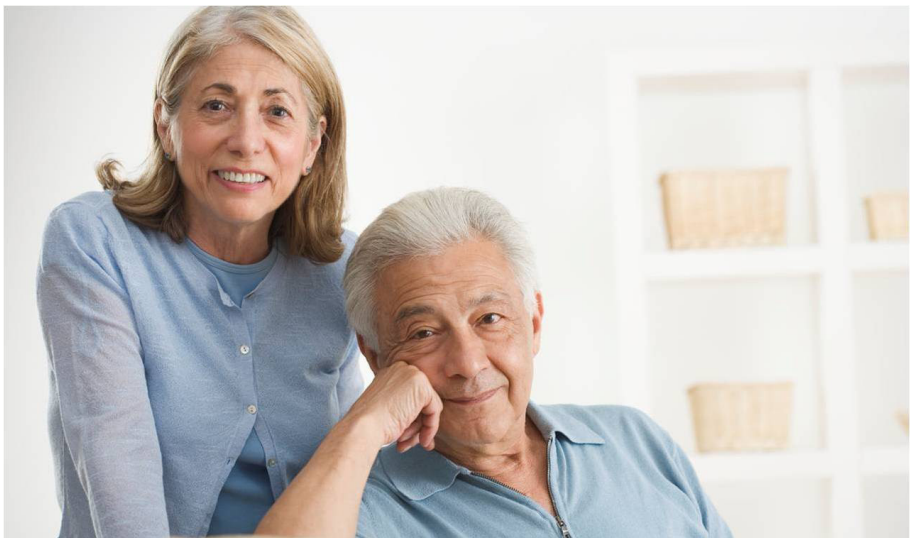
FINAL REPORT

MAY 2010

Marin County Division of Aging & Adult Services and Marin Transit

SENIOR MOBILITY ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT



Nelson|Nygaard
consulting associates

Marin County Senior Mobility and Implementation Plan Advisory Panel

We would like to thank the Advisory Panel and team who worked with us on this project.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In partnership with Marin Transit and other community agencies, the Marin County Health and Human Services Department, Division of Aging and Adult Services has sponsored the Marin Senior Mobility Action and Implementation Plan to identify measures that can be taken by Marin County and transportation agencies to support the mobility of the growing older population beyond their driving years. The Plan is a joint effort to keep older people safe and connected to their communities as problems related to aging make it harder for them to get around. The purpose of this report is to identify the major gaps in transportation services to older adults in Marin County and to develop specific strategies to close those gaps.

The report is in two volumes: the first report is this document, the Existing Conditions Report, which looks at current and future demographics, describes the current state of senior transportation, reports on outreach activities conducted as part of this project, and identifies transportation gaps in Marin.

The second volume, “Action and Implementation Plan”, outlines senior transportation strategies identified in this project and includes implementation steps and recommendations for funding opportunities.

For this project, the team researched best practices, interviewed stakeholders, gathered input from the public, and consulted with local experts, to identify the most significant transportation gaps for seniors in Marin County and a large number of strategies which might meet these needs. These strategies were then prioritized based on objective criteria. The table below lists the recommended strategies as a result of this process. These strategies are discussed in detail in the Action and Implementation Plan.

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Figure 1-1 Senior Mobility Action Plan – Summary Matrix of Mobility Strategies

Tier I Strategy	Need Addressed	Potential Lead or Participating Agencies	Potential Funding Sources	Next Steps
Transit-based Strategies				
1. Community Bus for Seniors Local fixed-route shuttles to serve short trips within communities. Open to all with emphasis on seniors.	Brings transit closer to seniors who live too far from transit to walk.	Marin Transit, cities wanting local service Also: SMART (shuttles), Kaiser	5310 Capital funding for vehicles 5217 New Freedom Funds	Inventory existing shuttles Identify routes Develop pilot service
2. Flexible Transit Services Fixed-route services that will deviate on request	Brings transit closer to seniors who live too far from transit to walk.	Marin Transit, cities wanting local service, senior centers and housing	Partnership with senior centers 5317 New Freedom Funds Area Agency on Aging	Identify likely origins and destinations near but not on transit routes Market to residents and businesses
Walkable Communities				
3. Walkable Communities for Seniors Identify priority improvements in neighborhoods with high concentrations of seniors and walkable destinations; Utilize ADA transition plans as foundational project lists.	Safe walking access to transit and neighborhood destinations	Marin County Commission on Aging County ADA Compliance Manager Marin County DOAAS DPWs of Marin communities Citizen groups	Caltrans NMTPP Reauthorization FTA 5310 / funding swap for local dollars Public/private partnerships SR2S and TLC funds from MTC	Inventory ADA Transition plans Develop senior-oriented prioritization criteria for repairs to sidewalks Develop consensus on criteria Inventory sites Prioritize and make repairs
Demand-Response Service				
4. Subsidized Taxicabs Build on results of current subsidized taxi pilot program.	Low-income seniors cannot afford market-rate taxis.	Marin Transit / Office of Mobility Management	5317 New Freedom Funds	In progress; next steps include: Assess results of pilot, including pricing, choice of communities, marketing methods
5. Community-Based Volunteer Driver Program Continue efforts to establish non-profit, community transportation network with public and private funding. An alternative to Whistlestop Wheels for seniors who can't drive or use transit.	Non-driving seniors may not be able to get to transit, or transit may not serve their destination.	Marin Transit / Mobility Manager Local community organizations Cities	New Freedom Funds have been granted for 2011 Lifeline Transportation Program (MTC) Area Agency on Aging	Once funding is received: - identify non-profit to administer program - determine reservation system - develop plan for recruitment and training of volunteers - publicize

Tier I Strategy	Need Addressed	Potential Lead or Participating Agencies	Potential Funding Sources	Next Steps
Information				
6. Encouraging Use of Transit "Try Transit" brochure and promotions, video, organized trips, tailored service descriptions. Communicate to seniors that transit is safe, modern, senior-friendly, and provides independence.	Older people who have always driven may be reluctant to use public transit, even when it is available and they are physically able.	Marin Transit Cities / communities Senior centers, senior housing	Sponsorship by health care organizations Marin Transit marketing funds	Identify a lead coordinating agency Prioritize programs Partner with others for in-kind or funding assistance Develop marketing plans for participatory programs
7. Safe Driving Driver training, driving retirement, adapting cars for older drivers. Older Driver Wellness Program	Older adults who stop driving prematurely have limited mobility and may not be aware of their options.	Training providers, healthcare providers CA Department of Motor Vehicles	Minimal, Marin Community Foundation	Identify programs Publicize through existing related County web sites, regular senior-focused meetings
8. Information & Assistance As part of Mobility Management function, multi-modal telephone information, web site, literature distribution, seminar hosting for agency staff that work with older people.	Older people are not always aware of the full range of their available transportation options.	In process through Marin Transit / Paratransit Program, Special Needs Services	Could be minimal; New Freedom Funds	Research other programs for framework appropriate to Marin Identify lead and partner agencies funding needs and resources Execute partnership agreements and hire or designate staffing
9. Walking Groups for Seniors Coordinated groups, possibly organized around senior center or culturally based organizations, include accessibility audits of path-of-travel	Seniors may not feel comfortable walking alone and would be supported through walking groups.	Marin County (Walk Bike Marin)	Minimal, Marin Community Foundation	Work with WalkBikeMarin to add senior walking info to their site Contact senior organizations for walking group info Present info through senior clubs
Planning Policies				
10. Planning Policies for Senior Housing Planning reviews for senior housing and other senior-related facilities should require close-in locations and a transportation element.	Current policies regarding the location of senior housing and other facilities are inconsistent and do not necessarily take mobility into account	Marin County Commission on Aging, Marin County Community Development Marin Community Foundation	Minimal	Research / document policies on locating senior housing in Marin Propose policies to incentivize placement in walkable areas Develop outreach strategy to reach decision-makers Draft sample policy language

Report Organization

This Existing Conditions report lays the foundation for planning future senior transportation by examining where seniors live now and will live in the future; how transportation options relate to where seniors live and desired destinations; how county policies support senior transportation; and what other communities are doing to meet the transportation needs of seniors. In addition, outreach activities are described, and from the research and outreach, transportation gaps are identified. The chapters following this introduction include:

Chapter 2 Demographic Profile of Marin Seniors

Chapter 2 summarizes Marin's senior demographic characteristics. The chapter presents maps showing current densities of seniors by census tract for all of Marin County, and projected densities based on data released in September 2009 from ABAG, overlaid with fixed-route transit systems. This section also provides maps showing proximity to senior housing and significant destinations, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and collisions involving seniors in Marin County (pedestrian-vehicle, bicycle-vehicle, and vehicle-vehicle).

Chapter 3 Inventory of Existing Transit Services

Chapter 3 provides an overview of all older adult transportation services in Marin County, including publicly and privately operated services, social service transportation programs, nonprofit agencies, church-related organizations, and for-profit services and taxis in the county.

Chapter 4 Review of Relevant Studies

Chapter 4 presents a summary of relevant plans, studies, and similar documents related to older adult transportation needs in Marin County, including findings and policies related to older adults. Based on this review, this section includes an analysis of County policies regarding transportation for seniors and preliminary recommendations for revising and updating County policies to make them more supportive of senor mobility issues and needs.

Chapter 5 Best Practices in Senior Mobility

Chapter 5 presents research in creatively addressing transportation needs faced by older adults, including innovative approaches from all over North America, emphasizing those which would be most applicable in Marin County. Approaches include alternative transit practices and programs, auto-based programs, and non-motorized transportation programs, as well as traveler education and innovative information distribution methods

Chapter 6 Public Participation Process

Identification of transportation gaps, and strategies to meet those needs, are based on a multi-pronged public outreach effort. This chapter describes the public outreach process for this project.

Chapter 7 Transportation Gaps for Seniors in Marin

Based on public outreach and research, Chapter 7 identifies gaps in transportation for seniors in Marin, and describes future program, land use, demographic, and funding developments that will address or exacerbate these gaps.

Chapter 2. Demographic Profile of Marin Seniors

A Growing Older Population

Expected rapid growth in the older population presents a major challenge for maintaining personal mobility. Not only is the size of the senior population expected to grow rapidly, but the most rapid growth is expected to occur in the oldest age groups which have the most severe mobility problems. Maintaining senior mobility is a concern because:

- The number of older people in Marin County is expected to double from 2005 to 2020. The number of older County residents who have difficulty driving or can't drive will also mushroom.
- Given Marin's suburban nature, more older people will live in places that are difficult to serve by public transportation and will not be accustomed to using public transportation.
- Existing alternatives to driving and conventional public transportation, especially paratransit service such as Whistlestop Wheels, will not be able to meet all the needs of seniors who must limit or cease driving.
- Because of recent waves of immigration, increasing numbers of older people will have difficulty accessing available transportation because of language and cultural barriers.

If action is not taken, these trends may result in:

- Rising numbers of traffic injuries and deaths due to rapidly increasing numbers of older drivers.
- Strain on families of older people as they experience the practical and emotional issues of limited mobility.
- Isolation of older people who cannot reach services and activities.
- Strain on public, non-profit, and volunteer services as they attempt to assist older people and their families dealing with these issues.

As in the rest of the country, the older population in Marin is increasing rapidly. Between 2005 and 2010, the number of Marin residents over 60 is projected to grow to 75,900, with the largest increase in the 70 to 79 year old cohort. ABAG projects that by 2010, almost 30% of Marin residents will be over age 60. This trend continues well into the foreseeable future, only slowing after 2030.

Methodology

The demographic findings generated through this study are based in part on data available from a number of sources, including US Census data for 2000 and 2005, Marin Transit records, projections from the California Department of Finance, and previous transportation studies. Where applicable, these references are cited.

Population projections are based on data provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The latest projections for the Bay Area, by County and by census tract level, were

released in early September 2009, as this report was taking shape. This data has been used to project the number of seniors in the County as a whole, as well as by Census tract.

The number of seniors is projected to increase dramatically through 2030, to the degree that ABAG's projection methods bear further elaboration. ABAG states that, "Past forecasts have typically been within 5 percent of actual population, household and job estimates, at the county level."[1] Forecasts of population use a "cohort-survival" method. "This method works by starting with a beginning population for each county, identified by age cohorts, and growing it over time using age-specific information about birth rates, birth timing, death rates, and net migration."[2] Using this method, ABAG projects that by 2035, an astonishing 48% of Marin residents will be over age 60.

Figure 2-1 Marin County Senior Population Growth, 2000 – 2025

Age	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
All	247.289	252.600	256,500	260,300	264,000	267,300	270,900	274,300
60-69	20,052	26,400	36,700	45,000	46,900	46,100	40,200	34,000
70-79	15,058	14,500	22,800	26,600	37,200	44,100	44,800	47,700
80+	9,537	11,400	16,400	18,700	22,800	30,000	36,800	49,700
All 60+	44,647	52,300	75,900	90,300	106,900	120,200	121,800	131,400

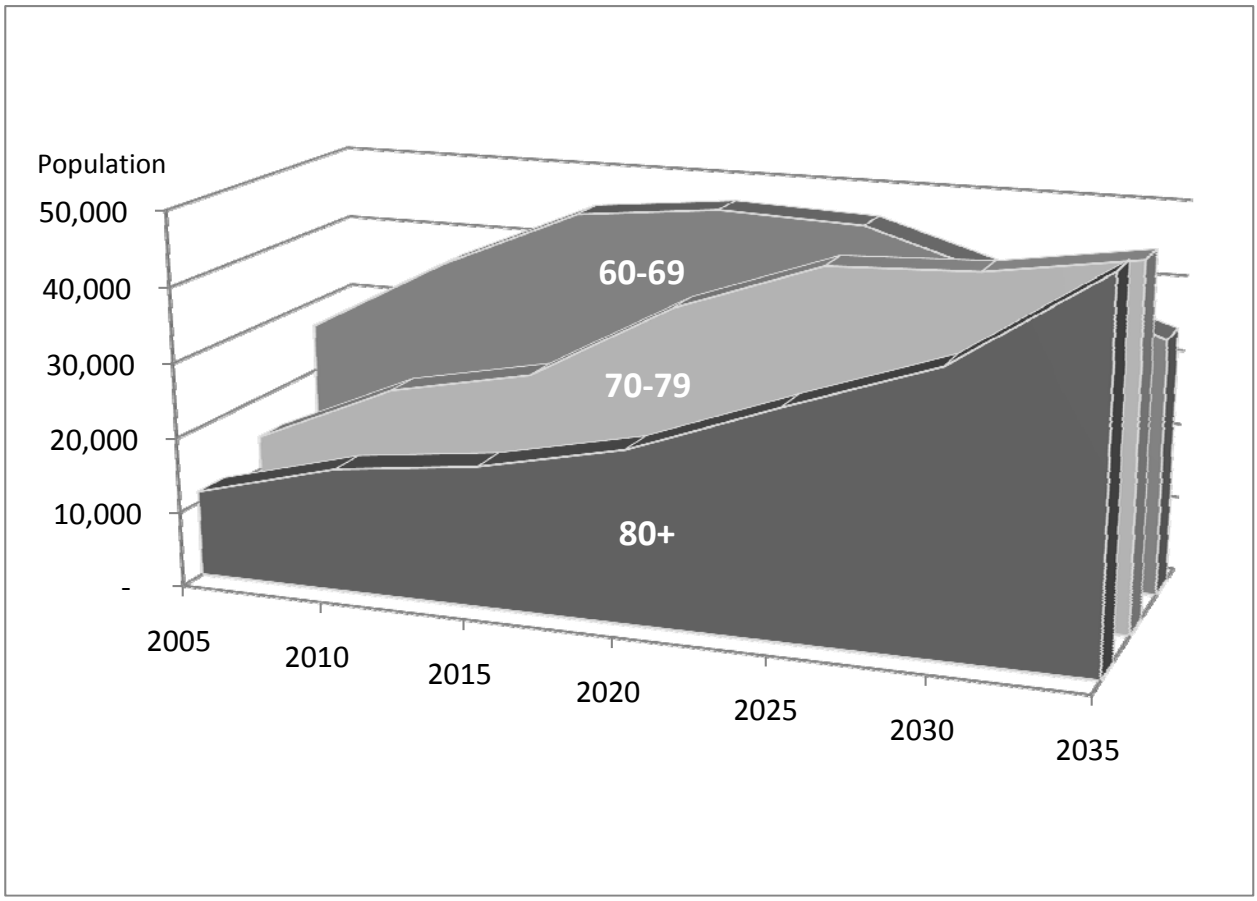
Source: Association of Bay Area Governments, Projections 2009

As shown in Figure 2-2 below, the rate of growth for residents over 60 varies greatly; while the growth in population for those in their 60's begins a downward trend in 2020, the growth in the number of people in their 80's continues on an upward trajectory.

[1] *Projections 2009: Performance Targets*, ABAG, May 1, 2008. http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/currentfcst/MayExecBoardMemo_May12008.pdf

[2] *ABAG Projections 2007: Modeling System*, ABAG. http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/currentfcst/modeling4.html

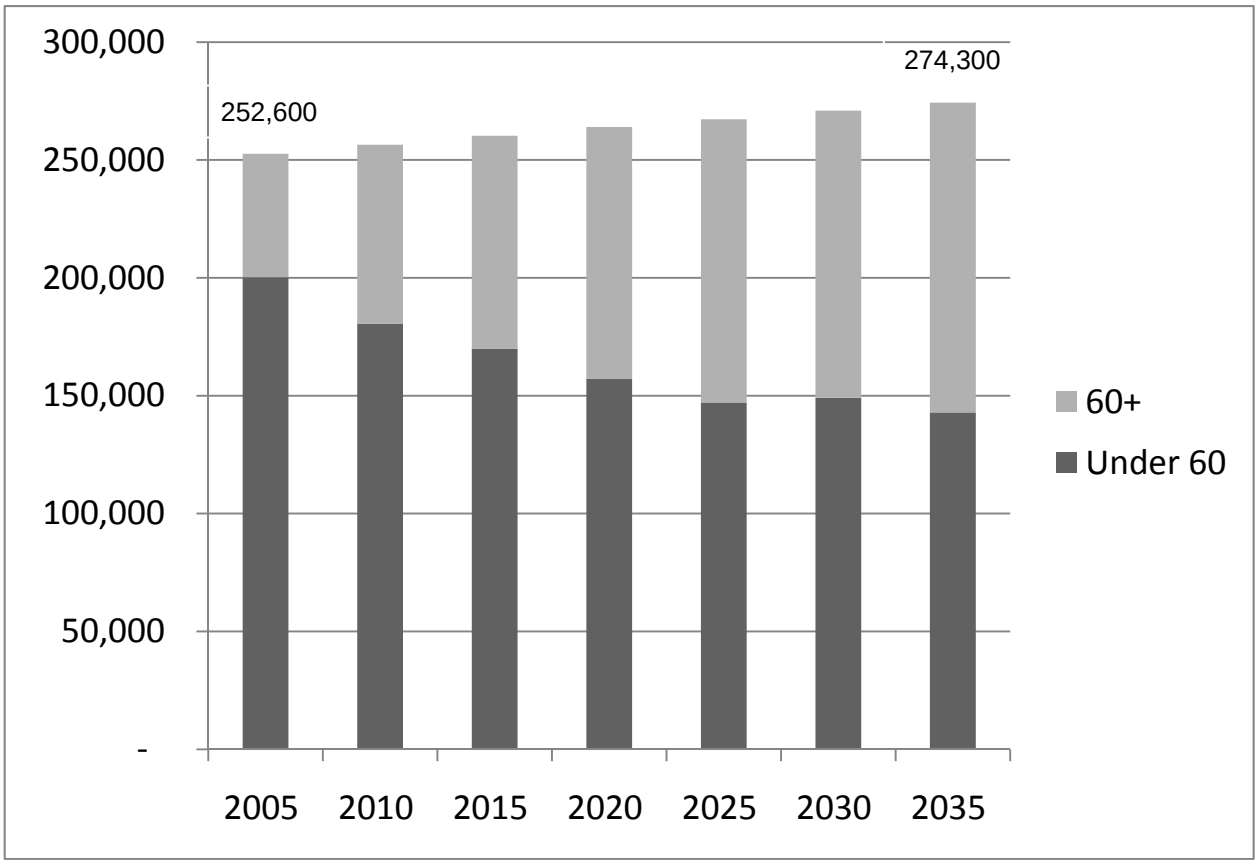
Figure 2-2 Rate of Senior Population Growth, 2000 – 2035



Source: ABAG 2009 Projections

This projected trend is even more remarkable when compared to the population growth of Marin County overall. While the number of seniors in Marin is expected to grow dramatically, the population growth of the county overall is expected to stay very low as it has in past years. Marin is the slowest growing county in the Bay Area, and is projected to grow a total of 8.6% from 2005 to 2035. However, within this same time period, the percentage of residents over age 60 is expected to rise dramatically, from 20.7% to almost 48%.

Figure 2-3 Marin Population Growth, 2005 – 2035



Source: ABAG 2009 Projections

Dependence on Transportation

Factors other than age can contribute to dependence on non-auto transportation. Low-income populations can't afford to own, insure, fuel and maintain a private vehicle, and some disabilities also prevent people from driving. For these and other reasons, seniors might not have access to a car.

In 2000, the median household income in Marin County was $71,306, significantly higher than the median household income of $53,629 for California households. County-wide, almost 16% had incomes under 150% of the poverty level, while for residents over 65, this dropped to just over 9%. While this might be interpreted as indicating a level of affluence among older Marin residents, this same proportion of seniors at 150% of the poverty level has been found at a national level. A recent study found that although the number of seniors aged 65 and older remained unchanged between 2003 and 2004 at 3.5 million, their poverty rate declined from 10.2% to 9.8% in 2004. This decline may have been due, in part, to the indexing of Social Security benefits.[3]

Disabilities tell another story. Among Marin residents over 65, twice as many (31%) reported having a disability as those in the population of Marin as a whole (15%). And twice as many residents over 65 (8%) had no access to a car, as compared to Marin residents as a whole (4%). The table below summarizes these findings.

[3] B. Haroian, E. Ekmekjian, E Grivoyannis, *Poverty in the United States: A Continuing and Growing Problem*, Journal of Business & Economics Research, December 2007.

Figure 2-4 Transit-Dependent Marin Seniors

	All of Marin	Marin Residents 65+
Low income (<150% of Poverty Level)	15.7%	9.4%
With a disability	15%	31%
No access to a car	4%	8%

Source: Census 2000

Where do Marin Seniors Live?

Marin County is divided into three large zones. Most of the population lives in the eastern part of the county, in towns and suburbs along US Highway 101, from Sausalito in the south to Novato in the north, extending westward through the Ross Valley to Fairfax. To the west of Fairfax and Novato is a large agricultural zone with very low population density. The westernmost section of the county, from Tomales and Bodega Bay south along the coast to Stinson Beach and Muir Beach, is comprised of State or National parklands: Mount Tamalpais State Park, Muir Woods National Monument, Stinson Beach, and the Point Reyes National Seashore. These lands are essentially unpopulated (with the exception of some small agricultural operations within the National Seashore, and some park and hostel staff). This report will focus on the developed portions of the county where the great majority of residents live, while also including the small but important pockets of residential density in West Marin: the San Geronimo Valley, Point Reyes/Inverness, and Stinson Beach/Bolinas.

People tend to “age in place” and are likely to retire where they live now. As of 2003, nearly three-quarters of older Americans live in suburban or rural areas of the country. Seniors today are less likely to move after they retire than seniors were 30 years ago.[4] By the time people are over age 55, only about 5% change residences and fewer than 2% move between states. This phenomenon is known as “aging-in-place,” where people tend to remain in their homes as they age. Thus the current concentration of older adults in the suburbs implies that suburbs will have an even greater share of seniors in the future. Even in states with high rates of in-migration, the number of seniors aging-in-place will have a larger impact on projected senior population than migration.[5]

As the following maps show, as of 2005, Marin’s senior population is spread fairly evenly within the eastern portion of the county, with higher densities in Belvedere, Greenbrae (just north of Larkspur), and the northwest section of San Rafael. (San Quentin Prison houses some senior inmates; because it has its own census tract, it appears to have a very high density of seniors. The needs of this special-situation community will not be addressed in this report since all transportation needs of this population are met by the prison.)

