

Seniors Transportation Assessment: A background literature review

Chris Hergesheimer & Greg Pinel

Abstract

Transportation is a critical determinant of seniors' quality of life, impacting their independence, social connectivity, and access to healthcare and other essential services. The complexity of transportation challenges— particularly in rural settings, requires an examination of common service challenges and innovative projects for filling gaps and meeting needs in context specific ways . This literature review highlights some of the common barriers and then examines some model projects in rural transportation for seniors— in certain cases, with a specific focus on examining some of these within the Sunshine Coast region. This review highlights the crucial role of learning from other community initiatives, policy frameworks, funding and technology in enhancing and driving forward plans for greater mobility, sustainability and accessibility.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1.0 Introduction	3
1.1 Objective and Research Questions	5
2.0 The Role of Transportation in Seniors' Lives	5
2.1 Specific challenges to Seniors' Transportation	6
2.3 Population density & geographically dispersed communities	8
2.4 climate	8
2.5 mobility	9
2.6 Frequency of service	9
2.7 Cost	9
2.8 Infrastructure	9
2.9 Integration and connectivity	10
3.0 Innovative Solutions and existing initiatives	11
3.1 Health Hitch	11
3.2 Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition	12
3.3 National Rural Transport Program- Ireland	13
3.4 Care for a lift- Sunshine Coast, BC	13
3.5 HandyDART Service	14
3.6 Car Stops: A Gulf-Island phenomenon	15
3.7 Community Buses	15
3.8. Sunshine Coast Connector	15
4.0 Discussion and the Sunshine Coast Context	16
4.1 The Sunshine Coast Context	17
4.2 The Sunshine Coast Context: Next Steps	19
6.0 References	20

1.0 Introduction

Population projections estimate that the global proportion of adults aged 60 and over will nearly double between 2015 and 2050 (World Health Organization, 2021). Over the next 20 years, Canada’s seniors population — those aged 65 and older — is expected to grow by 68% (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2022). At the local level— on the Sunshine Coast, recent research predicts that the fast growing demographic will be seniors (making up 33% of the population in 2021), with this age range experiencing nearly a 20% growth rate by 2026 (Cover the Coast, 2023). With all trends suggesting a continual rise in the number of senior aged individuals, it is imperative to examine some of the most important influences which positively shape and constrain their quality of life. While there are countless factors which shape health, quality of life and livelihood outcomes, transportation is the key variable of interest for this review.

Transportation is a critical determinant of seniors' quality of life, impacting their independence, social connectivity, access to healthcare and other essential services (Tahir, 2023; Latiff et al, 2023; Wachs et al, 2021). Transportation is one of the “eight domains of age-friendliness” and is noted as a vital element for individuals to be able to age well where they want to live (Dabelko-Schoeny et al, 2021). In fact, literature consistently reports transportation as being the number one, or at the very least, a significant barrier to seniors successfully aging in place in rural communities (Lahr & Henning-Smith, 2021; Wang et al, 2019; Winters et al, 2016). Older adults will not benefit from opportunities to engage with their community and maintain social networks if they are unable to access those opportunities (Lamanna et al, 2019).

As a result of the desire to retain and ensure the core elements of successfully aging in place, the complexity of transportation challenges as the key variable of interest (particularly in rural settings) requires an examination of barriers, service challenges, and adaptable solutions. This review brings together findings from various sources to offer a comprehensive overview of some transportation solutions for the aging population— some of which may be applicable to the Sunshine Coast region.

In rural areas, personal mobility is dependent on adequate transportation options and is an essential component of seniors’ well-being. Nordbakke & Schwanen (2014) conceptualized three core ways in which mobility influences wellbeing: first, mobility allows older adults access to destinations and social connections that improve their health and wellbeing; second, it improves physical health through physical activities; third, it enhances the feeling of wellbeing. An inability to use public transport or no longer being able to drive denies older adults’ participation in social activities which can lead to a host of negative health and mental health outcomes (Nordbakke & Schwanen 2014, cited in Latiff et al. 2023).

