



Senior's Transportation Forum: Getting Where You Want To Go

June 26, 2014

At A Glance

The Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network organized a Transportation Forum to bring seniors from around the Tri-Cities together to discuss key issues related to transportation.

Forum Preparation & Development

The Network wanted to engage seniors in setting the agenda for the Forum. Starting in November 2013, the Network distributed a survey to Tri-Cities seniors to explore:

- Topics of interest related to transportation
- Groups we should invite to speak
- Supports seniors need to help them live an active life if they could no longer drive

The survey also asked seniors how they planned to get to the Forum, and what time of the day and week would work best for them. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. translated the surveys into Chinese, Korean and Farsi. Hard-copy surveys were distributed through immigrant serving centres, seniors recreational centres, Food Banks, and local festivals. The survey was also available online, and emailed through Network contacts.

Pre-Forum Survey Responses

Between November 2013 and April 3, 2014 we received 231 responses:

- 166 hard copy; 65 online
- 188 in English; 38 in Chinese; 5 in Korean; 0 in Farsi
- 4% under 50; 50% between ages of 51 and 69; 43% between 70 and 89; 3% over 90
- 113 left contact information to be invited to Forum

The top three issues Tri-Cities seniors wished to hear about at the Transportation Forum were:

- ICBC's Driver Re-Examinations,
- Translink's incoming Compass Card system, and
- how to access HandyDART and Taxisavers

Transportation Forum Planning & Organization

Based on the survey responses, the Network organized the *"Tri-Cities Seniors Transportation Forum: Getting You Where You Want to Go"* at Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship on June 26, 2014.

The Forum went from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, with four key presentations:

- The Ins and Outs of Driver's Re-Examinations with ICBC Driver Examiner Catherine Will
- Accessing HandyDART & Taxisavers with HandyDART's Consumer Advocacy Manager, Linda McGowan

- Compass Card is Coming! What You Need to Know presented by Translink
- City Transportation Planner Panel, moderated by Linda Western, with city planners from Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody along with Translink's North East Area Sector Planner

The Forum included an expo of businesses and organizations whose work supports seniors. 14 vendors signed up for tables:

- SHARE: Better At Home
- John's Helping Hands
- Home James
- Driving Miss Daisy
- TransLink
- HandyDART
- Home Instead
- Safe Care Home Support
- Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Fraser Health Falls Prevention
- Fraser Health Healthy Built Environments
- ICBC
- North Fraser Chapter CARP
- SUCCESS

Forum Attendees

- 114 participants registered ahead of time via Eventbrite
- Approximately 80 seniors plus 30 vendors/guests attended all or part of the Forum.

Forum Discussion

During the day forum attendees expressed a number of concerns with access to transportation in the Tri-Cities:

HandyDart: Refusals of Service

Attendees reported experiencing refusal of service by HandyDART, in which case taxis are sent, at the same cost to the user as the HandyDART ticket would have been. The challenge here is not cost, but service. Unlike HandyDART, taxis do not offer door-to-door support, which is needed by seniors who are frail or otherwise need support to get to and from the vehicle.

Translink: Glen Pine Pavillion Bus Service

The bus routes around Glen Pine Pavillion were recently changed, cutting off bus service to Glen Pine.

Translink: Compass Card

Attendees had many questions about how automatic billing would work with the Compass Card. Attendees also raised concerns about paying cash for trips starting on the bus, as bus tickets will not be accepted on the Skytrain.

Translink: Shuttle Buses

Some attendees noted that it is difficult to navigate stairs to get into shuttle buses, especially if they have personal shopping carts. Although shuttles have back lifts, these are only used with wheelchairs & strollers, not carts.

Translink: Wheelchair Accessible Bus Stops

Attendees noted that not all stops are wheelchair accessible, so for seniors and other people who use wheelchairs, the distance from an accessible stop and their home can make transit impossible, even if they are close to a non-accessible stop.

Suggestions & Feedback

Attendees had some suggestions to improve future Forums:

- Provide agenda ahead of time for participants who would be interested in only one or two of the presentations; hand out agenda at registration
- Better advertising: more posters and advertising ahead of the event
- Provide more comfortable chairs
- Provide opportunity for elected officials to talk
- Have materials from speakers that can be emailed out after the Forum
- Instead of a Transportation Panel format try “Ask the Expert”: Collect written questions from audience ahead of time for panel participants
- Shorter day

Community Support

- ***Host Organization:*** Community Volunteer Connections
- ***Driving Support:***
 - Better at Home (SHARE Family & Community Services)
 - John’s Helping Hands
 - Home James
- ***Food & Beverages:***
 - Thrifty’s
 - IGA Marketplace
 - Starbucks
- ***Promotional Support:*** Tri–City News
- ***Language Support:*** S.U.C.C.E.S.S.