Looking forward to 2015, consistent with the aging-in-place phenomenon, those areas which have higher densities of senior populations are projected to increase that density, with more seniors also living in north Novato, north San Rafael, west San Rafael, Corte Madera, and Sausalito.

[4] Sandra Rosenbloom. The Mobility Needs of Older Americans: Implications for Transportation Reauthorization. Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 2003.

[5] William H. Frey. Mapping the Growth of Older America: Seniors and Boomers in the Early 21st Century. Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 2007.

The maps below show the density of the population of seniors for all of Marin County, and then show in detail the north and south portions of the populated eastern third of the county. These more detailed maps include transit lines, senior housing facilities, hospitals, and shopping centers.

Figure 2-5 Senior Population Density, Marin County 2005

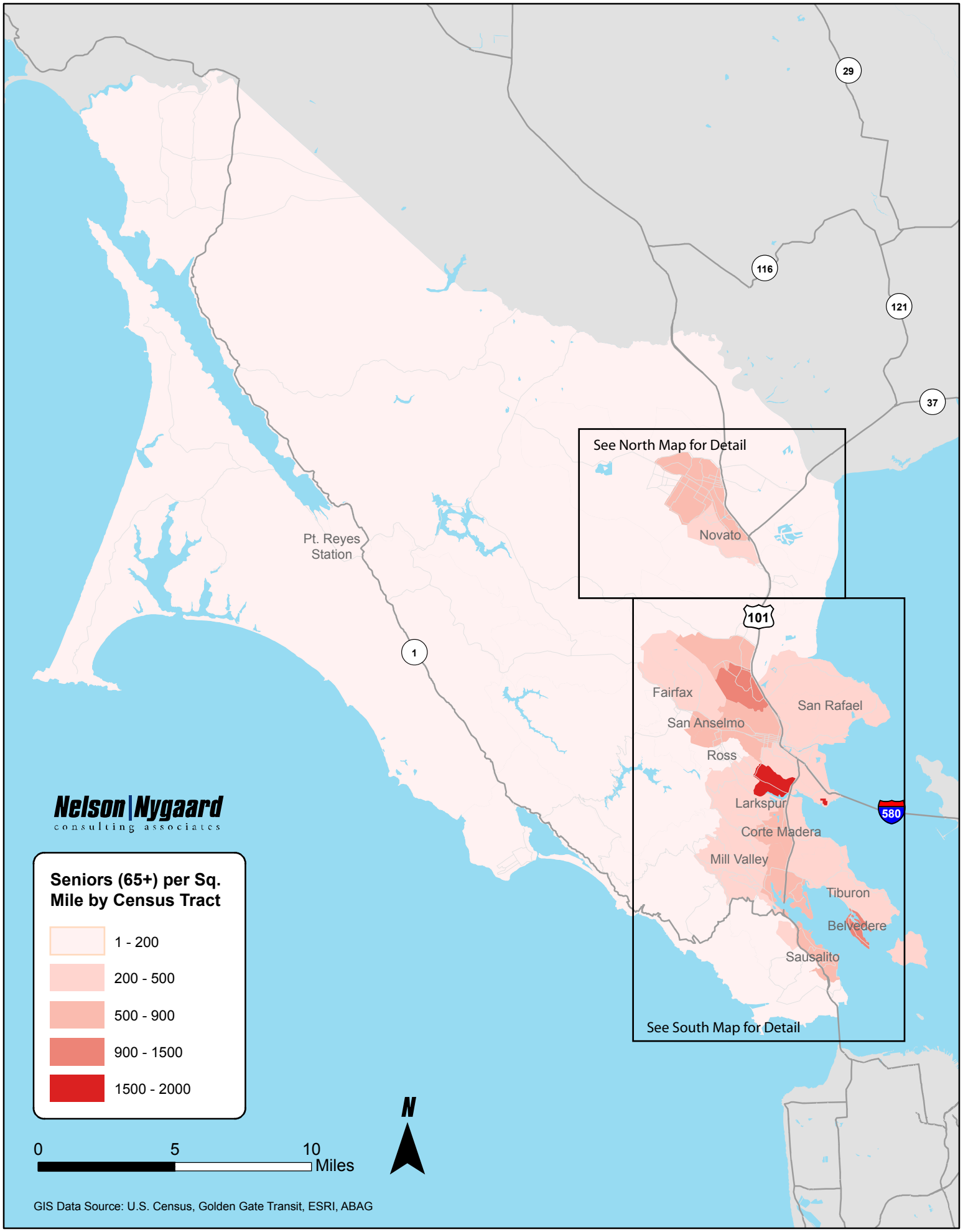


Figure 2-6 Senior Population Density, North Marin 2005

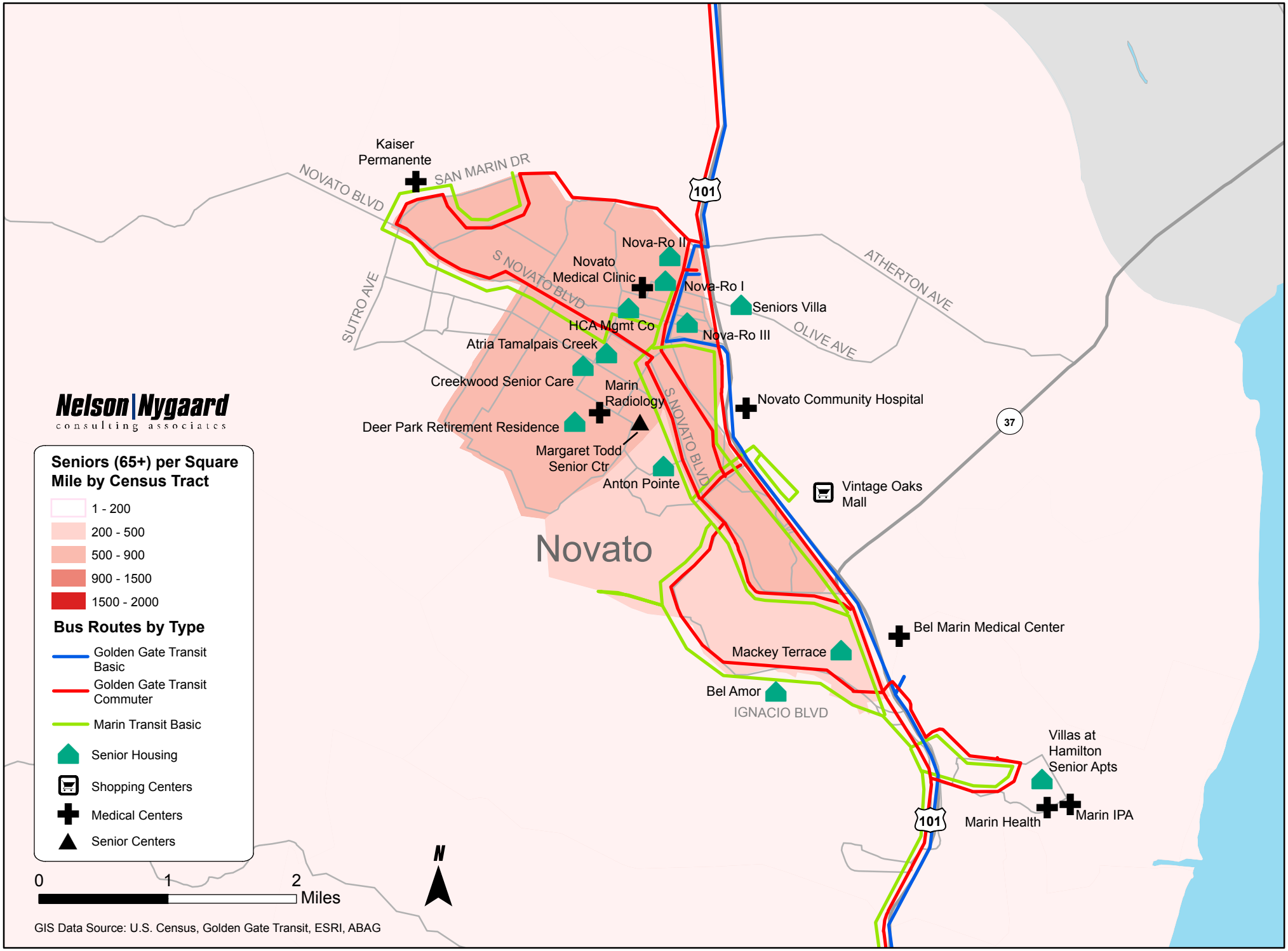


Figure 2-7 Senior Population Density, South Marin 2005

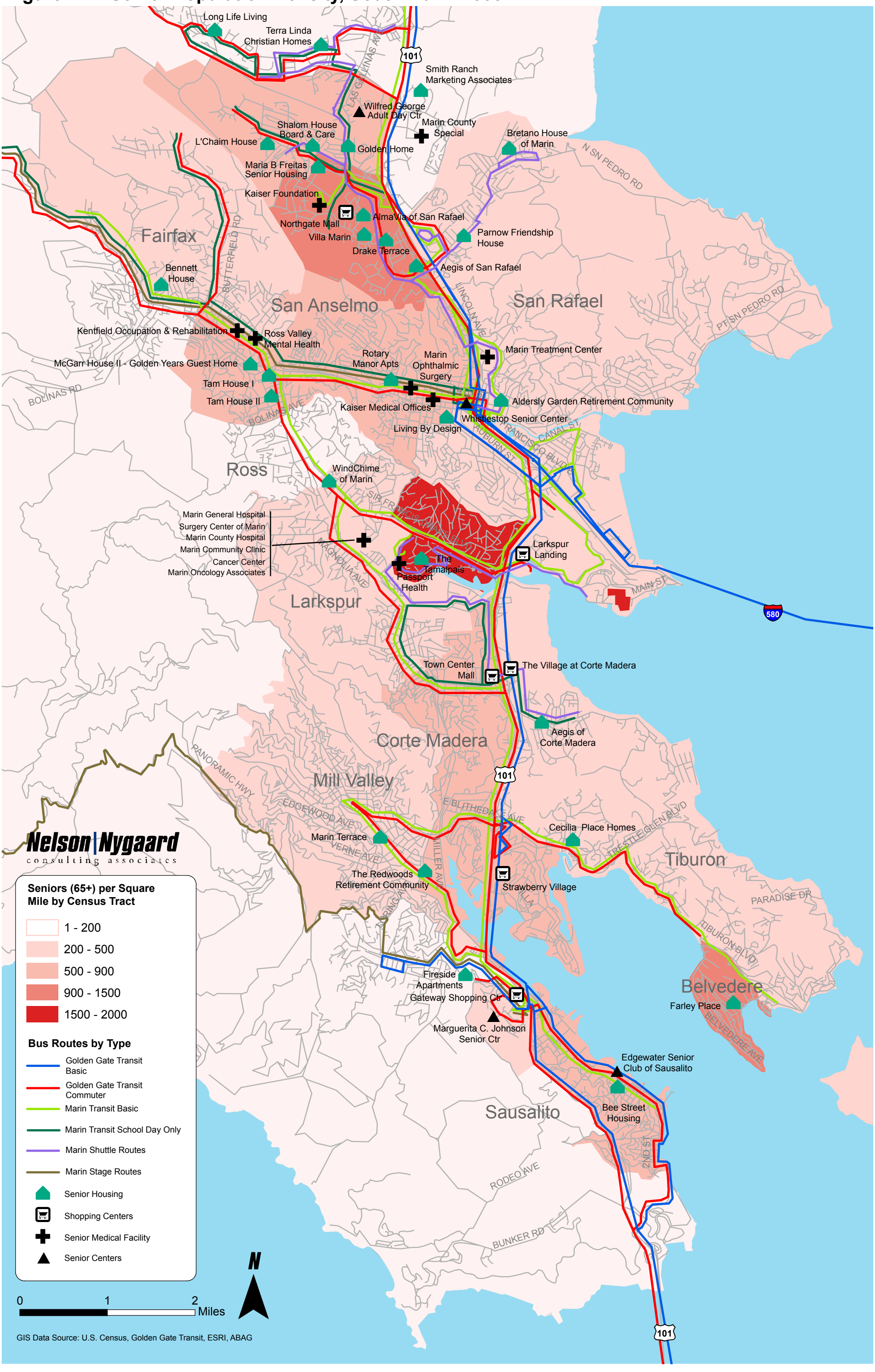


Figure 2-8 Senior Population Density, Marin County 2015

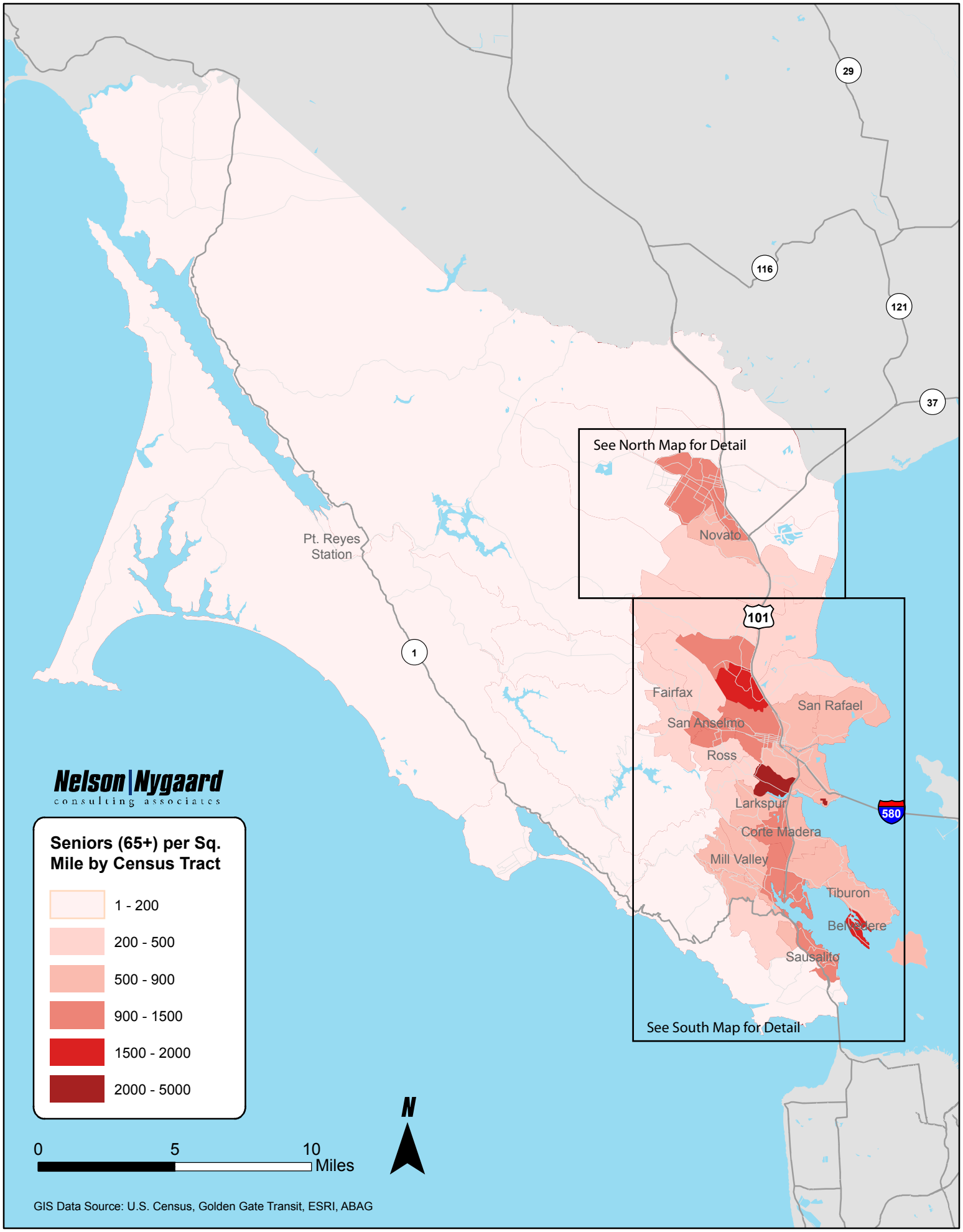


Figure 2-9 Senior Population Density, North Marin 2015

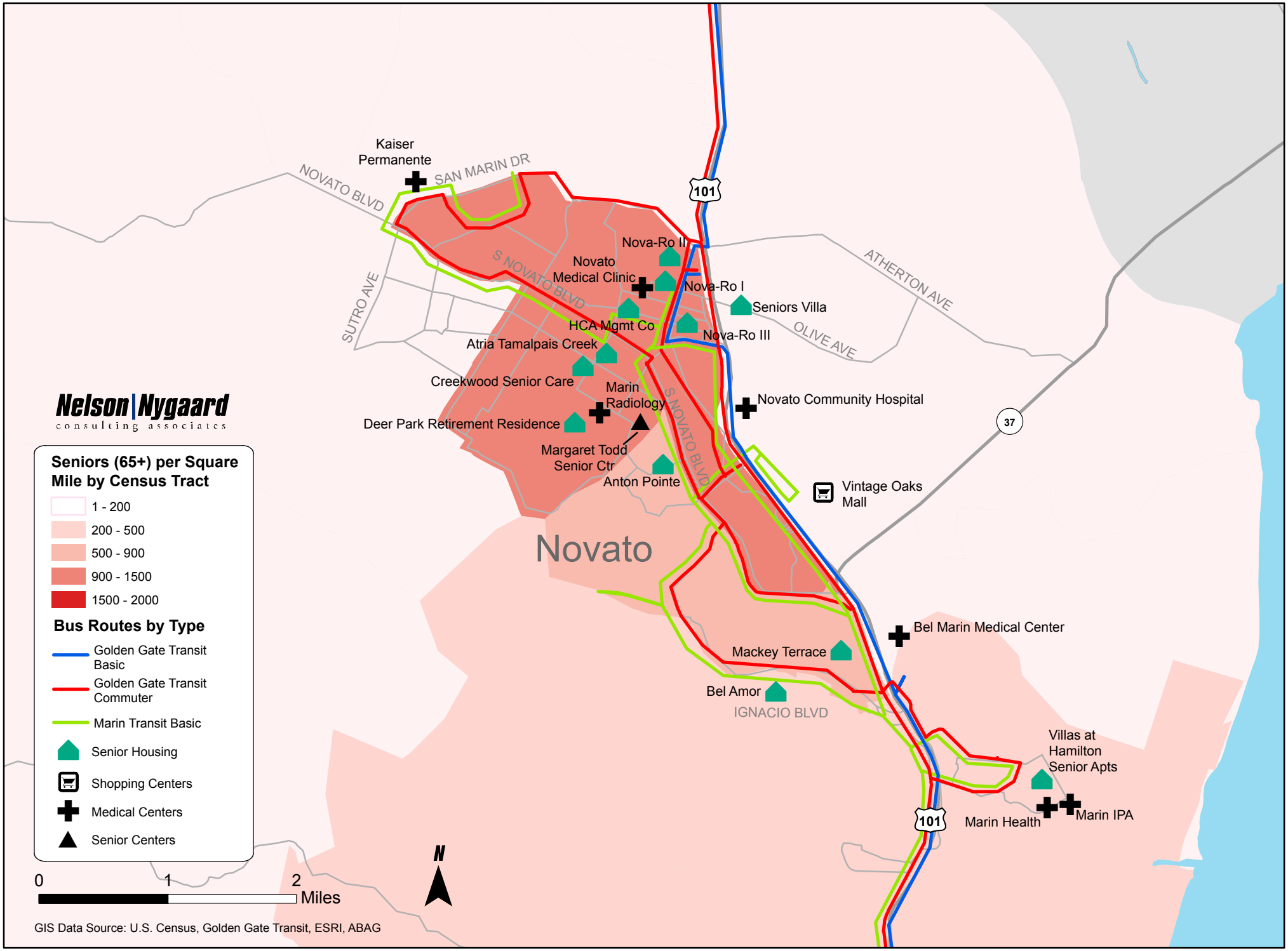
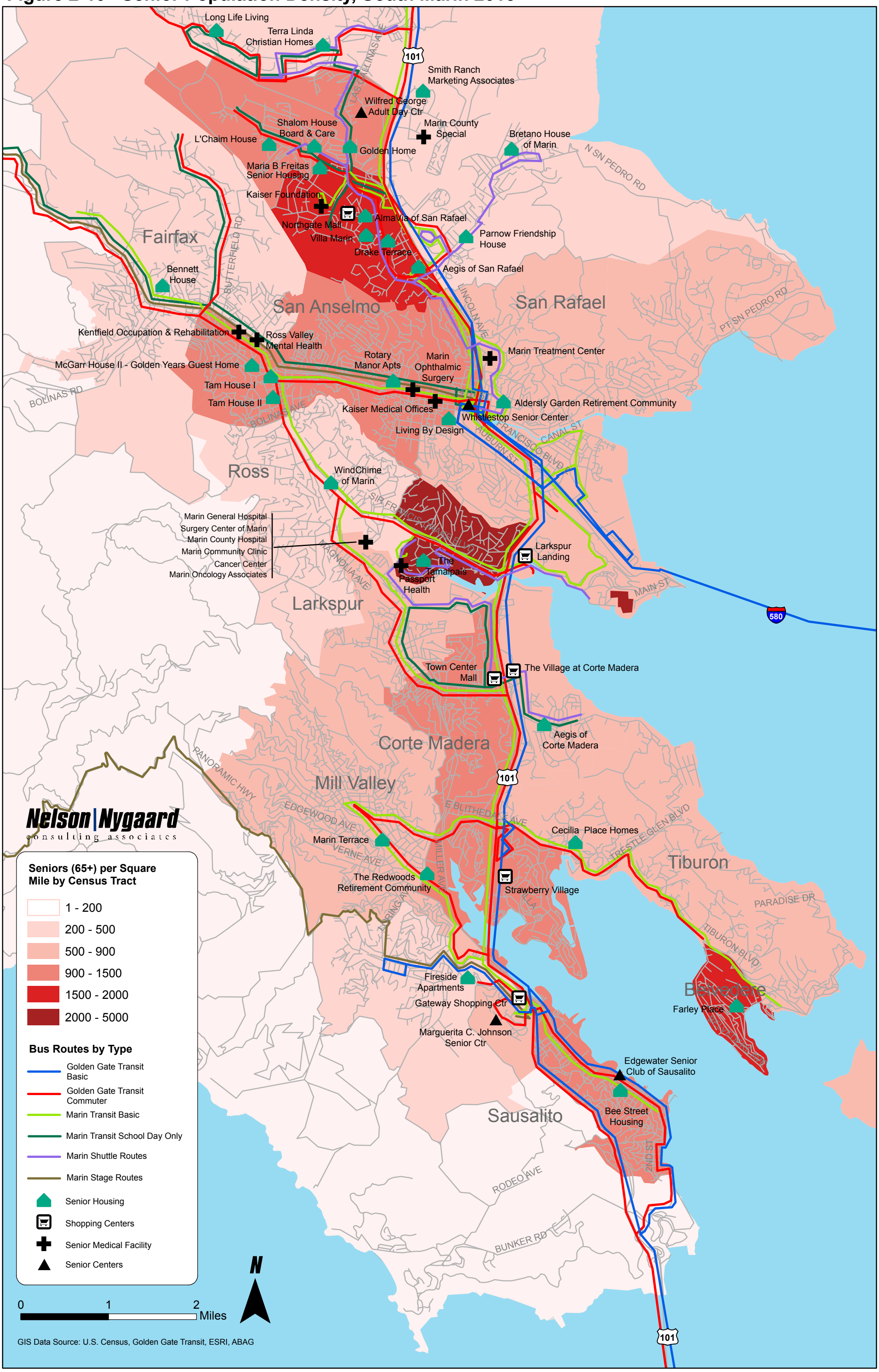


Figure 2-10 Senior Population Density, South Marin 2015



Seniors and Transportation Safety

Safety and Senior Mobility

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, seniors are involved in a greater number of accidents involving fatalities than younger age cohorts. This high fatality rate occurs despite the fact that older drivers tend to be more cautious than other drivers, are more likely to use seat belts, and are less likely to drink and drive. The biggest danger is to older people themselves; when they do have accidents they get killed and injured at far higher rates than younger drivers. Whether driving, biking, or walking, travel can be more dangerous for seniors than for younger people because of physical frailty.