1.1. Conceptual framing

Numerous frameworks exist to conceptualize seniors transportation services. The 5 A’s methodology is accepted by many national, state, and local policy and program initiatives of government and non-profit agencies as criteria for assessing the usability of transportation options by senior passengers (U of A, Beverly Foundation Report). The five A’s are: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability and Affordability. Each of these has a corresponding set of challenges leading to a “Senior’s Friendliness Calculator” to map and measure Public and Community Transportation Services¹. The

1

<https://www.ualberta.ca/medically-at-risk-driver-centre/media-library/misc/beverly-foundation-5-as-of-senior-friendly-transportation.pdf>

availability, accessibility and affordability of transport for seniors have consequences for equity, comfort, convenience, health, independence, wellbeing and social inclusion (Lin & Cui, 2021).

Other initiatives frame the challenges in different ways. The National Seniors Strategy employs a “four pillar approach” in their conceptualization. This approach recognizes that a) older adults face a diversity of transit obstacles; b) women and those living in rural and remote communities are particularly challenged c) there is inadequate federal enforcement of accessibility measures and accountability; and d) there is a lack of data on transportation needs in Northern and other remote communities. The document highlights the limited transition (less than 10%) to public transit among older adults, leading to a preference for or necessity of being a passenger in private vehicles. According to the initiative, “Supporting the provision of research and funding that can enable the development of more popular, accessible, and dignified transportation strategies both urban and rural older adults will be integral to supporting older adults to maintain their independence in their communities” (National Seniors Strategy, 2022).

1.2 Objective and Research Questions

It is clear that there are countless ways to conceptualize the barriers and opportunities that seniors face when it comes to transportation. This literature review seeks to touch broadly on the following three questions: Firstly, we ask: what role does transportation play in senior’s lives? Second, what are some of the transportation challenges typically faced? And finally, what innovative methods make the most sense for seniors, especially those in rural communities, and how might we consider and adapt some of these innovations to our unique circumstances on the Sunshine Coast?

2.0 The Role of Transportation in Seniors' Lives

Older adults overwhelmingly want to age in their own homes and communities; however, many do not expect this will be their reality. Transportation is one of the most commonly cited barriers to aging in place (Hosford et al, 2022). In a recent survey of adults aged 55+ in BC, over a fifth (22%) indicated that the existing transportation options in their community meant they will likely have to leave their community one day – potentially uprooting their sense of community, social connections, and routines they have developed over decades (Goudriaan D., 2022). Given older adults’ high reliance on private automobiles, the need to stop or reduce driving for health and safety reasons, and the importance of maintaining independence, healthcare access, and social participation, there is a profound need to identify safe, affordable, convenient, and accessible transportation options for older adults (Bayne et al, 2022).

Accessible and reliable transportation is paramount for seniors' autonomy and social participation. There is a wealth of literature and evidence supporting the fact that adequate, affordable and available transportation options enhance inclusion, can play a role in combating depression, and work to increase a sense of belonging. Adequate transportation for seniors to be able to access health care services also plays an important role. All of these factors contribute to greater positive health and mental health outcomes. Various options such as public transit, paratransit², micro-transit, seniors co-ops (of which transportation may be an element)³, rideshare programs, and volunteer driver

²

<https://www.transdev.ca/en/our-solutions/our-worldwide-solutions/transportation-of-persons-with-reduced-mobility/>

³ <https://www.kcnseniors.coop/>

programs play a vital role in ensuring seniors can navigate their communities effectively. Technology integration in transportation services has also emerged as a significant advancement, offering seniors greater flexibility and control over their mobility options. Overall, the literature is in agreement that transportation plays a crucial role in the lives of seniors and impacts so many of the other determinants of health. Given that future demand for rural transportation for older people will increase, examining some of the broad challenges and options for implementation remain crucial to the work ahead.

2.1 Specific challenges to Seniors' Transportation

Seniors face multifaceted challenges in accessing transportation. While some of these are seniors specific (including physical and cognitive limitations, and sometimes financial constraints) others could be categorized as barriers facing the more general population. For all demographics, the evidence is clear that rural areas exacerbate these challenges.

In rural areas (e.g., of Canada, United States), there are limited or no available, accessible, affordable, or adequate transportation alternatives to driving (Krasniuk, 2023) and evidence suggests that driving (personal vehicles) continue to be the number one choice for seniors and their transportation (McKenzie, 2023). Research has indicated that driving cessation marks a significant transition in seniors' lives— one that is often accompanied by significant stress. Adaptation can mean working with family and friends to find alternatives and/or in some cases, moving to new communities with more alternative transportation options (Hosford & Pitman, 2021). Additional research has shown that some seniors showed a greater propensity to reduce or give up driving [without as much stress and quality of life impacts] if they resided in denser, more diverse, transit-oriented neighborhoods (Wachs et al, 2021) where the infrastructure, culture and service needs corresponded with their individual needs and desires. Other research suggests that many middle aged adults don't fully consider the impacts of driving cessation and oftentimes cannot imagine the barriers faced when driving is no longer an option.

