussion will last approximately 1½ to 2 hours.

In addition, anyone who arrives at least 15 minutes prior to the group will be entered into a raffle for an additional $50.

Q13. Will you be able to attend?

01	Yes	→	**CLARIFY DATE AND TIME AND CONTINUE**
02	No	→	**THANK AND TERMINATE.**

To confirm, the group is scheduled for **[INSERT DATE AND TIME]** at **1501 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1100, Arlington, VA 22209**. We request that you arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled group.

So that I may send you a confirmation letter, including directions to the group, may I please have your complete address including zip code and/or email address? Also, I'd like to confirm your full name and telephone number. **(RECORD ALL INFORMATION. MUST GIVE EITHER HOME ADDRESS OR EMAIL ADDRESS TO CONTINUE.)**

(IF RESPONDENT GIVES BOTH HOME ADDRESS AND EMAIL.)
Q14. How would you prefer to receive your reminder letter?

01 Email, or
02 In the mail

To repeat, the group is scheduled for: **[DAY/DATE/TIME]**. If for some reason you are unable to attend, please call us immediately at the number provided in your letter so we can invite another participant. We are only inviting a small number of people to the discussion. Please plan to bring reading glasses if you think you will need them to read potentially small text.

APPENDIX

WBA Job No. 17-248
April 2017

Focus Group Discussion Guide

I. INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

a. 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 ge your opinions about transportation in the region. Let me assure you once again that this is not a sale 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.

b. 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

c. Respondent introduction
   1. Name
   2. Where live?
   3. How long lived in the area?
   4. Something about self (work/activities/etc.)
   5. Ice breaker

II. 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.

a. What types of places do you do to when traveling in the area?
   1. Work?
   2. Volunteering?
   3. Social?
   4. Errands? Medical?

b. Where in the area are you going?
   1. Arlington?
   2. Alexandria?
   3. DC?
   4. Outer VA suburbs?
   5. Maryland?

c. 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

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

APPENDIX

III. USAGE OF DIFFERENT MODES (25 minutes)

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

a. First, let's talk about cars
   1. How many of you drive yourself?
      i. Why do you use it? Where do you take it?
      ii. How long do you expect to continue driving?
   2. How many do not drive yourself?
      i. Why don't you use it?
   3. What are the pros of driving?
   4. What are the cons of driving?

b. How many of you are familiar with **Metrorail**?
   1. How many use it?
      i. Why do you use it? Where do you take it?
   2. How many do not use it?
      i. Why don't you use it?
   3. What are the pros of Metrorail?
   4. What are the cons of Metrorail?

c. How many of you are familiar with **bus services in the area**?
   1. Are you familiar with…?
      i. Metrobus
      ii. ART
      iii. Circulator
   2. Are there any differences in these modes in terms of service? Availability?
   3. How many use buses?
      i. Why do you use them? Where do you take them?
   4. How many do not use them?
      i. Why don't you use them?
   5. What are the pros of buses?
   6. What are the cons of buses?

IV. BARRIERS TO TRANSIT (15 minutes)

a. 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?
      i. Do you know where your closest bus stop is?
         A. If not, do you know how you would get that information?
         B. Do you know what bus routes serve your neighborhood?
      ii. Do you know where your closest Metro stop is?
         A. If not, do you know how you would get that information?
         B. Do you know what Metro line serves that Metro stop?
      iii. Do you know how fares work on area transit modes?
         A. Do you have/know how to use a SmarTrip card?
         B. Are you aware if senior fares are available?
         C. If not, do you know how you would get that information?

V. TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION (15 minutes)

a. 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?
      i. If so, which websites?
   3. **EXPLAIN COMMUTER STORE.** How many of you have been to a commuter store?
      i. 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?
      i. Where did you get these materials?

b. Now let's discuss technology use.
   1. How many of you have a smartphone?
      i. What do you use your smartphone for?
         A. Do you use apps to help with transportation? Google maps? Waze?
      ii. Would you feel comfortable paying for trips through a smartphone app?

c. 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?

APPENDIX

VI. INITIATIVES TO INCREASE TRANSIT (15 minutes)

a. 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?
        i. Why/Why not?
    2. What about if there were "try transit" days, where customers could travel at no cost?
    3. Why/Why not?

b. 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?

c. Are there any other initiatives you can think of that might make you more likely to consider using transit?

VII. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE (15 minutes)

a. 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?
        i. 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?
        i. What is their plan?
    3. Have you used/Are you familiar with MetroAccess or STAR (Specialized Transit for Arlington Residents)?
        i. **EXPLAIN PARATRANSIT as an option for those who qualify**
        ii. 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?
        i. **IF NO** - Would you consider using Uber of Lyft?
        ii. 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?
        i. How would you feel about riding in a driverless vehicle as a passenger?

VIII. CLOSING (10 minutes)

a. 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.

b. Closing comments