The following maps show the location in Marin of accidents involving seniors over 65 years of age, for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle accidents from 2003 to 2008.

Figure 2-11 Collisions, Vehicles, North Marin, 2003-2008

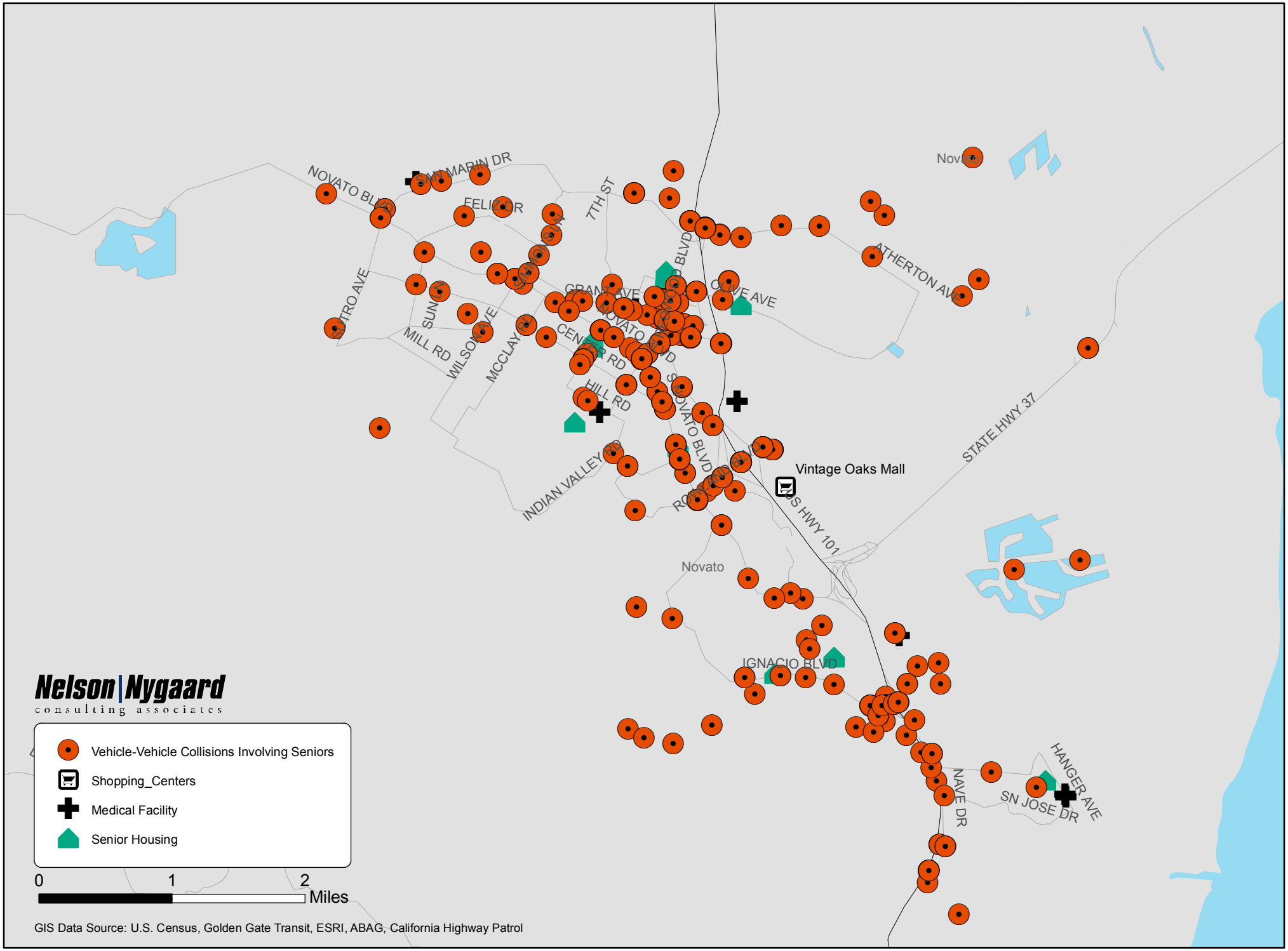


Figure 2-12 Collisions, Vehicles, South Marin, 2003-2008

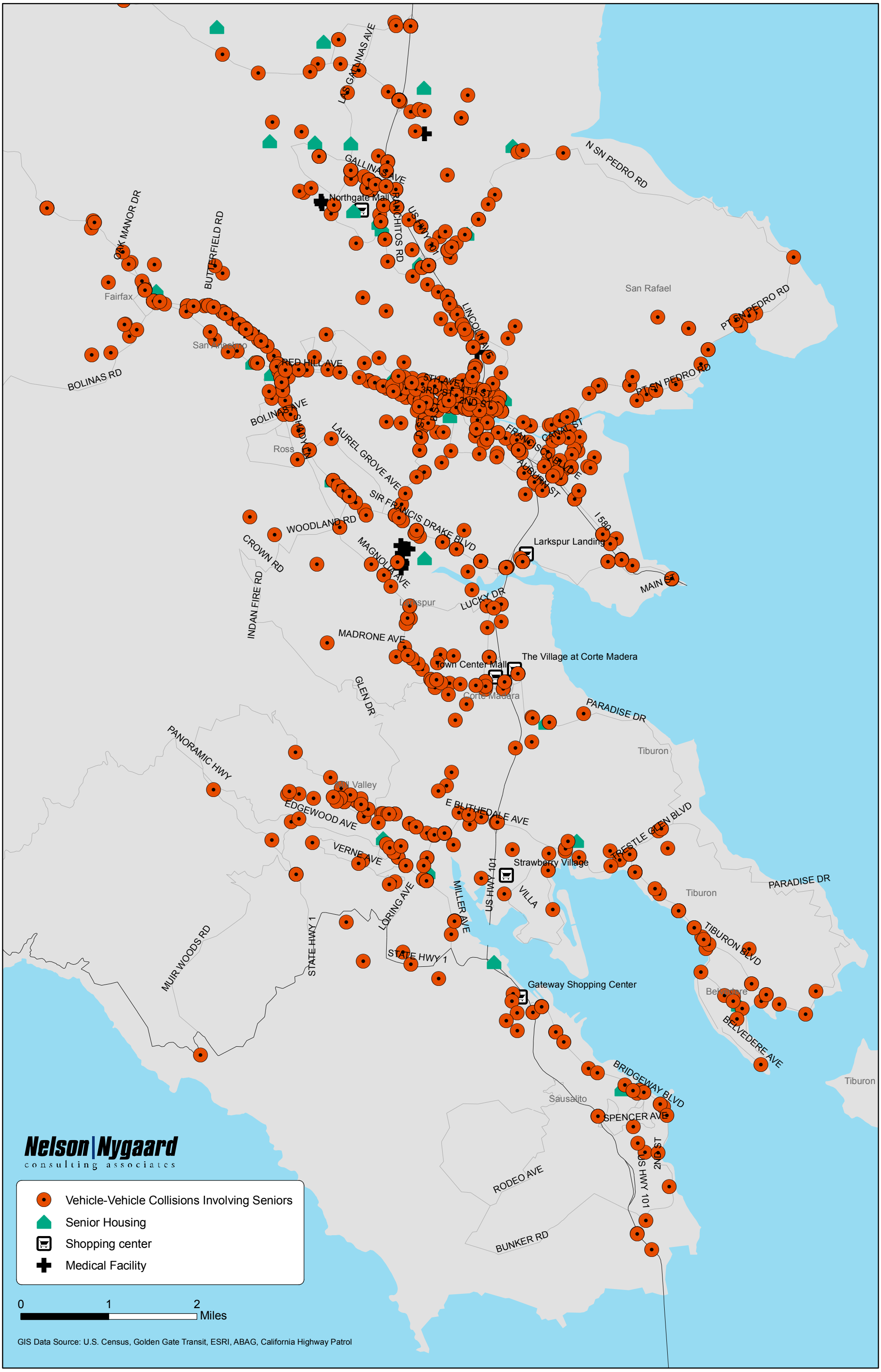


Figure 2-13 Collisions, Vehicle/Pedestrian, North Marin, 2003-2008

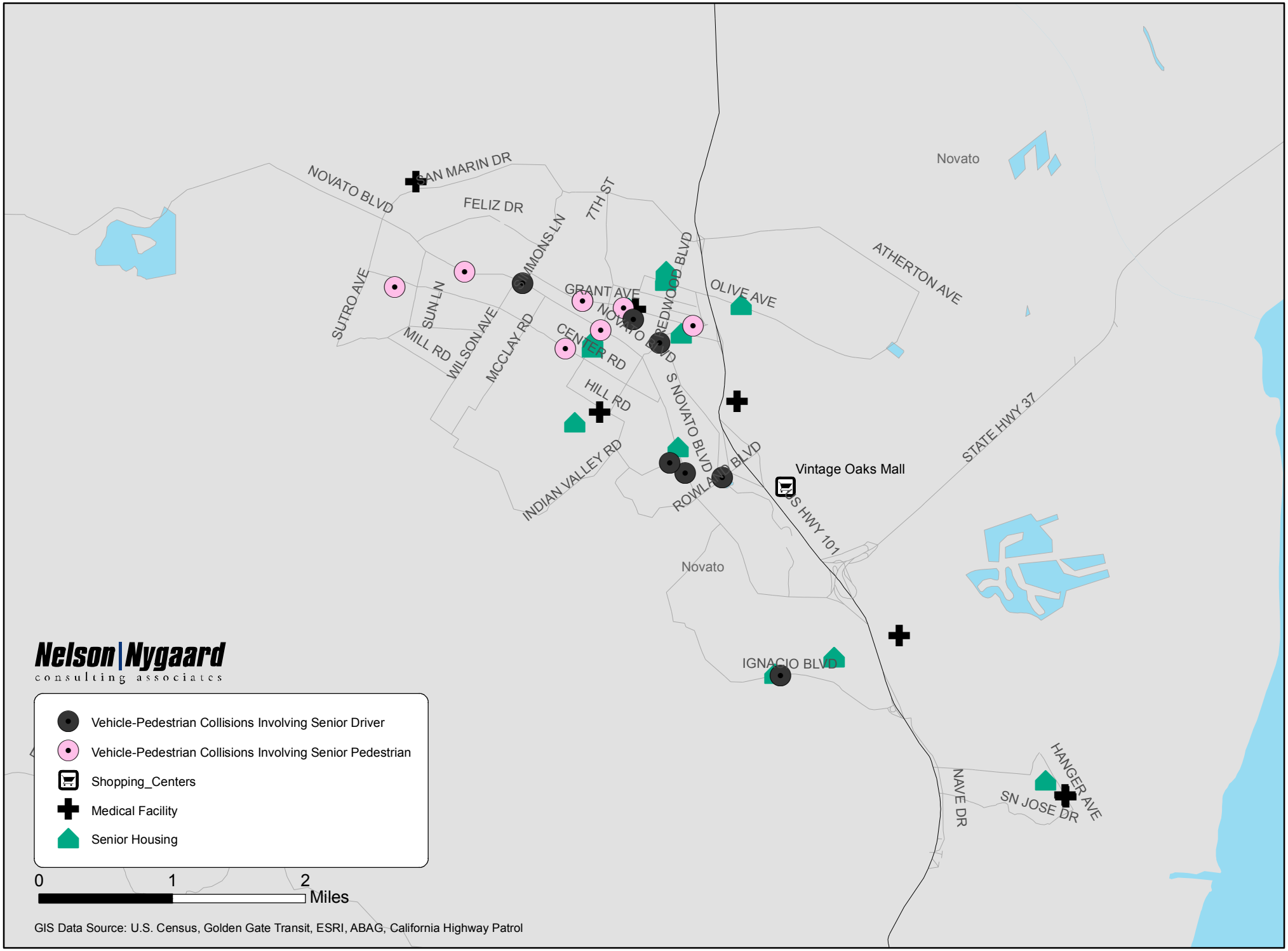


Figure 2-14 Collisions, Vehicle/Pedestrian, South Marin, 2003-2008

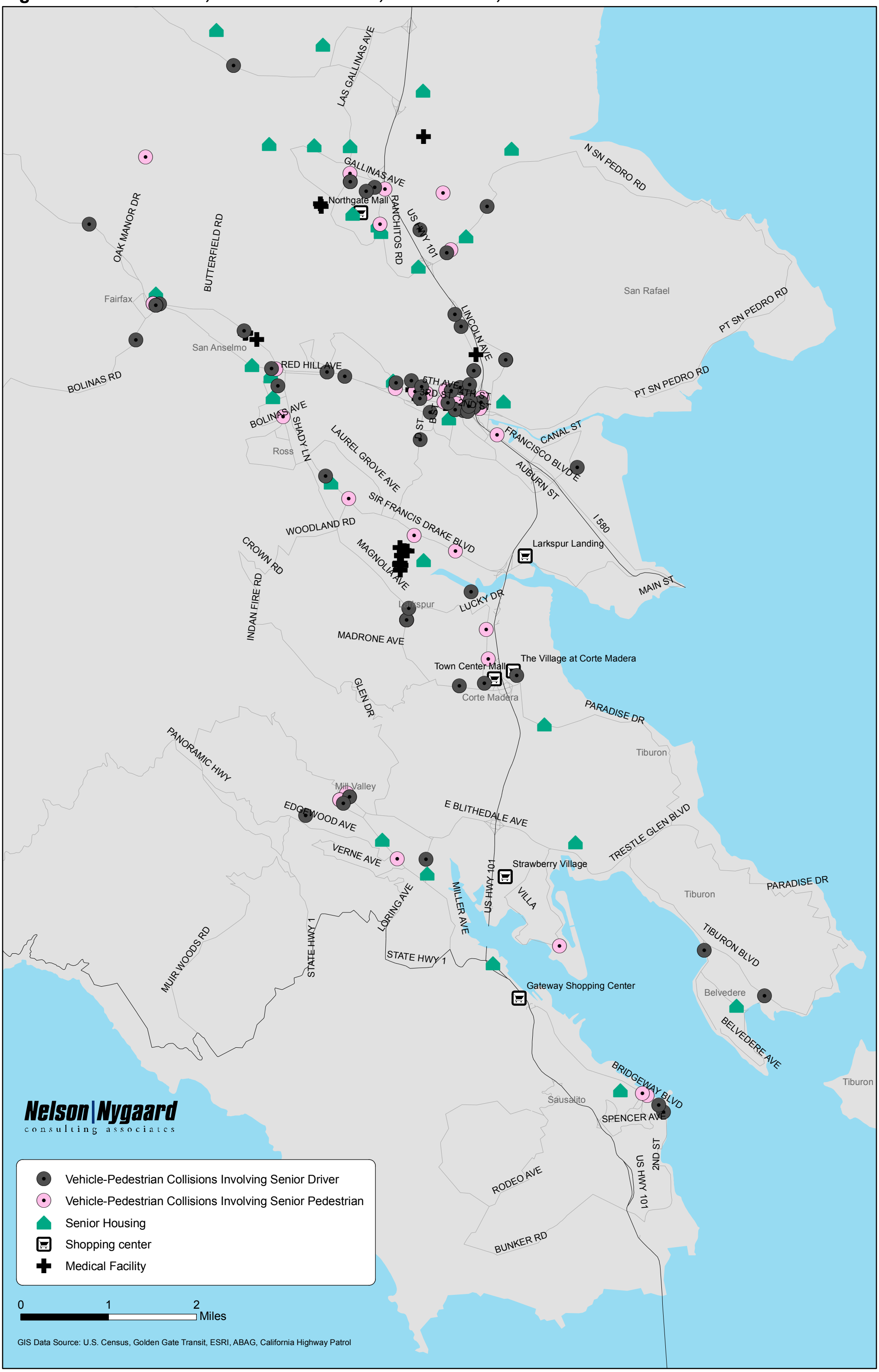


Figure 2-15 Collisions, Vehicle/Bicycle, North Marin, 2003-2008

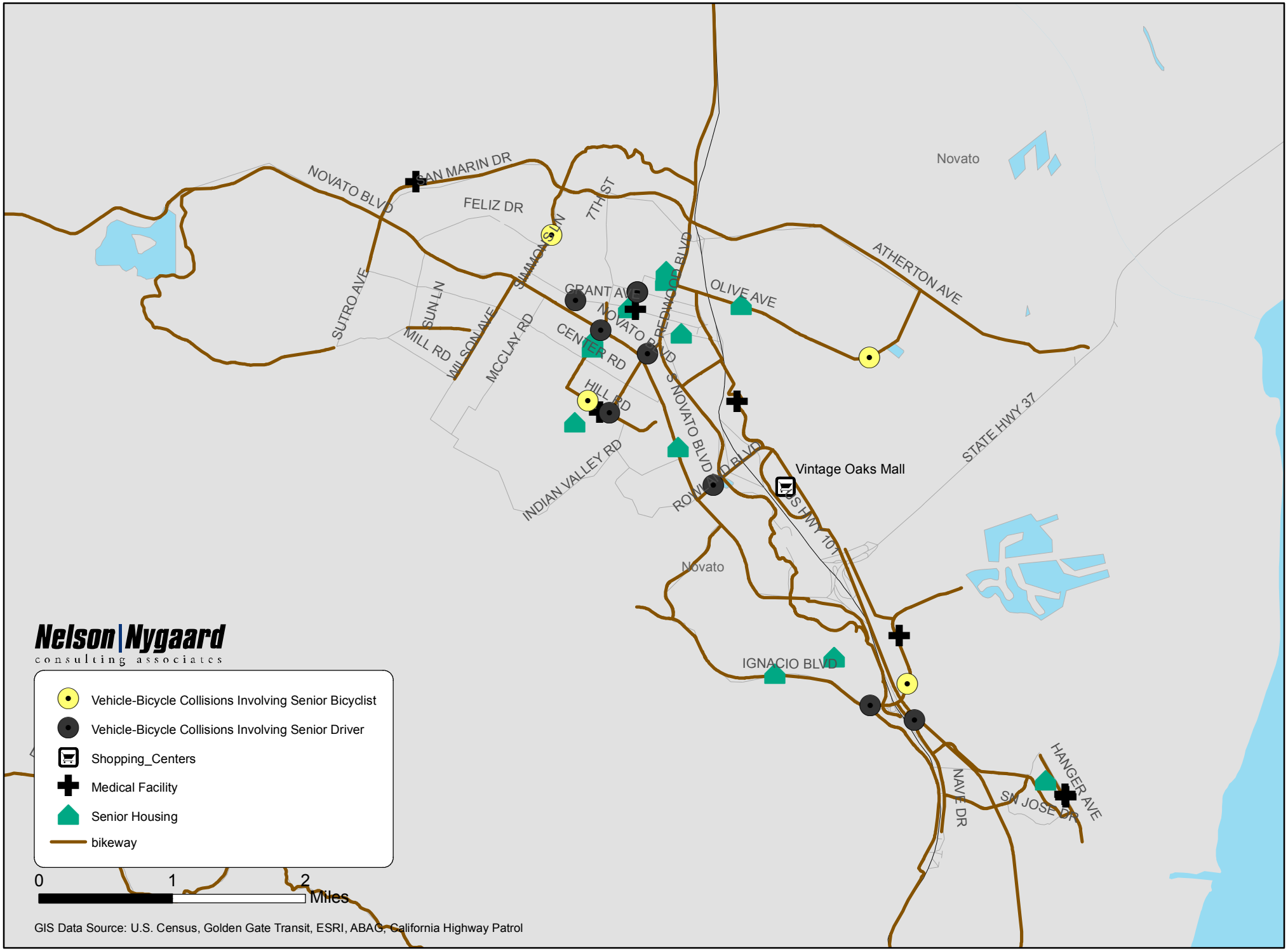
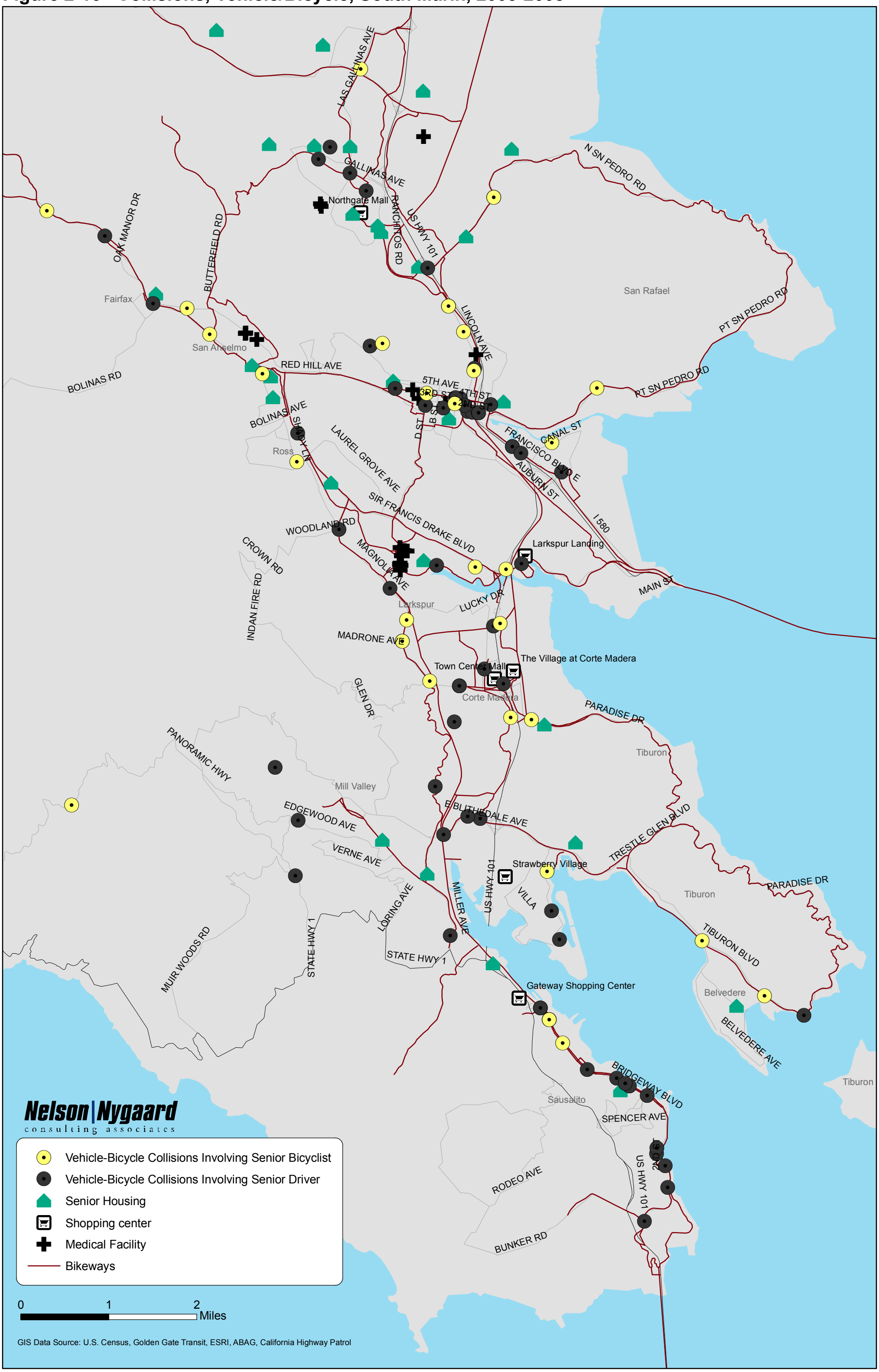


Figure 2-16 Collisions, Vehicle/Bicycle, South Marin, 2003-2008



Chapter 3. Marin County Transportation Providers

This chapter presents existing public, private, and social service transportation providers in Marin County.