It is clear from the research that a one-size-fits-all approach fails to address seniors' unique barriers in different contexts. This also has to do with a host of universal and context specific barriers. However, when it comes to public transportation challenges, there are clear and consistent issues. Yu & Liu (2024) list the top barriers from their study as service hours, service areas, trip destinations, getting in/out of service vehicles, service reservations, and operational scheduling (Yu & Liu, 2024). Henning-Smith et al (2017) identified six themes describing different types of rural transportation challenges from their study: infrastructure (mentioned by 63% of key informants), geography (46%), funding (27%), accessibility (27%), political support and public awareness (19%), and socio-demographics (11%) (Henning-Smith et al, 2017).

While acknowledging that transportation barriers for seniors can be conceived of and articulated in different ways, the barriers/ challenges that seniors face are certainly interconnected and overlapping (and variable in their impact on seniors for urban and rural areas). For the purposes of this review, we separated them out into six areas relevant to our region. These are: density/geography; climate; mobility; frequency; cost, and infrastructure.

2.2 Population density & geographically dispersed communities

Rural areas typically have lower population density and services are often spread out over larger areas. Getting to these service hubs often requires traveling between two or more small cities or towns, with private vehicles being the dominant (and in some cases the only) means of accessing these geographically dispersed services. In the case of the Sunshine Coast, the region is a ribbon community with three main population centers spread out over 60 kms of highway. Some services such as the hospital, seniors center, and government offices are located in one district and often require seniors making long trips to access these services.

2.3 climate

Climate can also have a significant impact on seniors' transportation options. While spring and summer may make public transit a more viable option, the climate of fall and winter may impact the viability of certain options. Long wait times in colder temperatures, uneven sidewalks (or lack of sidewalks in rural areas) can become more dangerous in the rain, ice and snow.

2.4 mobility

While bus service, however limited, may exist in rural, geographically dispersed communities, seniors with disabilities and mobility challenges may face additional access challenges. Getting to and from the bus stops, which might require uneven pavement along the rural highway can be a barrier to those who require mobility scooters, walkers or canes.

2.5 Frequency of service

In rural communities, the frequency of service can be a major barrier to ridership and use. The frequency of services in terms of number of trips per day can greatly affect the uptake of services and a senior's willingness and/or ability to cease driving voluntarily. Thus, frequency of service can be associated with quality of life improvements that are initially reduced by driving cessation.

2.6 Cost

While public transit is generally affordable, car for hire (coastal rides, taxi's) services are often prohibitively expensive in rural areas for seniors on fixed incomes. So, while offering personalized and on demand options to combat other prohibitive variables, cost remains a significant issue with private car for hire options. Volunteer drivers, publicly funded shared vehicle service and other dedicated seniors specific options offer affordable options as well.

2.7 Infrastructure

The infrastructure associated with transit routes (as well as the transit vehicles themselves) can have a significant impact on service usage. Lack of sidewalks, streetlights, inadequate bus stops and shelters can impact usage for safety, climatic (as noted above) and mobility reasons. Extensive community engagements in southern BC have revealed that many roads into small and rural communities are unpaved, in poor condition, impassible in winter months, and can be steep and slanted. Many participants expressed that bus stops should have shelters, with seating, and be illuminated so that bus drivers can see passengers waiting for pick up, as well as to make passengers feel safe (ICT Report-2023).

Furthermore, despite its benefits towards health, cost and reduced environmental impacts active transportation is limited by infrastructure as well. Many participants in the coastal BC region also commented on the lack of safe cycling lanes, sidewalks, bus stops, and active transportation corridors. Active transportation was described as a viable way for people to move between communities, but that physically protected shoulders, paved shoulders, signage, and illuminated paths are needed for them to be safe (ICT- Report, 2023).

2.8 Integration and connectivity

Related to infrastructure, the dual issues of integration and connectivity must be considered. The recent Island Community Economic Trust Transportation Inquiry (2023) highlighted the often overlooked barriers of integration and connectivity. The issue of connectivity – a passenger’s ability to seamlessly connect to different modes of transportation – was raised in all engagement sessions across the south coast and rural areas. Participants on the Sunshine Coast noted that one delayed bus may result in missing the ferry, which could cause a multi-hour delay. Conversely, a delay in the ferry may result in an empty bus departing from the terminal, leaving foot passengers stranded until the next available bus. Others noted the lack of integration when traveling off coast to other close coastal communities- requiring three to four tickets from multiple different companies (ICT- 2023) alongside the complexity and time required to travel inter-island or between inter-coastal communities. Focusing the transitions and integration between different modes can go a long way to smoothing out the transportation experience, especially for seniors in rural areas.

3.0 Innovative Solutions and existing initiatives

The literature reveals many innovative solutions to improve seniors’ transportation. From the community-driven "Seniors on the Move" initiative⁴ to technology-driven solutions⁵ efforts reflect a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive, flexible transportation networks. Policy frameworks like those proposed by the National Seniors Strategy (National Seniors Strategy, 2023) play a crucial role in guiding these initiatives, emphasizing the importance of accessibility, affordability, and safety in transportation planning. A number of initiatives and examples provide evidence of these innovative approaches to addressing the aforementioned challenges.

3.1 Health Hitch

In rural areas of western Sonoma County, California, the West Counties Health Clinic tackled improving patient access to reliable transportation with an innovative solution called Hitch Health. Health Hitch is a software that connects clinic electronic health records with the rideshare service Lyft, offering a seamless way for patients to attend their medical appointments. When patients schedule an appointment, they receive an SMS offering a ride. If accepted, reminders are sent, and the ride is scheduled without needing a smartphone or the Lyft app. This program started in 2018 and aimed to reduce missed medical appointments and improve access to healthcare by addressing transportation barriers. Despite its success, challenges such as adapting the software for rural settings and dealing with limited Lyft coverage in the most remote areas were encountered (www.hitchhealth.co/)

3.2 Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition

Another interesting innovation is offered by the accelerating rural transportation solutions in rural Ontario. The Rural Ontario Institute and the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition embarked on a project to enhance rural regional transportation. This project sought to identify effective models, explore business models and financing sources for cost-shared rural transportation systems, and share these resources through various channels, including workshops and webinars. This effort represents a

4

<https://www.seniorsonthemove.org/about-us#:~:text=The%20current%20iteration%20of%20Seniors,Program%2C%20and%20United%20Way%20BC.>

⁵ <https://www.seniorliving.org/>

comprehensive approach to addressing rural transportation needs through community engagement and knowledge-sharing. The ten cases studies from the region and summary findings were compiled into a comprehensive report⁶ with a summary revealing the following four processes findings.

First, all of the programs recognize the importance of providing transportation to individuals with a lack of access and/ or limited mobility to help them meet their economic, social and health needs.

Second, several of the programs received funding to conduct research or feasibility studies prior to establishing their initiatives. This allowed them to draw on information specific to their regions and to develop services that were appropriate to their individual circumstances. Quite a few of the programs were initially run as pilot initiatives. In some cases, initial attempts to start a transportation service failed before success was finally attained.

Third, most of the transportation initiatives also had some form of multi-sector community engagement process that informed the planning and development of the program. Different groups working together and recognizing that the issues are related and require diverse perspectives sourced from within the community impacted is a key variable in their success.

Finally, collaboration seems to have been an integral component for some of the initiatives that were studied, especially for those that coordinate their services with those of other organizations. This not only offered greater efficiencies for the transportation providers but also better met the needs of riders. These findings can help consider the important components and processes involved in planning and roll out.

3.3 National Rural Transport Program- Ireland

Another important example comes from Ireland. Ireland's National Rural Transport Programme (N RTP) focuses on creating shared mobility options to address rural areas' transportation needs. The program underscores the importance of *shared mobility solutions* in enhancing rural populations' accessibility and quality of life. These initiatives often involve things such as community car schemes, demand-responsive transport, and integration with existing transport services to ensure comprehensive coverage.