Public Transit

There are two public transportation providers in Marin County. Golden Gate Transit provides inter-county commute services, and Marin Transit provides local service.

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District is a public agency that directly operates bus and ferry service, and contracts additional bus and paratransit services (mainly through Whistlestop Wheels). Golden Gate Transit provides fixed-route regional bus service serving portions of Marin, San Francisco, Sonoma and Contra Costa Counties. Golden Gate service is primarily focused on providing commuter routes from Sonoma County through Marin County to San Francisco.

The district operates a total of 235 buses, 233 of which are lift or ramp-equipped vehicles. Local fare is $2.00 each way and inter-county service ranges from $3.95-$9.25 each way. A 50% discount is offered for senior citizens, youth (under age 18) and people with disabilities at all times.

Marin Transit

Marin Transit was formed by a vote of the people of Marin County in 1964 and was given the responsibility for providing local transit service within Marin County. Formerly the Marin County Transit District, MCTD was rebranded as Marin Transit on July 30, 2007. In addition to using a new logo, Marin Transit has taken a more active role in local bus service. Although Marin Transit has responsibility for local services, it does not own any vehicles or facilities and does not employ its own drivers. Marin Transit contracts with other providers, including Golden Gate Transit, Marin Airporter, MV Transportation and Whistlestop Wheels, for local bus and paratransit services. Marin Transit pays for services using Measure A Funds, State Transportation Development Act Funds, fares, property taxes and Federal Section 5311 rural transit funds. Marin Transit also leases accessible cabs to a taxi cooperative in Marin. See the Taxi Services section for details.

Golden Gate Transit operates most local bus service within Marin County under contract with Marin Transit. Marin Transit determines the level of transit service and the fares for all local service. Currently, there are 12 local fixed routes covering main travel corridors throughout Marin that operate on weekdays, with limited weekend and holiday schedules, and six supplemental school service routes that operate during school days. Marin Transit also operates one seasonal local shuttle route and one seasonal supplemental school service route. Marin Transit also provides three local shuttle services connecting neighborhoods to transit hubs, schools and shopping.

Fares on Marin Transit are fixed at $2,00 per adult, and $1.00 for youth 6-18, seniors, and people with disabilities; children under 6 ride free. Marin Transit also provides stored value fare cards and three new discount passes, good for unlimited bus rides within Marin County. These include

1-day, 7-day and 31-day passes. The passes provide the opportunity for significant cost savings for frequent riders of all Marin Transit, Golden Gate Transit, and West Marin Stagecoach routes operating within Marin County.

West Marin Stagecoach

The West Marin Stagecoach is a three-route service run by Marin Transit that serves West Marin. The Stagecoach began operation in 2002 as a two-year demonstration program created by Marin County to provide residents of West Marin improved access to medical, educational, civic, shopping and workplace sites throughout the County. In addition to providing connectivity between West Marin and the urbanized parts of Marin County, the service connects small farms and ranches and the dispersed coastal towns with a reliable public transit option.

The Stagecoach's three fixed routes were designed to serve the dispersed and difficult to access portions of West Marin: South Route 61, Coastal Route 62 and North Route 68. The success of these initial services has led to the need for larger vehicles, increased frequency and added days of service, allowing the Stagecoach to continue to effectively connect key West Marin communities and provide an alternative to driving for weekend visitors to West Marin recreational destinations. Efforts are made to coordinate with Golden Gate Transit, Marin Transit, other West Marin Stagecoach routes and school schedules in order to allow for trip-chaining and to accommodate the particular needs of targeted riders.

The Stagecoach is administered by Marin Transit, and operates under contract with MV Transportation. The primary sources of funds that support the service are Marin County Measure A sales tax funds and federal Section 5311 funds available through the Federal Transit Administration. The West Marin Stagecoach provides its own paratransit service for ADA eligible riders. The Stagecoach will deviate up to ¾ of a mile from the regular fixed route during regular service hours to pick up or drop off riders. Requests must be made by phone to Marin Transit at least 24 hours in advance. The Stagecoach Route 61 (South route) does not deviate on weekends. Marin Transit provides complementary paratransit on the weekend South Route through Whistlestop Wheels, its current paratransit provider.

Paratransit

ADA paratransit service in the Marin County region provides door-to-door, shared-ride transportation for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using the county's bus system.

Whistlestop Wheels

The *Marin Transit District* contracts with the nonprofit agency *Marin Senior Coordinating Service* a.k.a. *Whistlestop Wheels* to provide ADA-mandated paratransit services to more than 4,000 registered users, resulting in approximately 500 trips per day. It also provides deviation service for passengers traveling within ¾ mile of a main road and serves communities throughout the county. Whistlestop provides door-to-door services from 4:00 AM-12:00 AM for a cost of $2.00 to 2.50 per one way trip. The standard service area is ¾ of a mile from all Golden Gate Transit lines. The service area extends to Santa Rosa, Novato, and parts of San Francisco, as well as West Marin. The agency reports that most trip purposes are for medical-related reasons, but there are no restrictions as to trip purpose. Currently, the agency has 50 drivers on staff, and a total of 54 vehicles. Marin Transit will put the paratransit services contract out for bid in late 2009 for services provided as of July 1, 2010.

The *Hamilton Shuttle* in Novato is operated by Whistlestop Wheels. This shuttle is funded through a local homeowners' association as required by the City of Novato, operating during peak hours on weekdays between Hamilton and the Alameda del Prado Park and Ride. Marin Transit provides the *Novato Dial-a-Ride*, which is funded through Measure A. This service is currently provided by Whistlestop Wheels but will be put out to bid in early 2010. The Novato Dial-A-Ride is a general public service on an on-call basis within Novato. The Novato Dial-A-Ride replaced the former E-Z Rider service in August 2009. Whistlestop Wheels, along with Novato Community Hospital, also operates the *Novato Health Express*, which provides a medical-only shuttle for Novato seniors to the Novato Community Hospital, a Sutter affiliate.

Non-Profit Social Service Agencies

A number of non-profit agencies provide transportation services for special populations or for clients of their programs.

American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is a nationwide community based voluntary health organization dedicated to diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy and service. *Road to Recovery* is a Marin Unit of the American Cancer Society service program that provides transportation for cancer patients to their treatments and home again. Transportation is provided according to the needs and available resources in the community. Transportation services are generally available all days of the week from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. This is a free service for cancer patients. The Marin unit of the American Cancer Society provides a training program and the opportunity to meet with volunteers throughout the year.

Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC)

The Golden Gate Regional Center is the hub of a comprehensive network which links people to services, and acts as a community focus for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and service providers. Funding is provided for individuals with development disabilities to travel to and from their homes and day programs in privately owned and operated vans, which are provided by On the Move. While the GGRC does not serve seniors specifically, many of its clients are individuals with disabilities over age 65.

Jewish Family & Children's Services (JFCS)

The Jewish Family & Children's Services (JFCS) has been providing a variety of services to older and adults with disabilities in the Bay Area since 1850. The JFCS Rides program provides transportation for new outreach programs and for seniors who need assistance with shopping for groceries or personal items and attending medical, cultural, and/or educational events within the Jewish community. JFCS charges a $5 per one-way fee for transportation services, in addition to a $30 one-time "assessment" fee. JFCS provides one accessible van for its transportation services with a limited number of passenger slots for residents in the eastern Marin corridor who are not able to use other means of transportation or whose schedule cannot comply with the long waits sometimes experienced using regular paratransit services.

In addition, JFCS has a grant for Assisted Transportation for older adults from the Marin County Division of Aging and Adult Services. This service is targeted at older adults who are too frail for a shared program like Whistlestop paratransit, and is primarily for transportation to medical

appointments, including those in San Francisco. Drivers are trained to physically assist the passengers "door through door". There is no fee for the service, although donations are accepted.

Marin City Community Development Corporation

As part of its mission to promote economic self-sufficiency, the Marin City CDC provides financial assistance for low-income individuals in southern Marin to arrange both public and private transportation between home and work. The CDC does not provide the transportation service, but rather assists individuals in making arrangements and covering transportation costs.

Marin City Community Service District

The Marin City Community Services District is the governmental agency for Marin City. The agency maintains one 15-person van used solely for event-specific transportation to and from the local senior center (Marguerite C. Johnson Senior Center). Seniors may arrange for rides by signing up directly through the senior center.

Novato Human Needs Center (NHNC)

Founded in 1972 as a Marin County 501(c) nonprofit agency, the Novato Human Needs Center assists more than 4,000 Novato residents annually. The NHNC offers a variety of community services, education, food and transportation programs to support Novato low-income individuals and families. Using agency-owned vehicles, NHNC provides a shopping shuttle within Novato, connecting senior affordable housing/retirement communities with shopping centers. The service is funded by the Marin County Division of Aging and Adult Services, and there is no fee for rides (donations are accepted). When this service is not operating, the NHNC transportation program is available for contract to nonprofit and other agencies needing transportation services.

Osher Marin Jewish Community Center (OMJCC)

OMJCC operates two passenger buses. The 23-passenger partially accessible bus was purchased with a grant from the JCE Newhouse Fund in 2002. In 2006, a more accessible (but not lift-equipped) 18-passenger bus was purchased with a grant from the JCE Maimonides Fund. The key difference between the two buses is adequate storage space for walkers, folding wheelchairs, and/or oxygen tanks. The purchase of this additional bus has enabled the OMJCC to increase participation among the approximately 250 seniors who have in the past attended or expressed interest in attending special excursions, as well as to ensure that seniors are able to travel to and from the Center easily. In March 2007, the JCE Newhouse Fund approved a grant to support the hiring of a full-time driver and transportation coordinator for the Osher Center's two buses. An additional contract-based driver is used when both vans are operating concurrently. Most of the rides provided by OMJCC are for weekly Shabbat lunch, for which seniors must call the center in advance to arrange a ride.

Project Independence

Project Independence is a program of trained volunteers who, under the supervision of a public health nurse case manager, serve as caring partners to build a bridge of advocacy and support for persons who are transitioning from hospital discharge to independence at home. Volunteers support the patient in providing the transportation needed to get back to their doctors for post-hospital follow-up or physical therapy or dialysis treatments. They also coordinate and arrange for such services as shopping, home delivered meals, medication support, social and financial resources, public benefit programs and home health care.

West Marin Senior Services

For over 30 years, West Marin Senior Services has been providing seniors living in West Marin with in-home support, assisted living, and community services that foster independence and participation in the local community. Staff is on duty to help seniors and people with disabilities arrange transportation for medical appointments, shopping, errands, and other activities, both locally (Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Olema, Point Reyes Station, Inverness, Nicasio, San Geronimo Valley, Marshall, Tomales, Dillon Beach) and "over-the-hill" to the eastern part of the county. Transportation includes shuttle service to the Stagecoach as well as volunteer and paid drivers, and is provided to all West Marin residents over the age of 60. Typically, clients pay drivers directly for mileage and time with rates ranging from $11-$15 per hour.

Taxi Services

All taxi services in Marin provide a 10% discount for seniors on metered trips over $10 (excluding flat rate trips to the airport, etc.). General fares are $2.50 plus $3.00 per mile. The majority of taxi cab services have been consolidated under one of two umbrella entities: North Bay Cooperative Taxi and On the Move. North Bay Cooperative Taxi is a private taxi cab provider that provides rides directly, while On the Move is a private cab company operating cabs under different company names, and that administers contracts with several direct providers.

North Bay Cooperative Taxi

Based in San Rafael but serving all of Marin County, North Bay Cooperative Taxi provides two wheelchair accessible vehicles that can be reserved in advance. Under the current paratransit contract, Whistlestop Wheels shifts some trips to North Bay Cooperative Taxis to improve scheduling, increase capacity, and increase the likelihood that non-mandated paratransit services are provided. Marin Transit pays all additional insurance costs associated with this arrangement under the paratransit contract.

On the Move

On the Move Is an umbrella taxi company for multiple cab brands in Marin. They lease four wheelchair-accessible cabs from Marin Transit and are the dispatching agent for them. Vans can be reserved for private trips of any kind directly through On the Move for a cost of $45 one-way, $70 round trip, or $75 per hour for wheelchair charter. If the van is reserved under contract, however, this price varies. Thus, the most effective way to utilize On the Move's transportation services is to book through one of the entities under its umbrella, or to arrange a contract as a group of at least eight seniors seeking the service.

On the Move owns 30 cars and 21 11-15 passenger vans, most of which are contracted out to the following taxi cab providers:

- Radio Cab
- Belair Cab
- Happy Cab
- Yellow Cab
- Red Checkered Cab

On the Move also contracts many of its vans to the Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC).

Marin Door-to-Door

This taxi cab company provides direct rides between Marin County and the San Francisco and Oakland International Airports. Seniors receive a $2 discount per ride.

Accessible Taxis

Previous transportation outreach projects in Marin brought to light the need for taxi cabs that accommodate wheelchairs. Recognizing this need, Marin Transit purchased four wheelchair-accessible vans in 2008. These vehicles are leased to On the Move for dispatching through On the Move's taxi service. Trips in these vans can be requested by calling any of the cab services under On the Move. While advance notice is recommended, it is not required. The fare for these vans is the same as for any other taxi.

Senior Housing

Many of the senior living facilities in Marin County provide some form of transportation to their residents.

Aegis of Corte Madera

Aegis is an assisted living community that offers exceptional assisted living services and a nationally recognized program for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia. Residents enjoy transportation service at no extra charge on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays (excursion day), Thursdays (doctor day) and Fridays (shopping day) on a privately-owned van or car. Trips requested during a non-scheduled day may be arranged at extra cost to the resident.

Aegis of San Rafael

This assisted living community provides free transportation to all residents for shopping, medical, and recreational purposes in a company-owned van.

Aldersly Retirement Community

Founded in 1921 by Danish immigrants as a nonprofit retirement community, Aldersly today is a culturally diverse retirement community offering several levels of lifestyle options and unlimited transportation services using its passenger van or shuttle. Regularly scheduled shuttle excursions take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at extra charge, while trips to medical appointments are complimentary for all residents.

Alma Via/Elder Care Alliance

Alma Via is a non-profit, faith-based organization that provides a range of assisted living, memory care, continuing care retirement, and skilled nursing. Transportation is considered a fundamental service to all residents and is provided free of charge to all areas for any purpose using either a privately-owned auto or bus seating up to 16 people.

Atria Tamalpais Creek

Atria, a retired living community close to downtown Novato, provides scheduled local transportation to its residents. There are no restrictions on days or types of trips, although

residents are encouraged to sign up for pre-scheduled trips. Atria owns two vans and one bus for its residents to use at no extra cost.

Drake Terrace

This independent and assisted living facility provides pre-scheduled rides for medical appointments, bank and shopping excursions at no extra cost to residents. The facility operates one wheelchair accessible bus and requires that individuals are capable of functioning independently after drop-off at destinations.

The Tamalpais

Northern California Presbyterian Homes & Services, Inc. (NCPHS) is a non-profit organization that serves older adults through residential community living facilities. NCPHS works closely with many other non-profit agencies in the Bay Area to allow seniors access to programs and services available in the community. In Marin, NCPHS runs a Life Care Community, The Tamalpais, which offers regular weekly and daily transportation to local shopping centers, cultural events throughout the bay area, local church services, and doctor's appointments/medical procedures. The transportation service is provided to residents only and primarily serves central/southern Marin and San Francisco. There is no charge for regularly scheduled trips or medical visits. There are varying charges for special events, determined by location of the event. Transportation service is generally available Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM. Trips can be arranged through the Tamalpais Reception.

The Redwoods Retirement Community

The Redwoods is a non-denominational, not-for-profit organization founded and sponsored by the Community Church of Mill Valley in 1972. It offers four levels of housing for people 55 and over: independent, a level in between assisted and independent, assisted living, and skilled nursing. The Redwoods operates a 17-person accessible van which provides trips at no charge to residents. Trips are for medical/dialysis appointments, shopping, and social/recreational outings. Many residents still drive, and free parking is provided.

Villa Marin

Villa Marin is a multi-level retirement community for individuals over the age of 55, offering independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing care. A full-time driver on staff provides inclusive transportation services to medical appointments, local shopping and attractions. Villa Marin maintains a total of 4 vehicles, including a 26-passenger bus with a wheelchair lift, a 10-passenger van with a wheelchair lift, and two cars.

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Transportation Provider Inventory

Figure 3-1 lists contact information for all of the transportation providers in Marin County, including public transit agencies, social service providers, and private operators. The matrix provides contact information, the number of vehicles available, and describes the types of service provided.

Figure 3-1 Inventory Table

Agency Name	Contact	City	Phone	Website	Transportation services	Vehicles owned or operated	Buses	Vans	Autos
Public Transportation									
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District	Harvey Katz, Paratransit Coordinator and Planner	San Rafael	(415) 257-4416	http://www.goldengate.org/	Directly operates and contracts bus services; directly operates ferry services; contracts with Marin Transit to provide paratransit services on their behalf.	235	235		
Marin Transit	Amy Van Doren, Director of Operations	San Rafael	(415) 226-0855	www.marintransit.org	Provides all local bus service and paratransit in Marin County. Contracts with Whistlestop Wheels for paratransit. Services also include the West Marin Stagecoach and the Novato Dial a Ride.	33	33		
Whistlestop Wheels	John Gaffney, Senior Manager of Transportation	San Rafael	(415) 456-9062		Under contract to Marin Transit, provides paratransit services for elderly and disabled persons of Marin County eligible under ADA criteria; transportation for a number of special programs including adult daycare. No restriction on trip purposes. Operates two shuttle services in Novato: The Hamilton Shuttle and Novato Health Express for Novato seniors. Operates the Novato Dial a Ride for Marin Transit.	53	50	2	1
Non-Profit Organizations									
American Cancer Society	Susan Seitz, Staff Assistant	San Rafael	(415) 454-8466	http://www.cancer.org	The American Cancer Society provides a volunteer driver program called "Road to Recovery," which transports cancer patients	48 volunteer drivers			

Agency Name	Contact	City	Phone	Website	Transportation services	Vehicles owned or operated	Buses	Vans	Autos
					to and from treatments from 9 am to 5 pm.				
Golden Gate Regional Center	Tony Thurmond	Corte Madera	(415) 945-4460	http://www.ggrc.org/	The GGRC provides transportation for people with developmental disabilities, some of whom are seniors.	n/a			
Jewish Family & Children's Services	Nancy Masters, Director, Marin Region	San Rafael	(415) 419-3602	http://www.jfcs.org/	Provides transportation for new outreach programs and for seniors who need assistance with shopping for groceries or personal items and attending medical, cultural, and/or educational events.			1	
Marin City Community Development Corporation	Makini Hassan	Marin City	(415) 339-2842	http://www.marincitycdc.org/	Provides financial assistance for work-related transportation for low-income people; not age specific.	0			
Marin City Community Service District	Marie Gaines, Executive Director	Sausalito	(415) 332-1441		Transportation services are provided for seniors to and from events at the Marguerite C. Johnson Senior Center.	1		1	
Novato Human Needs Center	Deanna Euritt, Executive Director	Novato	(415) 897-4147 x33	http://www.nhnc.org/	NHNC provides free rides to seniors and disabled adults with agency-owned vehicles, and also partners with the Novato Shuttle program, which offers rides at a nominal fee for all Novato residents.	3		3	
Osher Marin Jewish Community Center	Iris Lax, Dir. of Marketing and Communications	San Rafael	(415) 444-8000	www.marinjcc.org	Limited door-to-door transportation available for seniors to programs at the JCC and for special excursions.	2	2		
Project Independence/ Marin Moves	Rita Widergren		(415) 473-2591	http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/hh/main/ag/pi.cfm	Trained volunteers provide support for people transitioning from hospital discharge to independence at home. Volunteers provide transportation for post-hospital follow-up, physical therapy, or dialysis treatments.	0			

Agency Name	Contact	City	Phone	Website	Transportation services	Vehicles owned or operated	Buses	Vans	Autos
West Marin Senior Services	Joan Corbett, Executive Director	Pt. Reyes Station	(415) 663-8148	www.WMSS.org	Staff help seniors and people with disabilities find rides, including shuttle service to the Stage Coach, and volunteer and paid drivers for medical appointments, shopping, errands, and other activities, both locally and "over-the-hill".				
Senior Housing Facilities									
Aegis of Corte Madera	Gale Bongol, Activities Director	Corte Madera	(415) 472-4200	www.aegisliving.com	Scheduled transportation available for residents for medical appointments and outings.	2		1	1
Aegis of San Rafael	Jason Smith	San Rafael	(415) 472-6530	www.aegisliving.com	Free transportation to all residents for shopping, medical, and recreational purposes.	1		1	
Aldersly Retirement Community	Gina Pandiani, Activities Director	San Rafael	(415) 453-3281	www.aldersly.com	Transportation provided to residents whenever necessary. Regularly scheduled excursions and shuttle services for seniors who live on site.	2	1	1	
Alma Via	Tim Welter, Director of Plan Operations	San Rafael	(415) 491-1900	www.almavia.org	Transportation to doctor, church, shops, banks.	2	1		1
Atria Tamalpais Creek	Lisa Longhurst, Sales Rep	Novato	(415) 892-0944	www.atriaseniorliving.com	Provides transportation to residents.	3	1	2	
Drake Terrace	Eric Flatt, Executive Director	San Rafael	(415) 491-1935	http://www.kiscoseniorliving.com/communities_draketerrace.asp	Provides transportation for residents for medical appointments and errands using their own bus. I	1	1		
The Redwoods Retirement Community	Jim Sanchez, Executive Assistant	Mill Valley	(415) 383-2741	http://www.theredwoods.org/index.html	17 seat minibus that can accommodate wheelchairs, coordinated by the office of Programs and Volunteers; private taxi service, arranged for by individual residents; Whistlestop Wheels, arranged for by individual residents.	1	1		

Agency Name	Contact	City	Phone	Website	Transportation services	Vehicles owned or operated	Buses	Vans	Autos
The Tamalpais (NCPHS)	Neil Vickers, Lead Driver	Greenbrae	(415) 461-2300	http://www.ncphs.org/life_care/the_tamalpais/index.html	Regular daily, weekly and monthly transportation for residents to shopping centers, museums, special events, and local church services. NCPHS also provides transportation to medical and doctor's appointments.	4	2	1	1
Villa Marin	Ralph Balsic	San Rafael	(415) 492-2408 x2517	www.villa-marin.com/	Villa Marin is a multi-service retirement community for individuals over the age of 55. A full-time driver on staff offers inclusive transportation services to medical appointments, local shopping and attractions.	4	1	1	2
Taxis									
On The Move	Bob Dewalt	Greenbrae	(415) 454-5437	http://www.onthemovebayarea.org/	On the Move administers contracts with a number of cab companies in Marin and leases four wheelchair accessible vans from Marin Transit. On the Move also contracts out its vans to Golden Gate Regional Center.	51		21	30

Chapter 4. Review of Relevant Documents and Studies

Summary

The project team conducted a thorough review of the below documents and studies. This chapter summarizes the key contents of each, including findings and policies related to older adult mobility. Preliminary recommendations for revising and updating County policies to make them more supportive of senior mobility issues and needs are also provided.

Figure 4-1 Documents Reviewed

Document	Source	Notes
Marin Countywide Plan	http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/cd/main/fm/TOC.cfm	
Short Range Transit Plans for Golden Gate Transit	http://goldengatetransit.org/services/SRTP.php	
Short Range Transit Plans for Marin Transit	http://www.marintransit.org/planningdocs.html	
Marin County Taxi Study	http://marintransit.org/completedprojects.html	
Marin County Bicycle Plan	http://www.walkbikemarin.org/resource_library_policies.php	Includes pedestrian plan
Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program	http://www.walkbikemarin.org/ http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/ntpp/ir1807safetealu.pdf	
Marin County Self-Evaluation & ADA Transition Plan	http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/PW/main/ADA/ada.cfm	
Transportation Authority of Marin - Transportation, Planning, & Land Use Solutions (TPLUS)	http://www.tam.ca.gov/ Section C-3.4 Toolset T-4: Mobility Needs of Seniors and Persons with Disabilities	
Marin Community Foundation's Report on Services for Older Adults in Marin	http://www.marincf.org/index.cfm	
Transportation Patterns and Needs Survey for Older Adults in Selected Housing Facilities	http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/Main/ag/PDFs/finalmarinseniorstransportationreport021809.pdf	
Marin County Area Plan for Aging 2009 - 2012	http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/ag/index.cfm	
Marin City Community Based Transportation Plan	Karita Zimmerman of TAM	Only existing conditions and appendix available
Canal Neighborhood Community Based Transportation Plan	http://www.tam.ca.gov/index.aspx?page=160	

Detailed Document Review

The below table provides a snapshot of the general level of senior mobility discussion and accommodation in each of the documents reviewed. A summary of each document follows the table.