3.4 Care for a lift- Sunshine Coast, BC

Care for a Lift Services Ltd⁷. is based on the importance of filling a need for care companionship with Accessible Transportation on the Sunshine Coast. They offer door to door car service and accompany seniors to medical, personal and special events. Unlike taxis or volunteer drivers, Care for a Lift accompanies clients for the full duration of the appointment providing not only the transportation element, but the companionship as well. This model holds potential to scale since it provides the mobility and the socialization and support that is often missing from car for hire or taxi service. The companionship and inclusion can be extremely valuable to providing emotional support, contributing to a greater sense of mental wellbeing.

3.5 HandyDART Service

⁶ https://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/ARTS_-_Case_Studies_for_WEB.pdf

⁷ <https://www.careforalift.com/about>

HandyDART is an accessible, door-to-door shared transit service for people with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route transit without assistance from another person. handyDART picks you up at your accessible door and drops you off at the accessible door of your destination. Operated by BC Transit, handyDART service offers a complementary and alternative service to existing public transit routes. Users must be registered. There is no charge for registration. Eligible users are defined as persons who have either a temporary or permanent, physical or cognitive disability that is sufficiently severe that they are unable, without assistance, to use conventional transit for part or all of their travel. Recent announcements bring good news to Sunshine Coast routes that service hours and days will increase beginning July 2024. Passenger “training” will also be enhanced to help increase autonomy and understanding and reduce costs. This may in fact help increase ridership on other conventional routes. While a recent report on service in the metro vancouver area suggest that HandyDART operated by Translink is “ignoring the needs of the aging population”⁸ the data from the Sunshine Coast engagement tell a different story. 80% of local handyDART users were “satisfied or extremely satisfied” with its services, according to the Sunshine Coast handyDART Services Review report (Fall, 2023). The report also pointed out that most client concerns focused on the desire to have more handyDART units in service during peak travel hours and improvements needed in the ride booking and user registration systems⁹.

3.6 Car Stops: A Gulf-Island phenomenon

During the south coast of BC consultation process, participants from some of the Gulf Islands made reference to Car Stops— essentially a sanctioned hitchhiking program. The program, which started on Pender Island, has since expanded to Mayne and Saturna Islands. Car Stops have hitchhiking signs at designated pullouts. It has been successful on the Islands for both locals and tourists. Participants described feeling safe using this system, though acknowledged it is not without risks and is not the best option for all users (ICT- Report, 2023). A program such as this holds potential in small communities; the Sunshine Coast included, and does rely heavily on feelings of connection, trust and community integration.

3.7 Community Buses

In some island communities in SW BC, community buses fill this gap of transport options in rural areas. These schemes are often founded, organized, and operated by volunteers or a community group as a service to certain populations (seniors, disabled) or open to all in order to connect people to major destinations or larger transit systems.

3.8. Sunshine Coast Connector

Serving the main areas of the lower Sunshine Coast without regional bus service, the Sunshine Coast Connector offers a transportation option that connects the lower (Langdale to Earls Cove) to the Upper (Saltery Bay to Powell River). While the service does provide a mobility option in the unserved areas of the coast, the service has proven difficult to operate. It is highly seasonal (April to October), expensive, runs only 60% of the weekdays and offers only one trip a day in each direction that does not correspond with typical working hours. Opportunities do exist to increase the capacity and efficiency of the Sunshine Coast connector. Simply reducing this service to operate between the end of Sunshine Coast Transit’s

⁸ <https://disabilityalliancebc.org/report-access-for-everyone-publicly-operated-handydart/>

⁹

<https://www.coastreporter.net/local-news/handydart-service-passenger-training-expanding-on-the-lower-sunshine-coast-8539982>

existing route 4 and Earls Cove would reduce the total trip time by 45 minutes each way, connect to existing transit routes and perhaps allow the service to expand to 2-3 trips daily, the two additional ones corresponding with business hours.

4.0 Discussion

The literature on rural transportation issues illustrates the diversity and innovation required to tackle seniors' transportation challenges. It is clear that unique and diverse approaches are needed—addressing specific local needs and barriers. These show up in different ways, from leveraging technology to ease access and availability, connecting patients with pre-existing rideshare services, fostering deeper community partnerships to enhance efficiency and focusing on shared mobility options. The common factor is that the success of such programs often hinges on community involvement, adaptability to local conditions, and collaboration between public and private sectors. It is also clear that many small projects hold great potential to scale to meet the rising need assuming that adequate funding and labour to expand any such operations are available. Despite the achievements, challenges such as technological adaptation and uptake, coverage limitations, and sustainability of the initiatives remain, highlighting the need for continued reflection, adjustments and support in rural transportation solutions for seniors.