Figure 4-2 Assessment Overview

Document	Addresses Senior Mobility (Limited/ Adequate/ Significant)?
Marin Countywide Plan	Limited
Golden Gate Transit Short Range Transit Plan	Limited
Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plan	Adequate
Marin County Enhanced Taxi Services Implementation Plan	Significant
Marin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	Adequate
Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program	Limited
Marin County ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan	Significant
TAM - Transportation, Planning, & Land Use Solutions (TPLUS)	Adequate
Report on Services for Older Adults in Marin - Marin Community Foundation	Adequate
Transportation Patterns and Needs Survey for Older Adults in Selected Housing Facilities	Significant
Marin County Area Plan for Aging 2009 - 2012	Adequate
Marin City Community Based Transportation Plan	Limited
Canal Neighborhood Community Based Transportation Plan	Limited

Marin Countywide Plan

The *Marin Countywide Plan* was adopted on November 6, 2007. This plan provides a framework for future development of the county, covering three broad categories: the natural systems and agriculture, the built environment, and the socioeconomic element. A figure from the Countywide Plan lists all the policies and programs related to the senior population. See Figure 3 for a subset of these policies and programs related to senior mobility. As can be seen from the table, senior mobility is not a strong emphasis of the *Countywide Plan* and there is only one policy directly addressing senior transportation. The plan covers many policies related to senior housing but does not make the important connection between housing location/characteristics and mobility.

Trail policy TRL 2.5 encourages design and development of trails that enhance accessibility by persons with disabilities. The two trail programs (TRL2.h and 2.i) work to identify and pursue new opportunities for trail access and distribute information concerning the availability of accessible trails and trail programs for seniors and persons with disabilities. TR-2.b *Adopt Standards for Pedestrian and Bicycle Access* lists a standard to provide safe road crossings at major intersections for schoolchildren and seniors.

The Socioeconomic Element of the Plan mentions an alarming statistic that 50.7% of Marin adults over the age of 60 are overweight or obese, and that 17.2% of seniors 60 and older never get moderate physical activity. Program PH 1.a advocates and supports policies, which encourage nutrition, physical activity, and education programs at schools, senior centers, and community based organizations. Healthier communities are promoted through sidewalks, safe routes to schools, parks, and gardens.

Figure 4-3 Countywide Plan Policies and Programs Related To Senior Mobility

Section	Policy/Program Number	Description
2.9	Trails	
	Policy TRL 2.5	Provide Access for Seniors and Persons with Special Needs
	Program TRL 2.h	Evaluate Existing Trails for Seniors and Disabled Access
	Program TRL 2.i	Distribute Information about Seniors and Disabled Access
3.9	Transportation	
	Program TR-2.b	Provide Countdown Crossings
4.11	Public Health	
	Program PH 1.a	Implement Policies That Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

The Transportation Element of the Plan also mentions funding to enhance senior mobility. Measure A, the Traffic Relief and Better Transportation Act, was approved by Marin voters in 2004 and authorized a half-cent sales tax. Over half of the funds would go towards developing a seamless local bus system serving community needs, including “special services for seniors and those with disabilities.”

Golden Gate Transit Short Range Transit Plan

The *Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD) Short-Range Transit Plan*, adopted on December 14, 2007, covers fiscal years 2008 – 2017. The *Short-Range Transit Plan* details the agency’s goals, objectives, standards, operations plan and budget, service and system evaluation, and capital improvement program. In regards to senior mobility, the Plan mainly focuses on paratransit services and ADA accessibility on existing lines. It does not address the broader category of senior accessibility, for the many seniors who are not paratransit (ADA)-eligible.

Paratransit

GGBHTD contracts for demand-responsive/paratransit service through an agreement with Marin Transit and its paratransit contractor, Whistlestop Wheels. Intercounty paratransit service is available to complement all GGT non-commute routes. Paratransit services comply with ADA requirements but serves only ADA-eligible individuals. Other agencies in Marin, Sonoma, and San Francisco provide non-ADA-qualified seniors and other individuals limited demand-responsive transportation services.

Novato Human Needs provides a private paratransit and shuttle service for seniors, primarily for shopping trips in Novato. Marin Transit operates the Novato Dial-a-Ride service, contracted for

operation to Whistlestop Wheels. It operates within Novato and connects with GGT at the Novato Transit Center. The County of Marin also provides a weekday shuttle bus service within San Rafael, between its offices at the Civic Center, Health and Human Services Department at 120 Redwood Boulevard, and the downtown San Rafael Transit Center.

One of core objectives of the Plan is to provide reliable, safe and effective transit services that attract and retain choice riders and meet the needs of transit-dependent riders. A primary measure of this objective is to provide the ADA required level of paratransit service with a goal of no denials of eligible ride requests. GGBHTD participated in a Marin Transit Study on Enhanced Taxi Services, completed in 2007; the agency may add accessible taxi programs to serve ADA paratransit customers in the next three years.

Fixed Route

GGT bus and ferry fares are discounted 50% for seniors. GGBHTD operates a 100% ramp/lift-equated fleet of buses. All GGBHTD-owned bus transit facilities are accessible. Golden Gate Ferry is undertaking a replacement and refurbishment project of the passenger boarding/alighting facilities at the Larkspur, San Francisco, and Sausalito ferry terminals. This will include replacement of passenger ramps to meet ADA requirements.

Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plan

The *Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plan for FY 2008/2009 – FY 2017/2018* was approved by the Marin Transit Board on April 20, 2009. The *Transit Plan* details the agency's performance, service plan and operation budget, marketing plan, and capital improvement plan. With respect to senior facilities, this Plan emphasizes its exceptional paratransit services and outlines goals to increase senior transit ridership.

As noted above, Marin County currently contracts with Whistlestop Wheels for paratransit services. Under this agreement, Whistlestop Wheels provides local and regional paratransit service for individuals who meet ADA eligibility requirements. The Novato Dial-a-Ride provides a flexible route and demand-response services open to all residents in the Novato area. This is an important service as it also provides transportation for those who may not qualify under ADA rules. Marin Transit also has a continuous paratransit vehicle replacement program, where matching funds come from Measure A and its partner agencies, GGBHTD and Whistlestop.

Marin County paratransit service goes beyond the ADA requirements in several aspects:

- Service is extended beyond the required ¾ of a mile radius from transit service
- Taxi overflow service is used to meet the demand for non-mandated and mandated trips
- ADA regulations allow for a fare charge up to $4.00, with no maximum charge for non-mandated trips. The paratransit fare is only $2.00 for mandated and $2.50 for non-mandated transits.
- Reservations are allowed up to seven days in advance, with limited quantity of life sustaining trips (mainly dialysis) reservations available. Neither is required.
- Drivers provide door-to-door service, assisting passengers to/from the front door to the vehicle. This is optional under ADA.

The Plan provides statistics that show senior ridership has increased 1% from 2005 to 2008. Marin Transit established a performance goal to have the proportion of local senior transit riders reflect the percentage of seniors in Marin County (15%). To increase ridership, Marin Transit

launched a travel training program in 2007 focused on encouraging seniors to use transit. The program aims to reduce the intimidation of transit and attract new senior riders through group presentations and field trips. Another component is a senior ambassador program designed to provide personalized support from a peer. Marin Transit's Senior Brochure highlights places seniors can travel on transit in Marin County, lists phone numbers for transit providers, and outlines the travel training program.

Marin County Enhanced Taxi Services Implementation Plan

In 2007, Marin Transit completed the *Enhanced Taxi Services for Social Service Transportation & Public Transit Programs in Marin County* project. The purpose of this project was to identify opportunities for enhanced taxi services to supplement and support social service transportation programs and public transit, including (but not limited to): Marin Transit and GGT paratransit, services for low-income persons, public bus and ferry services, and services for older adults. This implementation plan brought forward six enhanced taxi service strategies, of which one targets seniors and two more benefit seniors confined to wheelchairs or who are ADA-eligible.

Figure 4-4 Senior-Related Taxi Service Strategies

Service Strategy	Description	Markets Served
Marin County Senior Taxi Voucher Demonstration Project	Seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of a taxi voucher program as an ADA paratransit demand management strategy	Marin County seniors who can no longer drive but are not ADA-eligible
For-Hire Accessible Taxi Demonstration Project	Lease accessible taxis to local taxi companies to operate in regular for-hire taxi fleet. Demonstrate to local taxi industry that there is a market for accessible taxis.	Persons requiring a wheelchair accessible vehicle and General public taxi market
Supplemental Taxi Service Contract for Whistlestop Wheels	Expand current taxi use to mandated ADA trips. Use for overloads and trips where there is a cost advantage.	Whistlestop Wheels registrants

Marin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The *Marin County Unincorporated Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* was adopted by the Marin County Board of Supervisors on March 25, 2008. This plan works to push improvements to cycling and pedestrian environments throughout the County. The *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* has identified two groups, (a) schoolchildren and (b) senior citizens and people with disabilities, as important future beneficiaries of the *Plan*. Though few recommendations in the *Plan* are senior-specific, the *Plan* emphasizes that all recommendations will benefit the senior population and improve senior mobility. Two of the countywide projects, Marin Pathway Maintenance Program and Bus Stop Access Improvement Program, emphasize senior mobility.

Marin Pathway Maintenance Program

The following improvements are recommended to improve user safety, especially for children and seniors, and to encourage people to walk and bicycle:

- Evaluation of roadway crossings and improvements as needed including additional advisory and warning signs, longer signal times, etc.
- Provision of consistent pathway management signing to advise users about maximum speed limits, overtaking protocol, slower traffic staying to the right, leash requirements and dog etiquette, and any applicable enforcement codes.
- Pathway enhancements such as benches, historic markers, gateways, and/or landscaping as appropriate to make the pathway a more functional and enjoyable transportation facility.
- Exploration of innovative techniques such as colored pavement demarking user groups if approved for use in California, or possibly through a California Traffic Control Devices Committee-approved demonstration project. Colored bikeways have proven effective in Portland, Oregon, especially where the paths cross busy roadways.
- Raising the pathway elevation to reduce or eliminate the impacts of flooding or tidal action.
- Improving existing bridges as needed.
- Guide signs and informational kiosks

Bus Stop Access Improvement Program

This program will improve pedestrian, bicycle and ADA access through rehabilitation of bus stops in Marin County. Each bus stop rehabilitation may include the following components:

- Resolution of any safety concerns (inadequate sight distances, crosswalks in bus zone, etc). This may result in stop relocation, bus bulbs, and removal of obstacles.
- Addition or rehabilitation of ramps, paths, and sidewalks to meet ADA accessibility standards.
- Improved connections with existing pedestrian and bicycle networks
- Additional shelters where desired and physically feasible. Where a shelter is not feasible, a bench or other seating will be considered as an alternative.
- Trash receptacles at all high usage stops or stops with shelters
- Detailed signage to provide service information.
- Provision of bicycle parking, including lockers, at the highest volume locations, unless precluded by site constraints.

Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program

Marin County is one of four communities to be part of the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP) federal grant, which is looking at how investments in walking and biking could increase the number of people that walk and bike. The County has $25 million through the grant to make significant infrastructure improvements and study the before/after effects of the improvements. None of the improvement projects or events are senior-specific and there is no emphasis on targeting the senior population.

Marin County ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a comprehensive civil rights law for persons with disabilities in both employment and provision of goods and services. The *ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan* assists the County of Marin in identifying policy, program, and physical barriers to accessibility, and provides recommendations for ensuring compliance with ADA. This *Plan* is relevant to senior mobility since compliance with ADA benefits seniors with disabilities. The *Plan* highlights many areas affecting senior mobility, including: prioritizing barrier removal within facilities, sidewalks and curb ramps, pedestrian rights-of-way, standard curb ramp construction, right-of-way access improvements, on-street accessible parking, accessible pedestrian signals, and park trails.

TAM Transportation, Land Use & Planning Toolkit

The Marin Pedestrian and Transit-Oriented Design Toolkit was developed by the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) as part of the Transportation and Land Use Solutions (TPLUS) program in Marin County. Its goals is to help local planners, engineers, elected officials, and private citizens work together to develop new and coordinated approaches to addressing some of the County's most pervasive transportation and land use challenges.

Under section C-3, “Multimodal Streets and Circulation Network Design Guidance”, Toolset 3 focuses on Neighborhood Street Design, which includes recommendations on curb ramps, sidewalk widths, and pedestrian amenities, all relevant to senior pedestrians. Toolset 4 addresses “Mobility Needs of Seniors and People with Disabilities”. *Tool T-4.1* discusses the connection of land use and transportation, and improving local transit services and amenities that serve seniors. This section makes several recommendations, including that Marin Transit be more engaged in reviewing development applications for senior housing and facilities to determine transit accessibility. *Tool T-4.2* focuses on steps to create ADA-compliant pedestrian networks. *Tool T-4.3* supplies references to resources on ADA standards and recommends updating transition plans.

Report on Services for Older Adults in Marin – Marin Community Foundation

This report, published in September 2008, assesses the system of services for older adults in Marin and provides recommendations for future actions. It covers the topics of housing, healthcare, transportation, information access, diversity, and social engagement. The report found that a lack of accessible transportation options is a major problem, particularly in rural areas. Both policymakers and service providers note that many non-driving older adults are left with few options because of the disability requirements for paratransit and limited service to rural areas. The report provides two high level long-term recommendations addressing the mobility of older adults in Marin.

Figure 4-5 Mobility Related Recommendations, MCF

Recommendation	Time Frame	Strategy	Detail
Enhance transportation options	Long term	Implement risk reduction strategies for older drivers. Devise multiple strategies for increasing the availability of transportation to older adults.	A lack of transportation options is hindering older adults' efforts to reach services and be active members of society. Since expansion of public transportation infrastructure is an expensive undertaking and can be impractical for remote areas, multiple solutions will be needed. Formal and informal service providers, policymakers, and others should join in generating and testing innovative ideas. Furthermore, risk reduction strategies should be put in place for older drivers and those with disabilities as their numbers on the road increase. Strategies include the use of occupational therapists to help drivers work around muscular difficulties; modifications to vehicles that aid with getting in and out of the car as well as assist with vehicle controls; and education of physicians to connect declines in patients' function to driving ability and safety, making relevant referrals
Evaluate neighborhood walkability	Long term	Implement neighborhood walkability evaluations in communities across Marin, and use results to inform community planning.	In addition to improved and expanded transportation options, communities can evaluate whether services and resources are available locally and the ease with which non-driving residents would be able to reach them by walking. One available survey instrument, developed through Active Living Research, a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is the Neighborhood Environment Walkability Survey. It is designed to assess neighborhood infrastructure, safety, and satisfaction, and can inform community planning and change.

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2009

Transportation Patterns and Needs Survey for Older Adults Living in Selected Housing Facilities in Marin County

This report presents the findings of a study of the transportation patterns and needs for residents and employees at ten long-term care residential facilities in Marin County. The study produced the following results:

- At independent living facilities, driving is an issue, but so is not driving. Though residents are highly mobile, destinations are not always within walking distance from the facility.
- Facilities that have shuttles and vans seem to work the best. The service offers flexibility and has a high ridership. However, they still do not meet all needs.
- The Golden Gate public transit system is not able to adequately accommodate the special needs of riders. As such, some facilities have discouraged residents from using the service.
- Whistlestop Paratransit services are available, but it is not appropriate for everyone. Taxi vouchers might be a preferred option.
- Residents value walking as an important and beneficial exercise to keep healthy. However, neighborhoods are not always walkable due to pedestrian safety issues.

- Involvement of family members to drive residents who are no longer able to drive is central to older adults' feeling that their mobility needs are met.
- For employees, arranging carpools and vanpools may be a solution. Options for mid-day transportation such as carshare and bikeshare may be offered.

The transportation patterns study also provided suggested areas of focus for future transportation/mobility planning:

- Provide coaching to residents, staff, and family members on how to "give up the keys."
- Locate new housing constructions near walkable destinations. Existing housing facilities may also consider offering more services onsite.
- Conduct periodic surveys for transportation service needs to include time, days, and destinations. Consider one-on-one outreach to residents who express concerns that their needs are not met.
- Consider bringing services, such as drug store delivery, grocery store delivery, hair stylist to the facility.
- Supplement van service with car service.
- Encourage walking to services where pedestrian safety is not an issue.
- Prioritize pedestrian safety and traffic calming improvements near older adult housing sites, especially where independent living facilities are located.

Marin County Area Plan for Aging - Draft

The Marin County Division of Aging and Adult Services is required to submit an Area Plan that reflects future activities to best serve the needs identified by older adults, adults with disabilities, their families, and caregivers. These needs and concerns are addressed in a manner consistent with the Older Americans Act and Older Californians Act. This draft plan, covering years 2009 to 2012, has established major goals for Marin County for the next three years, as shown in Table 6. Objectives for fiscal year 2009-2010 were also established to address each major goal. Of these 24 objectives, only two are directly related to senior mobility (objective 1b & 1e). Objective 2f (under Goal #2) could have more specific detail to provide transportation information to the senior community. In a similar manner, objective 3a (under Goal #3) could be specific in suggesting a working relationship with the public and private transit agencies serving the Marin County community. The recommendations in the above Patterns and Needs study could also be incorporated in this Plan.

Figure 4-6 Area Plan Goals and Objectives – Senior Mobility Related

Objective	Projected Start and End Dates	Senior Mobility Addressed?
GOAL #1: Promote a community-based system of care that sustains the independence of older adults		
1b. The Housing & Transportation Committee will participate in the development of a "Senior Mobility Action and Implementation Plan" for Marin County by contributing to focus group discussions, working groups and project activities. The project aims to increase the types of transportation options for older adults that fit their physical needs and lifestyle, at the same time decreasing dependency on autos and improving public transit	7/1/09 – 6/30/10	Yes
1e. The Division of Aging and Adult Services will facilitate the recovery of Project Independence older adult patients discharged from hospitals through a volunteer transportation program aimed at preventing social isolation, helping clients successfully fulfill their discharge plans, and sustaining clients' ability to remain independent.	7/1/09 – 6/30/10	Yes
GOAL #2: Increase opportunities for people to access information about community resources.		
2f. The Public Information Committee will improve older adults, caregivers and disabled individuals' access to services by evaluating current methods of disseminating information; developing new strategies to increase awareness about available services; and conducting a survey to assess improvements in obtaining information and resources. The Great Age newsletter, 457-INFO line and community presentations will be evaluated for this purpose.	7/1/09 – 6/30/10	Has Opportunity To
GOAL #3: Improve the well-being of adults particularly those with special needs		
3a. The Ombudsman Program will sponsor a minimum of six in-service training sessions for staff and volunteers with other community programs who serve Marin County's elderly and disabled populations. The program will establish formal working relationships with each relevant agency in order to expand and enhance services to long-term care clients, both in facilities and living independently.	7/1/09 – 6/30/10	Has Opportunity To

Marin City Community-Based Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Community-Based Transportation Program identifies minority and low-income Bay Area communities and utilizes a grassroots approach to create a collaborative planning process involving residents, community organizations, and other groups, to identify and overcome barriers to mobility. The Marin City Community-Based Transportation Plan is the result of those efforts for Marin City. Parts of the report were available for review, including the Existing Conditions Report and the Appendix, which includes community survey results. Neither of these documents discusses future transportation plans or solutions. These documents indicated that:

- The population of Marin City is considerably younger than the rest of the County, with only 8% of the population being 65 years of age and older, compared to the County at 14%

- The report recognizes that senior communities are poorly served by the existing local transit system
- Per survey responses, providing special transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities ranked high as a beneficial transportation solution

In 2010, Marin Transit will implement a key service recommendation that emerged from this planning process. Under an MTC administered Lifeline grant, Marin Transit is developing a shuttle that will circulate in Marin City neighborhoods and transport residents to medical facilities in Greenbrae, including Marin General Hospital.

Canal Neighborhood Community-Based Transportation Plan

As mentioned above, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Community-Based Transportation Planning Program identifies minority and low-income Bay Area communities and utilizes a grassroots approach to create a collaborative planning process involving residents, community organizations, and other groups, to identify and overcome barriers to mobility. The Canal Neighborhood Community Based Transportation Plan, completed in September 2006, is the result of those efforts for the City of San Rafael's Canal Neighborhood.

The transportation plan provides a list of 13 transportation solutions to address the Canal Neighborhoods' transportation gaps identified by the community. The majority of these solutions impact senior mobility, although none of them formally address it. There is some mention of ADA requirements and accessibility in these solutions.

Figure 4-7 Recommended Transportation Solutions, Canal Area CBTP

Transportation Solution	Senior Mobility Addressed?
1. Adjustments to Bus Transit Service	No
2. Crosswalk and Lighting Improvements	No
3. Canal Crossing	No
4. Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Improvements	Improvements will improve ADA access, reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians, and improve visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalks.
5. Bus Shelters	ADA accessibility improvements
6. Safety and Streetscape Improvement Project	Project would focus on improvements for ADA access (addition of curb ramps and removal of other barriers)
7. Highway Crossing	No
8.'Street Smarts' Program	No
9. Rides to School for Parents Program	No
10. Neighborhood Transportation Information Kiosk	No
11. Canalfront Paseo	No

Transportation Solution	Senior Mobility Addressed?
12. Modified Transit Fare to Downtown	No
13. Car Share Program	No

Preliminary Recommendations

A thorough review of relevant plans, studies, and programs, indicates that public agencies serving Marin have opportunities to revise and update their policies to strengthen their support of senior mobility issues and needs. In addition, these agencies can further expand the recommendations beyond ADA accessibility to address a range of mobility needs of all seniors in the County.

Figure 4-8 Preliminary Recommendations

Document	Preliminary Recommendations
Marin County	
Marin Countywide Plan	Update senior housing policies to address the connection between housing location/characteristics and mobility
Marin County Area Plan for Aging - Draft	Update Goal #2 to have more specific detail to provide transportation information to the senior community Update Goal #3 to suggest a working relationship with public and private transit agencies to address senior mobility
Marin County Enhanced Taxi Services Implementation Plan	Consider expanding taxi voucher program if demonstration project has positive results
Marin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	Increase the number of recommendations focusing on senior mobility needs, accessibility around senior centers, and housing
Marin County ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan	Include senior-oriented criteria in prioritization of ADA improvements
TAM Transportation, Planning, & Land Use Solutions (TPLUS)	Using the principles articulated in section A-3, continue to develop recommendations for policy development and actions.
Transportation Patterns and Needs Survey for Older Adults in Selected Housing Facilities	Create policies based on this study's suggested areas of focus for future planning
Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program	Include specific accommodations for seniors in existing projects and consider selecting future project(s) to improve senior mobility
Bus Stop Access Improvement Program	Prioritize bus stop improvement locations based on senior-oriented criteria and in areas where seniors and senior-oriented services are concentrated
Report on Services for Older Adults in Marin - Marin Community Foundation	Provide short-term recommendations for more immediate results in addressing senior mobility.
Marin City Community Based Transportation Plan	Implement planned shuttle to address needs of senior communities in the area

Document	Preliminary Recommendations
Canal Neighborhood Community Based Transportation Plan	Include policies that specifically address senior mobility
Transit Agencies	
Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plan	Continue to work toward performance goal to have the proportion of local senior transit riders reflect the percentage of seniors in Marin County (15%)
Golden Gate Transit Short Range Transit Plan	Create policies to support seniors who are not paratransit (ADA)-eligible

Chapter 5. Best Practices in Senior Mobility

With the rapidly growing senior population and the mobility issues described in the previous chapters, communities are taking steps to enable older people to drive safely as long as possible, and to provide real alternatives to driving for older people who do not wish to drive, cannot afford to drive, or can no longer drive for reasons related to aging. In many cases, cities, counties, and community organizations are already stepping in to provide services that meet these challenges. Examples of such efforts are provided in this section. It is hoped that these examples can be replicated and customized in Marin communities.

Safe Driving

Outside of big cities the great majority of older people rely on driving for most of their travel. Research for MTC's Older Adults Transportation Study showed that, in the next 20 years, older people will increasingly live in places where public transportation is very limited. As a result, maintaining the mobility of older people has to include ways to help older people drive safely as long as possible. Local efforts to promote older driver safety include programs to educate older people and their families about myths and realities concerning older drivers, recognizing the effects of aging on driving and compensating for them, how to determine when it is time to curtail or stop one's driving, and information about alternatives to driving.

Older driver training curricula and materials have been developed by AARP, the American Automobile Association, and the National Safety Council. Courses based on these curricula are widely available. AAA produces a variety of public service brochures in a series called "Straight Talk for Mature Drivers." The AAA Foundation on Traffic Safety also offers a variety of free booklets:

- How to Help an Older Driver discusses how families and friends of older drivers can help them maintain their independence and mobility without sacrificing safety.
- The Older and Wiser Driver explains how to compensate for the effects of aging.
- Drivers 55 Plus: Test Your Own Performance is a questionnaire to test driving-related skills with suggested measures.
- A Flexibility Fitness Training Program Package for Improving Older Driver Performance outlines exercises that older drivers can perform at home.

AARP's Driver Safety Program covers topics such as vision and hearing changes, effects of medication, and reaction time changes. AARP also produces an *Older Driver Skill Assessment and Resource Guide* to help with self-assessment and a *Community Transportation Resource Worksheet* to help identify alternatives to driving that people can use.

The American Society of Aging (ASA) has identified a need to improve existing older driver training programs. In a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), ASA has developed Internet-based materials to assist communities in targeting older drivers with messages about safe driving in later life. The program, called Driving Wellness After 60, includes a comprehensive curriculum for training professionals on how to counsel older adults and their families on older driving, locating resources for older drivers, and other topics.

The website provides a toolkit for holding classes or discussions with older drivers. The driver curriculum focuses on increasing awareness of the effects of aging and health on driving abilities, self-assessment, and steps that can be taken to maximize driving abilities, such as strength training, medication assessments, and driver rehabilitation courses. The curriculum addresses the development of transportation plans, in which older drivers begin discussing transportation as another consideration for the future if and when they are no longer able to live completely independently.

The materials described above as well as others are available on the Internet:

> The New York State Guide *When You Are Concerned - A guide for families concerned about the safety of an aging driver* is available at www.aging.ny.gov/Caregiving/OlderDriver/Handbook2007.pdf .
>
> The California State Automobile Association (AAA) serves the older driver in a variety of ways. AAA Foundation's web site, www.SeniorDrivers.org , provides information on license renewal, research on senior drivers, and vehicles with senior-friendly features. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's publications can be ordered for free at www.aaafoundation.org/products/index.cfm .
>
> An on-line called booklet *Driving Safety While Aging Gracefully* outlines the physical changes associated with aging, as well as tips on coping with them. It was developed by the USAA Educational Foundation, AARP, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It is available at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/Driving Safely Aging Web
>
> AARP's Older driver publications are available at www.aarp.org/family/articles/resources_on_safe.html .
>
> ASA's Driving Wellness After 60 materials are available at http://www.asaging.org/cdc/module4/home.cfm .

Helping Older People Access and Use Transportation Services

Transportation services for older people (and for the general public) are provided by a wide variety of organizations with differing areas of service and differing missions. These divisions can make can make it hard for older people to locate appropriate services and find out how to use them, and can make travel across jurisdictional boundaries difficult. In the case of services provided by public transportation operators, this mosaic of services results from operator service areas that follow political boundaries that often have little to do with actual travel patterns. In the case of more specialized services, a variety of services is necessary to tap the resources and initiative of community organizations, to integrate services with the provision of human services, and to meet the variety of needs of older people.

This section illustrates some of the approaches being taken to make the complex collection of transportation services easier to access and use by older people and those who care for them.

Conventional Public Transportation

In the case of public transportation, operators attempt to coordinate schedules at convenient transfer points, pursue coordinated methods to provide information about services, and have developed agreements regarding payment of fares using transfers and multi-operator passes.

These efforts are intended to help all transit users, not just older people. Initiatives to help older people take advantage of these services are a promising area for future work.

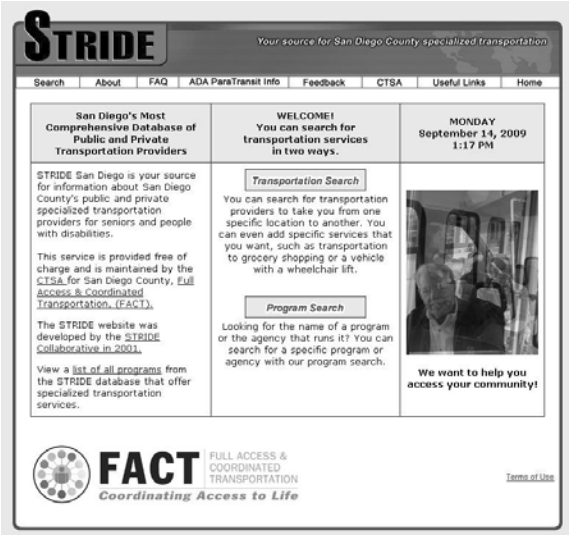
In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission operates a web site, www.511.org, with information about services and fares of all transit operators in the region. The web site includes a trip planner that provides detailed information about how to travel by public transit between any two points in the region, including transfers between multiple operators. Similar web-based multi-operator trip planners are available for the Southern California region ("Transtar": http://latranstar.tann.com) and the San Diego region(www.sdcommute.com).

For people without internet access or who prefer to speak to a person on the telephone, options are more limited. In the Bay Area, MTC's trip planning information available on the web site described above can be accessed by dialing 511. In San Diego, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board has developed coordinated transit information resources for all operators in its region. Riders can call San Diego Transit and obtain information about trips using any of the transit operators in the area. MTC is almost finished implementing a regional smart card system, called TransLink, that can be used on all the major transit operators in the region.

Specialized Services for Older People

When it comes to accessing the array of local community services operated by cities, community-based organizations, and human service agencies, the usual sources of travel information are often of limited help. Some of the steps that have been taken to help include: 1) specialized web-based information, and 2) improved telephone information and referral services.

Web-based Information in San Diego



In San Diego County, a collaborative of community and government agencies created a web-based service, www.stridesd.org, with information about transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities called STRIDE (Specialized Transportation Referral and Information for the Disabled and Elderly). Users can specify the origin and destination of their trips, based on cities, neighborhoods, and major facilities, and choose from a list of 23 types of service they may need, for example door-to-door service, transport to medical appointments, taxi vouchers, and wheelchair lifts. The web site will then provide information about all the services that meet the specified criteria. Users can also browse a list of more than 150 participating programs, which can be printed for seniors who do not use the internet themselves.

The STRIDE website was developed in 2002 by a collaborative including the Coordinated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), Del Mar Community Connections, North County Lifeline, Inc., Out and About Vista, and Redwood Senior Homes and Services. San Diego Aging and Independence Services provided funding for computer programming and the technical aspects of the web site development. Information from the Social Services Transportation Inventory conducted every four years by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) provided

the starting point for the STRIDE database. Collaborative members then resurveyed all the listed agencies to update and complete the necessary information.

The principal users of STRIDE are social workers and others who work with seniors, adult children of older people (especially those living outside the San Diego area), and older people who use computers themselves.

SANDAG, as the CTSA for the county, has assumed responsibility for maintaining the web site and plans to conduct a comprehensive update of the information every six months. Participating agencies can update their listings at any time using the Feedback link on the web site.

Enhanced Information and Referral in Orange County, California

Another approach to helping older people access transportation services is to enhance the ability of information and referral staff to locate appropriate services and connect older people with them. The Orange County Office on Aging (OoA) implemented a program of this type in mid-2002. In addition to funding several specific transportation services, the County has implemented a “one-stop” information and outreach program to inform seniors of available transportation options. Older adults can call the OoA’s information and assistance toll-free number and reach specially trained professionals who assess the caller’s transportation needs and refer them to options including:

- Services created under the County’s non-emergency medical transportation program;
- City transportation services, including many implemented through the Orange County Transportation Authority’s (OCTA’s) Senior Mobility Program;
- Any of the community-based and human service transportation programs in the county included in the annual list developed by the Transportation Committee of the Senior Citizen’s Advisory Council;
- OCTA’s fixed-route transit and ADA paratransit services; and
- Additional resources located by OoA staff.

Transportation is the second most common topic of calls, exceeded only by housing. The volume of transportation calls is expected to increase as OoA conducts additional outreach.

Helping Seniors Become Comfortable Using Transit

Most older people who need to begin curtailing their driving have little experience using public transportation. Since they have grown up driving they may know very little about transit options where they live and may not realize that they could use transit for many of their needs. A number of communities have created programs to familiarize older people with transit service using measures such as field trips, bus buddies and escorts, and joint promotions with merchants.

Santa Rosa Seniors on the Go

The City of Santa Rosa has developed a very successful senior marketing campaign called "Seniors on the Go" for its *CityBus* fixed route transit system. First introduced in October 2001, the program has continued as an annual *CityBus* promotion. For one week every October, all seniors age 65 years and older enjoy unlimited free access to all *CityBus* routes by showing a

"Seniors on the Go" pass. The passes are available at numerous outlets around Santa Rosa, distributed by the City's campaign partners and mailed to all senior residences and complexes.

Various incentives are used to encourage participation, including prizes of $50 gift certificates from a local grocery store or one of ten *CityBus* passes good for the month of their choice. The program is specifically intended to take advantage of available capacity on the transit system during midday hours. "Riding Tips" in the brochure to which the passes are attached encourage seniors to ride between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to avoid the work and school rush. In the first year of the program, senior and disabled ridership during the week of the promotion was 60% higher than the same week the previous year.

Local partners, including senior housing facilities, senior centers, AARP and local hospitals and the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging publicized the program in their newsletters and provided mailing lists. The partnership has helped *CityBus* establish coalitions with senior organizations to support other initiatives to build ridership by seniors and build support for transit.

Santa Rosa CityBus has two other senior-oriented programs. The Bus Buddy program provides personalized bus training for seniors and is promoted as part of Seniors on the Go and throughout the year. Through this program, riders are paired with volunteers who escort seniors on a trip on the bus. The "Learn to Ride CityBus" Travel Training Program is a one- to two-hour comprehensive training program introducing senior riders to the features of CityBus, and provides information on fares, bus tickets, monthly passes and transfers. Seniors learn how to read the CityBus System route map and schedules

Napa Transit Ambassadors

In suburban areas where transportation is oriented toward driving, many seniors don't use transit because they simply have never used it before and are unfamiliar with the logistics. The Napa County Transportation Planning Agency (NCTPA) coordinates a Transit Ambassador program that offers personalized orientation for new users of public transit in Napa County. Trained volunteers assist new riders in learning the basics of bus riding such as how to read schedules, plan a trip, use transfers, pay fares, use passes, where to catch the bus, and how special features, such as the wheelchair lift and "kneeler" work. The Ambassador can help alleviate fears of getting lost or taking the wrong bus by being a "travel buddy." The Ambassadors are all bus riders themselves, and many of them have disabilities of one kind or another.

Ambassadors provide several kinds of assistance, including one-on-one help to new transit riders or those who have had an unpleasant initial experience on the bus. Senior citizens, youth and people with disabilities are encouraged to take advantage of the program. The Ambassador will bring schedules and information about the bus, help plan a trip, and accompany the new rider, demonstrating features of the bus, repeating the process until the trainee feels comfortable about their ability to ride the bus alone. The Ambassadors also help out at the downtown transit center and provide assistance to other riders on board the buses.

New riders are assessed for their suitability for the Transit Ambassador program through a phone or personal interview, since people with severe cognitive or developmental disabilities may need more intensive training than the volunteer Ambassadors can provide.

As of mid-2009 there were seven Transit Ambassadors, recruited through social service agencies, by advertising on the buses, and by word of mouth. In seeking new Ambassadors, it is considered essential that candidates be "true bus riders" who know the system and will be enthusiastic about helping people learn to use it. Candidates fill out an application and are interviewed; those who may not have the temperament to act as one-on-one travel buddies may still be selected to help out at the Transit Center. As of 2009, as a requirement of being part of the California Transportation Insurance Pool (CalTIP), a background check is run on all applicants.

Prospective Ambassadors initially receive four hours of classroom training and go on a bus field trip. They receive a binder with information about all of NCTPA's programs, which is updated as service and policies change. The Ambassadors also receive vests, tee shirts, and pouches, all bearing the "Transit Ambassador" logo, which they wear while helping new riders or just while riding the bus. After 8 hours of service, they also receive a free bus pass to use whether they are working or not. Each new volunteer agrees to spend at least eight hours per month as an Ambassador, including time spent helping out at the transit center, riding the bus, and providing one-on-one assistance. The Ambassadors meet six times a year, when they are apprised of service changes and may receive additional training on new equipment and routes.

The budgeted cost of the program is minimal. In an average year, the special outings and supplies for the program including give-aways and thank you gifts cost approximately $1000 for all Ambassadors. The agency considers the program a valuable way to help orient new riders, and also a good way to involve the community.

Pedestrian Safety

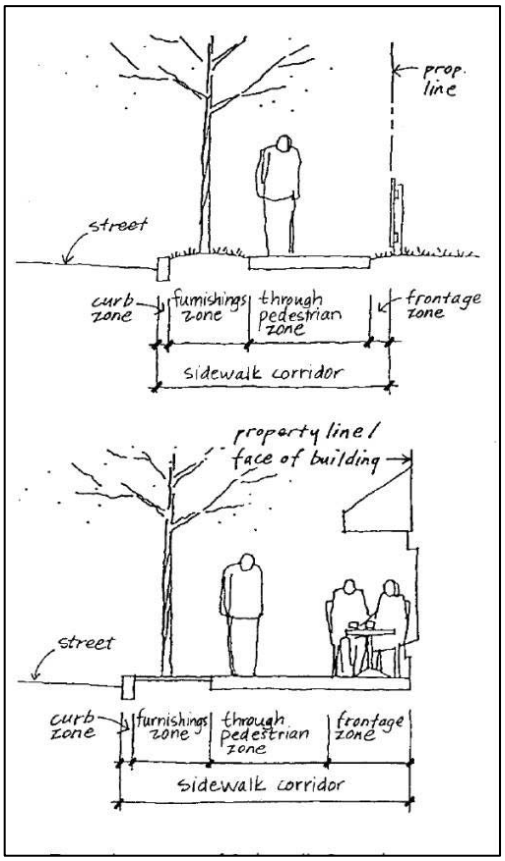
Walking (including travel by wheelchair) is one of the most important ways that seniors travel, especially for short trips in urban areas. Safe walking routes in neighborhoods enable people to reach transit stops and can make it possible for people to reach local businesses without using a car. In commercial areas and business districts, safe walking routes are necessary to be able to reach destinations independently from transit stops and from parking areas.

Pedestrian safety is especially important for older people. People age 65 and older have the highest traffic-related pedestrian death rates of any age group in California. In 2000, older adults represented 40% of all pedestrians killed and 12% of those injured in traffic crashes.[6] Many communities have begun initiatives to promote a safe walking environment for all people, including older people. Portland, Oregon, and Oakland, California, are examples of cities that have conducted comprehensive pedestrian planning process. In San Francisco, community advocacy has been a focus of pedestrian safety efforts.

[6] California Task Force on Older Adults and Traffic Safety, *Traffic Safety Among Older Adults: Recommendations for California*, Center for Injury Prevention Policy and Practice, San Diego State University (no date).

Pedestrian Planning in Portland, Oregon

The most basic changes needed to enable older people to walk in their neighborhoods are the same ones that will help everyone. The Portland, Oregon, region has been particularly active in promoting walking as the preferred mode of transportation for short trips. In 1998, the City completed work on a *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan*. The Plan establishes a 20-year framework for improvements that will enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation. The plan includes pedestrian policies, pedestrian street classifications, pedestrian design guidelines, a list of capital projects, and a set of recommended funding strategies. A *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide* was produced in conjunction with the plan, with the goal of every project designed and built in the City of Portland conforming to these guidelines.



Typical sections of sidewalk corridor in a residential zone (top) and commercial zone (bottom).

(Portland Pedestrian Design Guide)

Because of annexation over the last several decades, many neighborhoods were not built to urban standards and lacked any sidewalks. The plan relied on research showing that simply adding sidewalks in these areas would not create walkable communities.[7] The research identified four Pedestrian Environmental Factors needed to increase pedestrian modal share: ease of street crossings, sidewalk continuity, street connectivity, and topography.

The *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide* addresses the first two items in great detail. The Guide is clearly written with useful illustrations, specifying how projects should be built, and explaining the importance of its recommendations. The Guide specifies that sidewalk improvements be provided on both sides on all new public streets, in conjunction with improvements to most existing streets, and, to the extent practicable, as part of all new infill building development on existing streets. Exceptions can be made where there are severe topographic or natural resource constraints or on certain short cul-de-sacs.

City development review and transportation staff apply these guidelines as part of the development review process. Even a significant home remodel can trigger review of the street frontage, resulting in a requirement for sidewalk construction. While this can result in isolated sidewalk segments, staff regard this as a 100-year investment.

The Guide includes detailed recommendations for sidewalks, crosswalks, and street corners such as the required width of a “through pedestrian zone”, maximum grades, using curbs to delineate the pedestrian zone, providing street trees, treatment of driveways, and many other topics.

[7] *Making the Land Use Transportation Air Quality Connection,* Volume 4A, “The Pedestrian Environment,” Parsons Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, inc. with Cambridge Systematics, Inc. and Calthorpe Associates, December 1993.

The *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan* included a process for prioritizing pedestrian improvements over the next twenty years. To do this, two tools were developed: 1) a Pedestrian Potential Index that measures the strength of environmental factors that favor walking; and 2) a Deficiency Index that measures how critically improvements are needed. The Pedestrian Potential Index includes factors such as: location within a designated pedestrian district; proximity to destinations such as schools, parks, transit, and neighborhood shopping; and mixed land uses. The Deficiency Index includes missing sidewalks, difficult and dangerous street crossings, and lack of a connected street network. Projects that have a high pedestrian potential and a high deficiency were assigned the highest priority.

The process for the *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan* did not explicitly consider the needs of seniors. However, the *Pedestrian Design Guide* does includes very detailed specifications for curb ramps and recommends some increase in pedestrian crossing intervals for pedestrians with disabilities. More generally, the entire process is intended to promote walking as a mode for everybody.

As implemented, Portland's pedestrian planning process has resulted in a very responsive system for pedestrian needs of all types. A full-time Pedestrian Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the work of City engineering and planning staff on pedestrian issues, including extensive staff outreach and training. Individuals can report unsafe conditions and request improvements by calling a Transportation Safety and Livability Hotline, calling the Pedestrian Coordinator, or by calling the responsible departments, including the Signals Division, directly.

Portland's Pedestrian Master Plan, Design Guide, and many other useful resources can be found at www.portlandonline.com/transportation/.

Oakland Pedestrian Master Plan

The Oakland City Council adopted the Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) as part of the Land Use and Transportation Element of the City's General Plan in November 2002. The Plan aims to improve pedestrian conditions in the city of Oakland. It includes a summary of existing conditions including a collision analysis, establishment of a pedestrian route network, policy recommendations, engineering design elements and an implementation plan. In the formation of the plan, the Oakland Pedestrian Safety Project (OPSP) conducted extensive outreach including consultation with older adults. The Plan includes a number of components that show its consideration of older people who walk.

The PMP outreach included a wide spectrum of opportunities for seniors to provide input. Outreach was conducted through neighborhood associations and crime prevention councils (with the Oakland Police Department), which often take place in retirement homes and senior community centers and have a high attendance of older adults. In addition, community-based organizations for seniors, such as United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County and Asian Health Service, were involved in the outreach efforts. As a result the plan had a high level of input from Oakland's older population.

One element of the existing conditions chapter is an analysis of collision patterns including senior pedestrian collisions. The plan identifies the top ten intersections for senior pedestrian collisions relative to the location of senior centers. The analysis found that four of the top ten intersections had traffic signals and six were within one-quarter mile of a senior center. In addition, seniors suffer the highest rates of pedestrian fatalities (24% of fatal pedestrian/motor vehicle collisions and 10.5% of Oakland's population). Older adults are also most likely to be hit in crosswalks.

When formulating the PMP's recommendations, its authors used the "universal design" approach, choosing designs for the most vulnerable populations with the expectation that everyone's needs would be served. One of the most significant issues for senior pedestrians is crossing light times. Oakland's PMP includes a section on crossing treatments, which suggests a variety of treatments that can be used at intersections where pedestrian safety is a concern. These treatments include high-visibility ladder striping and distinctive paving of crosswalks, longer pedestrian crossing times, leading pedestrian intervals, scramble and countdown pedestrian signals, and audible signals.

The implementation of the PMP is a project in itself. United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County managed the community organizing aspect of the implementation of the plan. The Robert Woods Johnson Foundation awarded United Seniors $33,000 for the 18-month community-organizing process. This process involved identifying pedestrian safety hotspots, educating older adults on the benefits of walking, identifying and attempting to address barriers to walking (like crossing time and the need for benches to rest along the way), a walking audit of neighborhoods with a high concentration of seniors, and holding politicians, engineers, planners, and public safety officials accountable for pedestrian conditions.

Community Organizing in San Francisco

George Draper

In San Francisco, efforts to improve pedestrian safety for older people and others have involved community organizations, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT). During 2001 through 2003, several San Francisco community-based organizations were aided in their pedestrian safety efforts by "mini-grants" provided by DPH under its Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Project using grants from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). DPH views pedestrian safety as a public health issue, and its approach to health education campaigns (such as past violence and tobacco use prevention campaigns) matches OTS' approach to traffic safety through public awareness, education, and coalition building.* According to DPH staff, community-based advocacy has proved to be a very effective mechanism to help the City prioritize improvements that help seniors and others.

In 2002 and 2003, DPH awarded mini-grants to 19 community-based organizations to improve pedestrian and traffic safety among seniors, children, a variety of immigrant groups, bicyclists, and minority communities. In response to the work of the community organizations, DPT has made numerous improvements at intersections and incorporates seniors' concerns in the way it designs pedestrian crossings.

* OTS grants are awarded in nine priority areas, of which pedestrian and bicycle safety is one. Currently the program is targeting other topics.

MTC Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Toolbox

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has developed an on-line *Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Toolbox* to increase public agency awareness of the tools available to them, including:

- information on the risks of traveling to pedestrians and bicyclists
- a description of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- descriptions and illustrations of over 80 site-specific and programmatic tools to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- information on funding opportunities, and
- select success stories from the Bay Area and beyond.

Some of the tools of particular interest for older people are pedestrian signal countdown timers, longer WALK phases at traffic signals, community education, audible pedestrian signals, automated pedestrian detection, pedestrian signals that confirm activation, and brochures explaining the use of pedestrian signals. For each tool, information is provided about advantages and disadvantages, costs, locations where it has been tried, and contacts to obtain more information. While not specifically directed at the needs of seniors, these measures can help make walking safer for everyone.

The toolbox is a living document that will be updated periodically as new information and technologies become available. It is accessible through MTC's web page at www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/bicyclespedestrians/safety/overview.htm.