The literature highlights the need for continuous innovation, policy support, and stakeholder collaboration to develop transportation solutions that cater to the unique needs of the aging population. Addressing these needs enhances the quality of life for seniors and contributes to more inclusive, supportive communities. In short, everyone benefits – not just seniors – with a direct and expansive approach to improving seniors' access to transportation.

Finally, a major, common theme on rural transportation for seniors is that public transportation can never be the sole or even the majority transportation service. Variables such as distance (of residences) from bus stops, quality of rural roads (including driveways) leading to serviceable roads, and mobility issues are the main ones impeding the viability of public transportation for seniors in rural areas. Other methods of linking seniors to public transportation are needed, alongside improvements to public transportation. One of the main issues to be addressed and pieces of future work is to ensure that linkages between public transportation and these other modes are established and well defined to allow for efficiency and avoid duplication of services.

4.1 The Sunshine Coast Context

When considering the Sunshine Coast, the findings and recommendations from the literature take on added significance. The region's larger-than-average senior and near senior population (41%) and its rural and remote characteristics present distinct transportation challenges that cannot be overlooked. The reliance on personal vehicles and the associated problem of limited public transit options, coupled with the geographical spread of communities, highlight the need for community-driven solutions that can navigate the unique constraints of the Sunshine Coast.

Adapting models like the volunteer driver program or community shuttles for the Sunshine Coast could offer viable pathways to enhance seniors' mobility. The success of programs such as the Seniors GO Bus and Collingwood Neighbourhood House Seniors Shuttle in more urban settings suggests potential for similar initiatives tailored to the Sunshine Coast's rural context. Additionally, leveraging community-based support, akin to the Step Up 'N' Ride Society¹⁰, could mobilize local resources and

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/p/Step-Up-N-Ride-Society-100064300947123/>

expertise in addressing seniors' transportation needs. Using technology to connect to *existing* ride share services (coastal rides in our case rather than lyft) could bring a health hitch tech type efficiency into the region.

The reality is that Sunshine Coast poses a set of transportation challenges which may (or may not) be unique to the geographic layout of its different communities. What's for certain: Seniors living in this area often encounter obstacles in accessing convenient, reliable, and safe transportation options, which are critical in ensuring their ability to remain engaged and active within their communities. The relative isolation of some communities and the limited public transportation infrastructure (and service in areas where roads are perfectly fine enough for a bus, like the highway itself!) exacerbate these challenges, underscoring the need for alternative solutions.

The website "Seniors on the Move" is an initiative that offers a lot of potential for a region such as the Sunshine Coast. The website supports the transition from driving to utilizing alternative transportation methods, such as public transit, shuttle services, and volunteer driving programs. This transition is framed not as a daunting process but as an accessible, affordable, and convenient shift that can greatly benefit seniors in BC who no longer drive.

Key features of the "Seniors on the Move" initiative include the following: Support for Driving Cessation; the initiative helps seniors and their families through the process of driving cessation, promoting a range of accessible, affordable, and convenient transportation options and Multilingual Phone Service: In partnership with BC 211, they offer a free, 24/7 multilingual phone service for seniors seeking transportation information in Metro Vancouver.

The "Seniors on the Move" initiative's comprehensive approach, which supports seniors through the transition from driving to utilizing alternative transportation methods, could be especially relevant on the Sunshine Coast. By promoting a shift towards public transit, shuttle services, linking with existing ride share services and volunteer driving programs, "Seniors on the Move" could be a great model to replicate. The transition away from driving personal vehicles needs to be seen as not a barrier to mobility but as a gateway to enhanced accessibility and community participation in different ways. Exploring the applicability and expansion of "Seniors on the Move" to the Sunshine Coast could be crucial in fostering a more accessible, sustainable, and senior-friendly transportation landscape.

One cannot overlook the crucial role that funding plays in the implementation of any viable and innovative solutions. Core funding is crucial and continues to be a major challenge to sustaining many of the unique options that different communities are rolling out in BC (Hosford et al, 2022). In the context of the Sunshine Coast and elsewhere, advocating for funding to support the implementation of alternative and complementary transportation options remains crucial.