Local Shuttles and Circulators

Many cities have introduced local shuttle routes to supplement regional services operated by transit agencies. The shuttles commonly use small vehicles, operate on neighborhood streets, and link local destinations of interest to seniors, youth, and commuters needing access to and from rail stations. Among the Bay Area cities that currently operate local shuttles are Burlingame, Emeryville, Foster City, Menlo Park, Novato, Oakland, Palo Alto, and San Carlos. A particularly attractive feature of shuttles is their ability to serve several kinds of trips and groups.

West Oakland Senior Shuttle

The West Oakland Senior Shuttle connects 6 senior housing complexes to food shopping and senior center meal programs. The shuttle is operated by Bay Area Community Services (BACS) using funding from the 7th Street/McClymonds Neighborhood Improvement Initiative, which is supported with grants from the Hewlett Foundation, and a portion of the City of Oakland's share of the countywide Measure B sales tax devoted to transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. The Transportation Committee of the Mayor's Commission on Aging has been instrumental in obtaining funding and conducting outreach among residents of the senior the shuttle.

West Oakland is a low-income neighbor-hood with a predominantly minority population located immediately west and north of downtown Oakland. The City has attempted to get a grocery store to locate in West Oakland, but so far there are very limited food shopping opportunities within the neighborhood.

The shuttle picks up residents from the senior complexes and takes them to lunch at the West Oakland Senior center and to a variety of food shopping opportunities in other neighborhoods chosen by the seniors. There is a sign up list at each of the housing complexes. The residents are encouraged to sign up for the shuttle in advance, although they can ride without signing up if there is space available. The Shuttle operates between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. four days a week. Three or four of the 14 senior residences are served each day. The same 18-passenger van is used before and after the shuttle routes to carry clients to and from several adult day health centers. On average the shuttle provides about 800 trips to riders each month. One of the most distinctive features of the West Oakland Senior Shuttle is that an attendant rides every trip, assisting the riders with their packages and getting on and off the vehicles.

The shuttle began operating in March 2002 as a pilot project, but the riders who use it now regard it as a necessity of life. The City is interested in expanding the shuttle concept to other neighbor-hoods and is working to identify funding.

Palo Alto Shuttle

The City of Palo Alto, in northern Santa Clara County, has been operating free local shuttle service since 2000. The Palo Alto Shuttle was designed to focus on needs not served by the regional transit systems whose routes run through the city. The Shuttle was intended to serve multiple goals, of which providing mobility to seniors was just one. The service was also intended to attract passengers who would otherwise drive cars, support economic development, and increase safety at schools.

There are three Shuttle routes. The most heavily-used route, and the one most used by seniors, is the Crosstown Shuttle. This route operates every half hour from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and connects residential neighborhoods, senior residences and services, schools, libraries, recreation centers, commercial districts, and the Caltrain commuter rail station. The Embarcadero route operates every 15 minutes during commute hours, and connects the Caltrain station with employers and two high schools. The Downtown Express route, begun in January 2003, is a cooperative venture between the City and Stanford University. This route is an extension of the University's Marguerite system linking a number of downtown Palo Alto and Stanford campus locations.

High school and middle school students account for a little over half of shuttle ridership. According to a survey conducted after the first year of operation, seniors (age 65 and older) accounted for 38% of ridership on the Crosstown route. Stops at senior residences were among the most active on the route.

In fiscal year 2008-09, the shuttles carried 136,511 passengers. Funding for the shuttles comes from City General Fund and the Caltrain Shuttle Program.

Details on the Palo Alto shuttles are at www.city.palo-alto.ca.us , under "Visiting Palo Alto".

The West Oakland Senior Shuttle is described on www.oaklandhumanservices.org/services/seniorsdisabled/oped.htm .

Privately Funded Services

Public transportation is generally perceived as a publicly funded activity. However, many communities are using private sources of funding for senior transportation. The examples in this section describe services funded by donations, homeowner dues, merchant contributions, and foundation grants.

Oakmont Village Transit Service in Santa Rosa

The City of Santa Rosa operates transit service in a planned retirement community with support from the homeowner's association. Santa Rosa is the principal city of Sonoma County, located 50 miles north of San Francisco. The City, with a population of about 162,000, operates a 21-bus municipal transit system.

Oakmont Village is a planned retirement community built around two golf courses on land annexed to the City on the outskirts of Santa Rosa. Residents of the community approached the City with a request for transit service. Transit service to this low-density, affluent community on the edge of the transit service area would be unlikely to meet established performance objectives. However, the City agreed to operate transit service if the residents would subsidize the service. A partnership agreement was reached in 1999 between the City and the Oakmont Village Association (OVA). The City agreed to operate two weekday routes to circulate within the boundaries of Oakmont Village, and also to provide direct mid-day round trip service to nearby shopping centers. The mid-day shopping trips include a stop-over, timed to coincide with the driver's lunch break, that gives riders time to do their shopping or errands before the bus returns to Oakmont Village. For this service the City uses one of its 30-foot low-floor buses.

OVA provides the City with a $54,000 per year subsidy for the service using revenue from regular homeowners dues. The transit subsidy adds $1 per month per resident to the dues. It covers about one-third of the total cost of operating the route. In exchange, Oakmont Village residents ride the route free of charge. There was some initial opposition within Oakmont Village to the concept of the transit subsidy. However, when the agreement was put to a ballot, it was approved by a wide margin.

Rossmoor Community Transit Service

The adult community of Rossmoor in Walnut Creek, California, provides extensive transit and paratransit services for its residents. The services are financed by the residents through their monthly fees. Rossmoor consists of about 9,000 residents living in 6,700 units in a mix of multi-unit buildings and single-family houses. There are also extensive public facilities. At least one resident of each unit must be 55 years of age or older. Although Rossmoor is part of the city of Walnut Creek, it is largely isolated from the rest of the city.

The Golden Rain Foundation, the non-profit property manager for Rossmoor, began providing bus service in 1970 with four buses on four routes. A paratransit program began operating in 1997 with two new lift-equipped buses. There are now six routes plus dial-a-bus and paratransit provided with nine small buses, eight of which are lift-equipped. The routes operate from approximately 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The Dial-a-Bus service extends general public service to 6 a.m. in the morning and 10 p.m. at night and on Sunday. Destinations include recreational and service facilities within Rossmoor and a near-by retail and medical center where connections can be made to the public bus system. The system is fare-free and provides about 19,500 trips per month making it one of the largest providers of service to seniors and

persons with disabilities in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is estimated that approximately 10 percent of residents use the bus; total annual ridership for 2008 was 144,364.

Although the operating cost of the transit system is paid entirely out of resident fees, the system has been able to obtain five small paratransit buses through the federal Section 5310 program which funds vehicles for service to seniors and people with disabilities.

The Rossmoor web site at www.rossmoor.com includes bus schedules and information about the community.

Independent Transportation Network

The Independent Transportation Network® (ITN) is a non-profit transportation service for seniors and people with visual impairments with 13 affiliates nationwide. The program started in Portland, Maine and vicinity and was developed with support from research grants; it is currently entirely community-based, operating without public subsidies. To achieve this objective, the ITN has developed a variety of methods for community support. Individuals support the program by volunteering as drivers, by becoming dues-paying members, by donating automobiles, by making contributions, and by hosting community teas. Corporate sponsors include the AARP, the Federal Transportation Administration, and the Transportation Research Board. Riders are also a major source of financial support.

Part of the philosophy that led to creating the ITN is that older people who were used to driving, and used to the cost of driving, would be willing to pay to support transportation that offers them the dignity and independence of a private car. In accordance with this philosophy, the charge for the service is much higher than for typical public transportation. Riders pay by the mile or by the hour, and the average charge per trip is about $7.

Businesses also support the program. Two particularly innovative forms of business support are the Ride and Shop™ and Healthy Miles™ programs. The two programs are similar, except that the first is for merchants and professional services and the second is for health care providers. In both programs, whenever an ITN member uses ITN to travel to a participating business, the business contributes $1.50 toward the cost of transportation. To avoid excessive processing costs, the businesses pay annual dues and establish an account with ITN. The merchant or health care provider’s account is debited whenever a trip is provided by ITN to their business. The businesses receive regular statements showing the activity in their accounts.

In Portland, nineteen merchants and other businesses participate in Ride and Shop including grocery stores, a mall, a restaurant, a bank, arts groups, and lawyers specializing in elder law. Health care providers participating in Healthy Miles include eye doctors, audiologists, and podiatrists. The per trip support amount was chosen to be similar to a typical cost for parking validation. Businesses also support ITN by becoming members, by in-kind donations, and by sponsoring the program’s newsletter.

ITN’s web site at www.itnamerica.org describes the full range of services provided, including information on how to start an affiliate.

Foundation Support in Reno, Nevada

In 2001, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), which operates public transportation in the Reno, Nevada urbanized area encouraged the local business community to establish a non-profit to assist with transportation challenges for seniors and persons with disabilities. Led by a local attorney, a group of citizens founded CitiCare, a non-profit corporation. CitiCare's mission is to create partnerships among government, private businesses, foundations, and individuals to

generate funds to bridge the gap between the growing need for affordable transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities and the RTC's ability to fund it.

CitiCare is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, which can receive tax-deductible donations. The RTC provides administrative support and technical transportation expertise, so that all donations go directly to provide service.

The CitiCare Foundation is described on the RTC web site at www.rtcwashoe.com/public-transportation-2-6.html.

Marin Village

A new program, Marin Village, is just starting in several neighborhoods including Sausalito and the Mill Valley area. Marin Village is modeled after the Beacon Hill Village program[8] in the Boston area. Villages are membership-driven, grass-roots organizations that, through both volunteers and paid staff, coordinate access to affordable services including transportation, health and wellness programs, home repairs, social and educational activities, and other day-to-day needs enabling individuals to remain connected to their community throughout the aging process. The Marin Village organization will emphasize meeting the transportation needs of seniors.

The program is designed to make it easier for middle income people to age in place; the concept is that seniors become members in a “village” by paying an annual fee, and are then eligible to receive services. Monthly fees for Marin Village will start at $200 a year for a household, with discounted memberships available for households of more moderate means. For the Marin Village, member dues, fees and donations will be the primary source of income in the future, with the initial setup funded with a feasibility grant through the Marin Community Foundation and the Scan Foundation. WhistleStop Wheels has also offered to be their “fiscal sponsor”; while the Village is in the process of applying for their 501(c)(3) non-profit status, Whistlestop has agreed to receive funds and make payments on their behalf.

Affordable and Accessible Taxicabs

Taxicabs are a widely available means of transportation that older people who no longer drive can use when there is no one available to provide a ride. However, taxicabs can be quite expensive, and wheelchair accessible taxicabs are rarely available. Taxicabs are specifically exempted from provisions in the ADA requiring accessible vehicles. Programs to increase the affordability and availability of taxicabs include discounted taxi rides and efforts to help or encourage taxi operators to obtain accessible vehicles.

Discounted Taxi Rides

Beginning in the 1970s many communities began offering discounted taxi rides to seniors and people with disabilities. After passage of the ADA in 1991, many of these programs were discontinued or sharply curtailed. However, many taxi discount programs do continue to operate; in most programs, riders buy books of scrip which can be used like money to pay for taxi rides. For example, in the City of Richmond, California, eligible program participants may purchase a quarterly amount of taxi scrip books at a discount. With prior approval, participants may purchase additional taxi scrip books for a higher fee to be used for medical appointments. Program participants may purchase taxi scrip books by mail or in person by appointment. Participants arrange their own rides by calling one of the taxi companies under contract with the City. Other

[8] Beacon Hill Village - http://www.beaconhillvillage.org

cities in the Bay Area that use scrip include San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Fremont, Richmond, Napa, and Vallejo.

Discounted taxi service is very popular with riders since it is available 24 hours a day every day. Unlike most paratransit services, it does not require advance reservations, so it can be used for unanticipated trips. Passengers get a direct ride to their destination without detours to serve other passengers.

From the point of view of cities, discounted taxi service can be very simple and flexible. It requires no purchase of vehicles, and the cost of the program can be varied according to budgetary needs by changing limits on the value of trips subsidized for each rider. Cities can also control cost by varying the effective discount, for example by raising or lowering the amount users pay for a book of scrip. As a result, it is possible to operate a taxi discount program with a great range of available budgets. In the Bay Area, the effective discount ranges from 50% to 90%.

Some small cities have used creative means to reduce the administrative burden of a taxi discount program. For example, in both Emeryville (2009 population 9,350) and Albany (population 16,411) riders pay cash for their taxi rides and obtain a receipt. The riders bring or mail their receipts to the senior center and the City reimburses 80% (Albany) or 90% (Emeryville) of the cost of the rides taken.

A persistent concern with taxi discount programs is the potential for fraud and abuse by taxi drivers and passengers. San Francisco, which has the largest taxi discount program in the Bay Area, is confronting this problem. Since it is part of the city's ADA complementary paratransit service, the potential for fraud is greater in San Francisco than other cities because riders are permitted to obtain as much scrip as they need and pay only 10% of the face value of the scrip. In order to combat unauthorized selling and transferring of taxi scrip, San Francisco is moving to an automated debit card system which will totally eliminate the need for cash payments and paper handling, and tie payment directly to taximeter readings.

Using Volunteers Effectively

Volunteer assistance can be an effective and efficient way of providing the high level of personalized care that many seniors require for transportation. Volunteers driving their own vehicles or driving agency-owned vehicles can combine transportation for older riders with assistance in and out of buildings and in conducting their business. This type of assistance is often referred to as escort service. Volunteers can also provide trips in rural areas that might be prohibitively expensive to provide with paid drivers. Challenges for volunteer programs include finding the right ways to make good use of volunteers, attracting volunteers, and keeping them involved. A number of programs illustrate some successful approaches to these challenges, including:

- Working within faith-based organizations;
- Having seniors themselves take responsibility for finding volunteers;
- Working through existing service organizations;
- Structuring volunteer opportunities to allow for group participation and limited time commitment;
- Regional coordination providing support for volunteer transportation;
- Coordinated aging and ADA paratransit services; and

- Combining volunteer transportation with case management services.

Out and About Vista

The City of Vista, in northern San Diego County, has developed a volunteer transportation program for its older residents that illustrates several effective techniques for attracting and retaining volunteers. The program is called Out and About Vista. It includes a volunteer mileage reimbursement component, and a van service operated by City staff.

In response to the need for individualized transportation service for seniors, Out and About has created a Volunteer Driver Corps (modeled after Riverside's TRIP program), many of whose members are themselves older people. People who call Out and About often have already tried without success to find someone to drive them. Volunteer recruitment is always a challenge. To help make participation more attractive for the volunteers, Out and About Vista reimburses for mileage between the volunteer's home and the home of the person needing a ride, as well as for the mileage of the ride itself, at the current approved IRS rate to a maximum of 150 miles a month. This additional reimbursement helps address the fact that providing rides in a spread out community can involve substantial driving distances. Volunteer recruitment takes place through local papers and newsletters.

Volunteers decide the days, times of availability and distances they are willing to travel. The program recommends one-week advance notice for requesting volunteer driver services. The Out and About coordinator matches a volunteer driver with a senior according to request criteria; however, eventually the rider and driver may arrange rides without the coordinator. The City also provides umbrella insurance coverage, through a rider on the City's regular policy, for the volunteer drivers. The drivers' insurance remains as primary coverage, but the City policy protects them against any claims that might exceed the limits of their own policies.

Out and About Vista began with funding from Aging and Independence Services of San Diego County, a grant from Tri-City Medical Center, and Community Development Block Grant funds from the City of Vista. The City also contributes in-kind services in the form of maintenance and fuel for the shopping shuttle van, use of office space and equipment, and administrative services such as processing the volunteer reimbursements.

Out and About Vista is described at www.ci.vista.ca.us/community/out_about.htm.

Regional Coordination by Ride Connection in Portland, Oregon

The Ride Connection program in Portland, Oregon illustrates how a partnership between a regional coordinating organization and local providers can support volunteer transportation. Ride Connection is a not-for-profit corporation that coordinates transportation provided by community-based organizations in the four-county Portland metropolitan area, including Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties. Ride Connection was formed in 1988 (originally under the name Volunteer Transportation, Inc.) following a collaborative process involving a citizen committee and Tri-Met, the principal public transit operator in the region. The process recognized that older people and people with disabilities had transportation needs that were not served by existing programs and determined that a volunteer program could meet those needs.

Transportation is provided by a network of over 20 partner agencies. About half of these organizations currently use volunteers to provide transportation either exclusively or together with paid drivers. These include religious and ethnic organizations, medical and senior centers, youth clubs, public agencies, and general social service organizations. Ride Connection coordinates funding for specialized transportation for the region, makes vehicles obtained through the federal

Section 5310 program available to its partner agencies, provides centralized driver training and insurance, provides management support to smaller agencies, and assists with volunteer recruitment.

All these activities help make volunteer transportation viable in the long term as a meaningful component of specialized transportation in the region. Working through Ride Connection, Tri-Met has been willing to maintain a substantial financial contribution to volunteer transportation.

Ride Connection recruits directly and refers volunteers to appropriate organizations. As an established regional organization, Ride Connection has the ability to recruit using methods that would be beyond the means of many of its smaller partner organizations. To recruit volunteers, Ride Connection places notices in newspapers, arranges for public service radio announcements, lists opportunities on the national Volunteer Match web site, and makes presentations to interested groups. Retirement organizations such as retired teachers, bus drivers, fire fighters, and police officers are sources of volunteer drivers. Ride Connection also works with Chambers of Commerce and small businesses whose employees may have some flexibility in their hours. Building and maintaining long term relationships with these groups is important.

In recruiting volunteers, Ride Connection is as clear as possible about the commitment involved, including training, overall time commitment, and what to expect when providing rides. Even though this may slow down initial recruitment, it is important for maintaining satisfied, effective volunteers. Ride Connection recognizes that many volunteers today want short term activities, including assignments that are project oriented with a definite beginning and end. For all new volunteer drivers, Ride Connection conducts a screening interview, a criminal history check, and a road test. They also provide eight hours of classroom defensive driving, a DMV driver history check, and four hours of training on mobility awareness and assistance, and give drivers a small blood-borne pathogen kit. For volunteers who will be driving a Ride Connection vehicle, the training includes all of the above plus a vehicle operations and daily vehicle inspection training. Ride Connection recommends but does not require that volunteer drivers have first aid and CPR training.

Ride Connection's web site at www.rideconnection.org describes the agency's mission and history, lists the partner organizations, and provides links to staff.

The Volunteer Match web site at www.volunteermatch.org lists volunteer opportunities with over 25,000 organizations, including Ride Connection.

Chapter 6. Public Outreach

Summary

Recognizing the value of public involvement, the Marin County Division of Aging and Adults Services provided several opportunities throughout the planning process for older adults and other key stakeholders to participate in the study. To ensure comprehensive and in-depth information were gathered on Marin senior mobility needs, community and stakeholder input was collected in several ways, described below.

- **Public Workshops** – Four public workshops were held in the fall of 2009. The workshops were designed to learn more about the ways seniors travel throughout Marin County, identify key destinations in their communities, and discuss opportunities to improve their travel options. The workshops also provided an opportunity to inform the public about the purpose of the study and solicit input about existing issues and future opportunities for improving senior mobility. The workshops were held at senior centers, community centers, and senior residential facilities in Novato, Mill Valley, San Rafael and Pt. Reyes Station, with geographic diversity and access being a priority.
- **Stakeholder Interviews with Service Providers** – After the inventory of existing services and public workshops were completed, stakeholder interviews were conducted with transportation service providers throughout Marin County. The purpose of these interviews was to gather additional data on the limitations and opportunities service providers encounter. Representatives from the following providers were interviewed:
  - Jewish Family & Children's Needs Services
  - Whistlestop Wheels
  - North Bay Taxi Cooperative
  - Novato Human Needs
  - City of San Rafael Public Works

  Interview notes can be found in Appendix A.

A public workshop at the Margaret Todd Senior Center in Novato

- **Focus Groups** – As a final step, focus groups were held throughout the County to provide guidance on the concepts and vision for the Mobility Action Plan.
  The focus groups a dual purpose: they allowed for a more in-depth discussion of issues, opportunities, and feasibility for strategies to enhance senior transportation throughout the County; and they served as a forum to evaluate ideas for improving senior mobility options, and to measure public interest and willingness to participate in specific programs such as healthy walking programs, ride and car sharing, and innovative transit/paratransit programs.

The following sections present the key information gathered from the workshops, interviews, and focus groups.

Public Workshops

Four public workshops were conducted to gather input from seniors and community members interested in senior mobility issues. Each workshop was held in a different area of Marin County:

- North Marin – Margaret Todd Senior Center, Novato
- South Marin – The Redwoods, Mill Valley
- Central Marin – Jackson Café at The Whistlestop, San Rafael
- West Marin – The Dance Palace, Pt. Reyes Station

Approximately 55 participants attended the workshops.

Following an initial presentation of the study and introduction of team members, three information stations were set up around the meeting room to gather information on typical destinations, travel choices, and priorities/needs. The following section synthesizes themes, issues, and opportunities identified at each workshop. The appendix includes a more detailed documentation of the feedback received.

Travel Choices

At all four workshops, several common themes emerged regarding participants' travel choices, described below.

Driving

Many seniors are still driving because they do not feel like they have any other transportation options. In particular, seniors in West Marin depend heavily on driving to get to regional destinations such as Novato, Petaluma, and San Rafael because they do not have alternative options. Whistlestop Wheels and the Stagecoach provide limited service in this area that is infrequent, and viewed as not always reliable and comfortable.

Workshop participants discuss their travel choices in central Marin County

While some participants are comfortable driving to destinations throughout the Bay Area, most drive locally and during the day. Many seniors who continue to drive would like alternative travel choices for regional trips and trips at night (especially to San Francisco). Some participants carpool or provide rides to friends.

Parking

For some drivers, parking is a significant challenge. Many said they would be more likely to use the ferry or regional bus if they knew that they could park reliably at the transit hub. This is particularly true for the ferry at Larkspur Landing, since the ferry parking lot fills by 9:30 AM with commuter cars.

Whistlestop Wheels

Whistlestop Wheels is a vital service for many seniors; however, the logistics to organize a ride and wait time are seen as cumbersome. Participants noted that Whistlestop is good for intra-county trips, such as errands and medical appointments at Kaiser.

Several participants noted that the rules and conditions of Whistlestop were confusing. Some did not understand how to register, or were frustrated by the advanced scheduling requirement. The workshops themselves were beneficial as an opportunity to provide enrollment information to participants and answer other questions.

A representative from Senior Access, a program for seniors with dementia, noted that they had had significant challenges with Whistlestop's lack of reliability. Clients would be dropped off and picked up early or late.

West Marin residents have difficulty using the service because they are dropped off in Central Marin for several hours at a time which is too long for most. West Marin residents could benefit from knowing more about Whistlestop Services in East Marin.

Overall, many would like weekend service and same-day scheduling. Several seniors who currently drive expect to use Whistlestop when they can no longer drive.

Bus Service

Several issues emerged regarding public bus service. Many participants said it was difficult to navigate the schedule and map. Several participants noted that transit information is very confusing and not easy to use. Participants suggested that if they had more information about bus stop locations and schedules they may be more comfortable using the bus. Others noted that schedule and route changes have reduced their transit options. Many expressed concern that bus stops do not always directly serve key destinations like shopping malls, requiring patrons to cross busy roads or walk quite a distance to reach the front door.

It can be physically challenging for seniors to get on and off the bus. In particular, the West Marin Stagecoach was identified as uncomfortable. Many seniors choose not to use the Stagecoach because they were not certain they would have a seat, since school students and weekend tourists often fill the buses to capacity during peak times. Many also felt that bus stop areas are not comfortable or safe – especially in San Francisco and Marin City.

In general, the biggest obstacle to riding the bus seems to be that bus stops are not located within easy walking distance of the participants' homes. Many said that if they could be picked up closer to home they would be more willing to use this option.

It should be noted that many Spanish-speaking residents at the San Rafael workshop use the bus and most expressed comfort with this travel option.