Finding labor, whether volunteer or otherwise, remains a consistent challenge as well. Actively recruiting and retaining volunteers to participate in volunteer driver services is also an ongoing challenge. With the growing seniors population and the proven successes of volunteer driver programs, finding appropriate human resources for this solution is one of the most appropriate and accessible pathways forward.

Finally, enhancing the quality and frequency of communication between transportation initiatives and agencies and stakeholders will greatly enhance the successful roll out and sustainability of any new initiatives. A stakeholder forum with representatives from the Sunshine Coast, would be instrumental in sharing insights and strategies tailored to the challenges and opportunities of rural and remote communities.

4.2 The Sunshine Coast Context: Next Steps

One of the major challenges with reading and consolidation ideas from the literature is what comes next. There has been much work and learnings done in the context of the Sunshine Coast and we advise that future efforts should be targeted and strategic. In order to support this recommendation, we proposed very targeted data collection strategies using mixed methods approaches that deliberately build on lessons learned from this review rather than seeking to uncover well established and consistent top barriers and uses for and impacts of transportation. Listening to seniors share their transportation stories will offer more rich and robust learnings that can be combined with well established themes from previous local studies and existing literature. Finally, rather than a long form report, we advocate for a creative presentation and sharing of seniors' experiences to garner broad reaching support. This creative endeavour with unique partnerships will help highlight the community's role in advocating for specific ideas and proposals that might be appealing for the future.

5.0 References

Age Friendly Community Plan—a Sunshine Coast Seniors Planning Table presentation for the District of Sechelt, March 2017

Bayne, A., Siegfried, A., Beck, L., & Freund, K. (2021). Barriers and facilitators of older adults' use of ride share services. *Journal of Transportation Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2021.100994>

Dabelko-Schoeny, H., Maleku, A., Cao, Q., White, K., & Ozbilen, B. (2021). “We want to go, but there are no options”: Exploring barriers and facilitators of transportation among diverse older adults. *Journal of Transport & Health*, 20, 100994. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100994>

Hosford, K., & Pitman, L. (2021). Provincial consultation on seniors' transportation: Life without driving? Summary report of the Provincial Consultation on Seniors' Transportation held on September 28, 2021.

Island Coastal Inter-Community Transportation Study—What we heard report, July 2023

Lamanna, M., Klinger, C. A., Liu, A., & Mirza, R. M. (2020). The association between public transportation and social isolation in older adults: A scoping review of the literature. *Canadian Journal on Aging / La Revue canadienne du vieillissement*, 39(3), 393-405. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0714980819000345>

Lin, D., & Cui, J. (2021). Transport and mobility needs for an aging society from a policy perspective: Review and implications. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(22), 11802. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182211802>

Ravensbergen, H., McIntosh, S., & Tisdall, J. (2024). Public transit and accessibility. *Journal of Transport & Health*. [Note: Please add details such as volume, issue, and pages once available.]

Rural on Demand Transit Feasibility Study, Feb 2024. Left Turn, Right Turn, Ltd.

Seniors on the move www.seniorsonthemove.org

Sunshine Coast HandyDart Service Review, March 2024. Sunshine Coast Regional District.

Sunshine Coast Regional District Regional Growth Framework—Phase 3 Report: Data Synthesis and Strategy Recommendations, January 2023

Sunshine Coast Transit Future Plan, 2014

Sunshine Coast Transit Service Presentation by Transportation Choices Sunshine Coast, June 2023

Sunshine Coast Transportation System Convening—A report from the Sunshine Coast Transportation and Collaboration Convening, May 2024

Transportation Lower Sunshine Coast—A resource guide, May 2024

Wang, K., Yamin, S., & Oluyomi, A. (2019). Exploring senior mobility challenges: Implications for transportation planning. *International Journal of Sustainable Transportation*, 13(6), 425-439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15568318.2018.1491670>

Winters, M., Vachon, J., Ashe, M. C., Gutteridge, K., McKay, H., Sims-Gould, J., & Voaklander, D. (2016). Where do they go and how do they get there? Older adults' travel behavior in a highly walkable environment. *Social Science & Medicine*, 169, 163-171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2016.10.012>

Yu, J., & Liu, Y. (2024). Barriers to transportation in rural communities: Perspective of older adult users. *Journal of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 79(1), gbad135. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbad135>