Walking

Many seniors enjoy walking for exercise, commuting, and errands. Two main issues expressed include hills and a lack of seating along walking routes. The topography and land use decisions in Marin County cause many people to live in hilly residential areas too far to walk to commercial areas. Many residents “age in place” and thus lack sufficient transportation alternatives to the car. Some participants noted that they would consider moving closer to amenities and services so they could walk there.

Several participants also noted sidewalk areas that could be improved, including parts of downtown Pt. Reyes Station, downtown Mill Valley, and Strawberry.

At the Mill Valley workshop, several noted that Highway 101 was a barrier to walking. Despite having pedestrian overpasses, some did not know where the overpasses are located or how to access them.

Taxis

Taxis are prohibitively expensive and mostly used for short trips, such as returning from the grocery store. Participants said they would like to use this option more if it was less expensive.

Ferry

Many noted that they like the ferry and would like to use it more, especially at night and on the weekend. Ferry service was particularly popular at the Southern Marin workshop in Mill Valley. More evening service was requested as well as more convenient parking options during non-commute hours.

Other Options and Opportunities

Additional requests and opportunities included:

- Whistlestop van service on nights and weekends, including to and from local bus stops
- Volunteer or paid driver services
- Transportation to downtown areas organized by senior clubs
- More small local shuttles
- Electric shuttles
- A rideshare program
- Tram or electric street car system between southern Marin cities
- Donated van with maintenance, driver, and insurance
- Senior-oriented regional services once a month, like the "Symphony Bus"
- Use of abandoned rail right-of-way for bicycling and hiking

Destinations

Workshop participants noted their typical destinations on large-scale maps. Locally, seniors travel to grocery stores such as Safeway, Whole Foods, Costco and Trader Joe's, and larger malls including Bon Air and Strawberry Shopping Center. Many need transportation to medical appointments and services at Kaiser facilities throughout the county as well as Marin General. Other destinations include the College of Marin, community centers and downtowns.

Beyond Marin County, participants regularly travel to Sonoma County (Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Petaluma), San Francisco, and the East Bay. Regional destinations such as San Francisco were the primary destinations that participants noted they would like to travel to but have limited options.

Trade-Offs

To collect information regarding participants' priorities and needs, they were asked to mark their preferences between competing transportation enhancements. The table on the next page provides a summary of preferences from the workshops.

A group discusses trade-offs at the Central Marin Workshop at The Whistlestop

Overall, participants favored:

- frequent bus service over sidewalks (except in Mill Valley)
- frequent bus service over roadway improvements for senior drivers
- improvements to sidewalks over bus shelters
- improvements to sidewalks over bicycle lanes (except in West Marin)
- taxis over wheelchair-accessible transit (except in West Marin)
- bus service closer to home over more affordable service
- regional over countywide bus service
- countywide over local bus service (except in Mill Valley)

Figure 6-1 Preferences by Workshop Location

Trade-Offs	Novato		Mill Valley	San Rafael		West Marin	
More bus shelters versus	35%		40%	40%		25%	25%*
More/Improved sidewalks	65%		60%	60%		50%	
More/Improved sidewalks vs	30%		60%	0%		25%	15%*
Frequent Bus Service	60%		40%	100%		60%	
Frequent Bus Service vs	100%		50%	0%	100%*	50%	50%*
Affordable Bus Service	0%		50%	0%		0%	
Reliable Buses vs	30%	40%*	50%	0%	100%*	0%	25%*
More Bus Routes	30%		50%	0%		0%	
Wheelchair Accessible Taxis vs	0%		30%	0%	100%*	40%	30%*
Subsidized Taxis	100%		70%	0%		30%	
Buses/vans closer to home vs	100%		50%	60%		40%	60%*
Affordable Bus Service	0%		50%	40%		0%	
Local Bus Service vs	0%		75%	20%	30%*	0%	70%*
Countywide Bus Service	100%		25%	50%		30%	
Countywide Bus Service vs	30%		40%	25%	15%*	30%	40%*
Regional Bus Service	70%		60%	60%		30%	
More/Improved sidewalks vs	100%		80%	30%	40%*	25%	25%*
More/improved bike lanes	0%		20%	30%		50%	
Larger street signs vs	0%		0%	20%	20%*		25%*
Frequent Bus Service	100%		100%	60%		75%	

*Split cells note No Preference / Both / Either Or

Geographic Comparisons

As may be expected, many of the issues and opportunities that emerged at each workshop were specific to the workshop location.

At the Mill Valley workshop, participants discussed the challenge of travelling between southern Marin towns such as Mill Valley, Strawberry, and Tiburon. They were interested in local, direct bus service between these communities so they do not have to transfer through Marin City, which is indirect and felt unsafe to many. Ferry service was also of great interest to participants, who enjoy using the ferry but would like to see the service expanded on the weekends and evenings.

The San Rafael workshop had a high number of Spanish-speaking participants, many of whom take Golden Gate Transit regularly. Many noted that they were happy with the bus but would like to see increased service to areas such as Novato.

Several participants at the Novato workshop noted the difficulty of reaching walkable destinations and bus stops from their home. Those who no longer drive were dependent on Whistlestop Wheels (if eligible) and otherwise had trouble reaching services and commercial areas. Participants who wanted to travel to regional destinations such as Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa were largely dependent on friends and family to drive them there.

West Marin residents had unique mobility needs from the rest of the county. Almost all participants continue to drive because they do not feel like they have any alternative. There was a great deal of interest in carpooling, volunteer drivers, and organized van trips to Petaluma and Novato for destinations such as Trader Joe's, Costco, and Target. Participants largely perceived the Stagecoach as uncomfortable and unreliable.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were held throughout Marin County in January, 2010 to solicit input and feedback on the proposed strategies to improve senior mobility. The focus groups were held in the following locations:

- West Marin – EAH Housing Facility, Point Reyes Station
- Southern Marin – Johnson Senior Center, Marin City
- Central Marin (San Rafael)
  - San Rafael Community Center: members of the Goldenaires senior group
  - The Whistlestop: two focus groups with Vietnamese and Spanish translation

Approximately seven to twelve seniors participated in each focus group. The small group size facilitated a useful discussion, though it should be noted that the small sample size of these groups is not necessarily representative of all older adults living in the County.

Each focus group was 90 minutes long, and included a brief presentation of the study and discussion of the proposed strategies (as shown on the following page). Group facilitators focused the discussion and questions on strategies that were most relevant to the local area and participants' personal mobility choices. Participants were asked if the specific strategies would be helpful to them, as well as how they could be implemented to best meet their needs. Strategies that would be implemented at the policy level or relate more closely to land use and development decisions did not generally garner interest/traction from group participants and were not discussed in detail.

Some key themes emerged within each focus group:

The West Marin focus group at EAH Housing in Pt. Reyes Station

- In **West Marin**, representatives from Marshall, Tomales, and Dillon Beach stressed the need for enhanced transportation services to these small coastal communities that have very few options. Participants also noted that the key destinations for West Marin residents vary (i.e. Stinson Beach residents need improved access to Mill Valley whereas Tomales residents need improved access to Petaluma).
- In **Southern Marin**, Marin City residents had great difficulty traveling from their homes up the hill to transit stops by US 101, and expressed interest in a jitney style service.
- In **Central Marin**, Goldenaires members were very interested in a printed booklet or pamphlet that could provide information on all types of transportation services. Participants stressed the need for door-to-door service such as a Dial-A-Ride or subsidized taxi. They were also interested in a volunteer driver program, but were not comfortable with the idea of accepting a ride with a stranger unless it was organized through a local, familiar contact.
- The **Vietnamese and Spanish speaking groups** at the Whistlestop in San Rafael were very accustomed to using public bus transit and walking and had relatively few concerns about their mobility options as compared to the other groups. They typically viewed riding transit as a necessity rather than a choice.

Group Comments on Strategies

Following is a table describing transportation strategies for seniors, which was handed out at all of the focus groups to guide discussion.

Marin Senior Mobility Strategies – Focus Group Participant Handout
1. **Provide Senior-friendly Housing Downtown –** New residential developments in downtown areas must be senior-friendly (single level or elevators provided)
2. **Provide Senior housing with easy (walking) access** to shopping, medical, transit and other amenities
3. **Provide Bus-friendly Senior Centers & Housing –** New senior centers and senior housing would be built with bus stops on site
4. **Make Parking Lots Safer –** Parking lots would be easier to park in and walk through
5. **Make Marin City Bus Transfer Station More Comfortable** – with lighting, seating, or moving the bus stop location
6. **Make Streets Work for Everyone ("Complete Streets")** – Areas around existing senior centers/housing and bus stops would be enhanced to improve walking access (sidewalks and crosswalks) and bus service while working well for cars
7. **Provide Taxi Vouchers** – Subsidized taxi service for local trips
8. **Facilitate Ride Share/Carpooling** – Seniors going to the same destinations could be matched up
9. **Develop a Volunteer Driver Program** – Participants build credits by driving during their driving years or by trading credits. Volunteers may be general community members as well.
10. **Create Community Bus/Shuttle Routes** – Local bus circuit that serves senior destinations
11. **Provide Door-to-Door Buses or Vans ("Dial-a-Ride")** – Low cost bus or van service that will provide door-to-door service to local destinations (ADA eligibility not necessary but reservations may be)
12. **Enable Flexible Bus Routes** – Public bus would deviate from route to directly serve senior housing
13. **Provide a direct bus routes from West Marin to Petaluma and/or San Francisco** – to eliminate transfers and reduce travel time
14. **Make Stagecoach buses more comfortable** – retrofit vehicles or acquire new ones with softer suspension/smoother ride
15. **Enhance Bus Stops** – Bus stops would have shelters, benches, and lighting
16. **Provide Information on How to Use the Bus or Ferry** – Including a "Bus Buddy" escort option
17. **Develop a Senior-Friendly Website for Bus or Ferry Information** - For schedules and route maps
18. **Organize Senior Walking Groups** – To encourage exercise and notify officials of problems (like cracked sidewalks)
19. **Provide Safe Driver Education for Seniors** – Focusing on extending driving years and knowing when to stop driving

The following section describes the feedback on specific strategies given at the five focus groups.

Taxi Vouchers

The Central Marin focus group with Goldenaires members at the San Rafael Senior Center

Participants were interested in taxi vouchers, particularly for low-cost short trips around town. Southern Marin participants discussed how the key trips that they needed support with were 10-20 miles distance to Kaiser and other medical appointments. For longer trips, they would be willing to pay $5-$10 each way. They suggested a pre-paid senior taxi card (similar to TransLink) would be useful. Others were interested in taxi vouchers to San Francisco. For example, seniors could buy a ticket to a cultural event and receive a coupon for reduced taxi fare from Marin County. Participants were also interested in a flat rate for taxi fares so that they would know in advance what to pay for a given trip.

The Goldenaires group in San Rafael like this strategy but felt it should be paired with others and only used when another strategy (dial-a-ride, rideshare, etc.) would not be an option. Participants noted that taxi service should focus on one-way trips as well (i.e. home from the grocery store but not necessarily to the store).

The Spanish-speaking group at the Whistlestop suggested that knowing the cost in advance of a taxi ride is key. An easy-to-understand rate of $1/mile or similar received support.

In general, participants felt that taxis would be most useful for emergency situations only, unless they are significantly subsidized.

Carpooling and Ridesharing

Many participants had concerns about liability, insurance, and personal safety relating to a carpool or rideshare program. Finding drivers would require strong coordination on a localized level. Participants felt that some type of screening/qualification process is necessary but may inhibit people from participating.

Some participants use the internet (many at the library) and said they would use an on-line coordination system, while most said they did not use computers and would prefer a phone number or bulletin board to coordinate rides. Southern Marin participants like the idea of a central phone number that would connect them to a live coordinator that could arrange the ride. They also noted a key challenge with carpooling is that some cars do not accommodate wheelchairs.

In West Marin, participants identified several places to advertise and coordinate rides for such a program:

- Churches
- Post Offices
- The Dance Palace, Pt. Reyes Station
- Toby's, Pt. Reyes Station
- Tomales Town Hall
- Dillon Beach
- Marshall
- Bolinas Community Center
- Stinson Beach Community Center

The Over-the-Hill Gang website and phone number would also be an option for rideshare coordination. For West Marin residents, a twice weekly rideshare/carpooling option to Petaluma would be beneficial. Participants would like to stop at a grocery store as well as Kaiser for medical appointments.

In Central Marin, the Goldenaires participants noted that the organizations' bulletin mailer would be a good place to advertise such a program, but that they would be very hesitant to accept a ride form a stranger. This sentiment was echoed at several focus groups and underscores the importance of coordinating this type of program at a very local, small scale level.

The Spanish-speaking group at the Whistlestop expressed interest in this strategy but preference for carpooling with people they know. Suggestions for a rideshare bulletin board location included Whistlestop, churches, and Walgreens. A rideshare "hotline" was also well-received.

Develop a Volunteer Driver Program

There was significant interest in a volunteer driver program, though many felt that it would only work or work best with a personal, community-based approach with one-on-one interaction to create a comfortable and trusting environment.

The Southern Marin focus group at the Johnson Senior Center in Marin City

In West Marin, the Over the Hill Gang has provided volunteer rides to destinations in central Marin and Sonoma County. This service has decayed over recent years as participating seniors have aged out, the increase in the price of gas has affected driver behavior, and younger people work full time and have less flexibility in their schedule to provide rides during the day. There did appear to be interest in reactivating this program.

West Marin participants also noted that Sonoma County has a good centralized system for scheduling volunteer drivers, providing information on fixed route service, and ADA transportation services. The computerized volunteer system is highly regarded.

Participants in Southern Marin also felt that drivers would need to be screened. Whistlestop was suggested as a central clearinghouse for this.

At the Whistlestop in San Rafael, the Vietnamese participants were very interested in a volunteer driving program, and liked the idea of Whistlestop coordinating this effort. These participants heavily rely on public bus transit and rides from family and friends, and felt a volunteer driving program would be valuable. Volunteer rides to medical appointments and for emergency needs

were of most interest to this group. Participants also like the idea of a "personal shadow" – someone to help them with their medical appointments and provide help with other personal services when needed. The Spanish-speaking group also liked this strategy. Two of the participants who still drive mentioned that they would serve as a volunteer driver in exchange for volunteer driver assistance at a time when they may no longer drive.

Create Community Bus/Shuttle

Southern Marin participants were very interested in a community shuttle. They discussed the defunct Sally Shuttle that serviced Sausalito, and that they would be interested in a similar service today. In Southern Marin, shuttles would need to be frequent enough to make them successful. Participants also suggested that a shuttle service should be open to all people (not just seniors) so that the service could be fully utilized and most successful.

The Vietnamese participants also liked the idea of a community shuttle as many live in senior housing in downtown San Rafael.

Dial-A-Ride Service

A Dial-A-Ride service was not particularly appealing to Vietnamese participants, who generally disliked transportation services that require advanced reservations and planning. Most use the public bus and appreciated the efficiency, flexibility and independence it afforded them.

Conversely, participants from the Goldenaires were very interested in a Dial-A-Ride program as several still drive and would like other options besides the public bus. The Spanish-speaking group at the Whistlestop also supported a dial-a-ride strategy.

Provide Direct Bus Routes from West Marin to Petaluma

West Marin focus group participants noted the particular need for direct service between Tomales, Dillon Beach, and Marshall to Petaluma. Currently, public bus service is provided once a week, with just 90 minutes between dropping off passengers and leaving for the return trip back to West Marin. There was considerable interest in more bus service for these communities.

Make Stagecoach Buses More Comfortable

This strategy was discussed with the West Marin focus group. Many noted that while the Stagecoach was a bumpy ride and can rattle, the newer buses are greatly improved. The comfort issue did not appear to be the main deterrent for seniors to use public transit. Larger concerns were the fear of missing a return bus, not having access to bathroom facilities at the terminus, or missing a connection to Whistlestop Wheels. These concerns were magnified for Dillon Beach and Marshall residents, where bus service is extremely limited.

The Vietnamese focus group at the Whistlestop in San Rafael

Another suggestion/question was raised about whether the Stagecoach can make road-side stops. Many thought that drivers are not allowed to stop at undesignated bus stops, and are not allowed to stop unless off the road. It was unclear whether this is official policy or bus driver interpretation.

Enhance Bus Stops

The Spanish-speaking group at the Whistlestop liked the suggestion of additional shelters, benches, and lighting but did not feel these enhancements would influence whether seniors would ride the bus. Participants in this group as well as the Southern Marin focus group supported enhancements to the Marin City bus transfer hub. The suggestion of relocating the bus stops to the inside of the shopping center and providing lighting and seating received support for enhancing personal safety

Provide Information on the Bus or Ferry

Participants were very interested in a printed booklet that provided information on various transportation services. Participants noted that a "Know Your Rights" type guide would be very helpful. For example, several West Marin workshop participants did not know that the discharge planner at a medical hospital can provide taxi vouchers. A personal travel planning[9] programmatic guide was also received with interest. At the Goldenaires focus group, a participant shared a fact sheet on transportation services that included information on prices and contact information that others found very helpful. The fact sheet was distributed by the Commission on Aging.

The Spanish speaking focus group at the Whistlestop in San Rafael

Southern Marin participants like the idea of a pre-paid fare card like Translink, specific for seniors. One person suggested an annual pre-paid card of $365 for all public transit services for seniors. The Vietnamese participants were very interested in a senior bus pass as no pass is currently available to them.

West Marin participants were receptive to the idea of a bus buddy program and potentially connecting it to a public service project required by local high schools. Seniors from the GoldenAires in San Rafael were not interested in a bus buddy program and were generally disinterested in using public bus service. They did note that they liked taking the ferry, but that parking was an issue as the lot fills up with commuters earlier in the day. Not knowing if there would be an available parking spot discouraged them from using the ferry.

Organize Senior Walking Groups, Enhance Sidewalks/Crosswalks

Tomales and Pt. Reyes Station have walking exercise groups, though West Marin has so few sidewalks that walking groups would be very challenging. ADA-accessible trails would be more appropriate in these areas.

[9] http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/ntpp/ptp.htm

The Spanish-speaking group at the Whistlestop noted several areas in the Canal area where sidewalks are narrow or missing. Participants requested additional crosswalks along San Pedro Road. They appreciate countdown pedestrian signals where they are provided and would like more.

Provide Safe Education for Drivers

Classes such as the "55-Alive" program are already being offered in several areas of Marin County. While some participants found the classes very helpful, others felt the class lacked substance and provided little new information.

Other Suggestions

At the conclusion of each focus group, participants were invited to add additional suggestions to enhance senior mobility in the County. Suggestions included:

- Provide specific buses for seniors with lower floors (easier access)
- Focus on transit options for those who do not qualify for Whistlestop but choose not to drive
- Provide frequent "jitney" service for everyday errands
- Use the Whistlestop newsletter to advertise transportation options, including rideshare sign ups
- Provide reserved parking for seniors near regional transit stops/stations
- Enhance coordination among transportation options already in place and provide better information to seniors on these Ride Connection.

Chapter 7. Transportation Gaps for Seniors in Marin

Based on the research and public participation described in the preceding chapters, this chapter summarizes the barriers that limit the mobility of older adults in Marin County. The barriers that were identified cover all transportation modes used by local seniors, as well as the connection between transportation and land use, and the need for information and training on transportation options.

Key Findings

Barriers to mobility are grouped into the following five categories. Following this section, gaps within each category are discussed.

Access/Land Use – Many seniors live in hilly, residential areas that are not easily served by transit or walking trips. Mobility can be limited by these factors, particularly for seniors who do not drive. Seniors living in West Marin and other rural areas face similar challenges and often feel they have no choice but to continue to drive. Access to regional destinations such as San Francisco or Santa Rosa is also limited as seniors feel less comfortable driving far distances and transit and van service is typically restricted to weekday hours.

Livability/Mobility – Limited transportation choices, particularly for those who do not drive, limits mobility and affects the quality of life for seniors. Transportation services to medical appointments and other important destinations typically require advanced planning, and even then can mean unreliable service with long wait times. Traveling to destinations in the evenings and on weekends is restricted for many seniors who would like to visit with friends and family or run errands. These limitations on mobility promote isolation, as seniors must give up trips that sustain their lifestyle. Additionally, while many service providers run small scale transportation programs that provide personalized service, they have limited profitability and are therefore hard to expand.

Safety/Comfort – Personal safety and comfort are important issues for seniors who may be frail or have a disability. Public bus service may not adequately accommodate the special needs of seniors. In particular, bus stops are often too far to walk to, lack amenities such as seating, shade and real-time schedule information, or are perceived to be unsafe. In particular, the Marin City transit hub and Golden Gate transit bus stops in San Francisco are undesirable locations to wait or transfer. In addition, seniors have a unique set of pedestrian safety needs. Uneven sidewalks, a lack of curb ramps and poorly lit areas can present significant safety issues for seniors and people with disabilities.

Information and Training – Both service providers and seniors have discussed the challenge of sharing information about transportation services, particularly as many seniors do not use computers. There are many opportunities to enhance marketing and outreach efforts to seniors. In addition, training opportunities can be very valuable but labor-intensive.

Affordability – For seniors with a limited income, affordable transportation options are key to their mobility choices. For example, many seniors enjoy the door-to-door service that taxis provide, but the cost prohibits all but very localized trips. Supporting the development of volunteer driving programs and providing subsidies for taxis and other transportation services will help provide more flexibility for seniors.

Access/Land Use

Land Use Issues

The topography and land use decisions in Marin County cause many people to live in hilly residential areas that are not served by transit, or are too far or hilly to walk to commercial areas. Many residents "age in place" and lack sufficient transportation options. Seniors who live in these areas often feel isolated and are frustrated by the constraints on their mobility.

For example, several participants at the Novato workshop talked about the difficulty of reaching walkable destinations and bus stops from their home. Those who no longer drive were dependent on Whistlestop Wheels (if eligible) and otherwise had trouble reaching services and commercial areas. Participants who wanted to travel to regional destinations such as Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa were largely dependent on friends and family to drive them there.

Some workshop participants noted that they would consider moving closer to amenities and services so they could walk there. Affordable senior-friendly housing options in downtown/commercial areas served by transit would be attractive to this group.

Rural Areas

Many seniors living in rural areas continue to drive because they don't feel like they have any other transportation options. In particular, seniors in West Marin depend heavily on driving to get to regional destinations such as Novato, Petaluma and San Rafael because they do not have alternative options. Per ADA eligibility requirements, the West Marin Stage Coach bus service will deviate up to ¾-mile off route to provide its own complementary paratransit service. However, bus service in this area is infrequent, and workshop participants noted that the Stagecoach was not always reliable and comfortable.

Before the West Marin Stagecoach provided its own paratransit service, Whistlestop Wheels covered West Marin's paratransit needs. West Marin residents had difficulty using Whistlestop Wheels service to Central Marin because they were dropped off for several hours at a time which is too long for most seniors. Today, West Marin residents could benefit from having more information about Whistlestop Services in and around Central Marin.

Participants at the Pt. Reyes Station public workshop voiced a great deal of interest in carpooling, volunteer drivers, and organized van trips to Petaluma and Novato for destinations such as Trader Joe's, Costco and Target.

Distance to Transit

Many workshop participants expressed concern that bus stops do not always directly serve key destinations like shopping malls, requiring patrons to cross busy roads or walk quite a distance to reach the front door. In general, the biggest obstacle to using bus transit is that bus stops are too far away from home to walk to. Many said that if they could be picked up closer to home they would be more willing to use public bus service.

Regional Access

While some seniors are comfortable driving to destinations throughout the Bay Area, most drive locally and during the day. Many seniors who continue to drive would like alternative travel choices for regional trips and trips at night, especially to San Francisco. Some participants

carpool or provide rides to friends, while others noted that Whistlestop Wheels is useful for intra-county trips, such as errands and medical appointments at Kaiser.

For some drivers, parking is a significant challenge. Many said they would be more likely to use the ferry or regional bus if they knew that they could park reliably at the transit hub. Commuters fill the ferry parking lots early in the day.

Many workshop participants noted that they like the ferry and would like to use it more, especially at night and on the weekend. Ferry service was particularly popular at the Southern Marin workshop in Mill Valley, where participants said that they enjoyed using the ferry but would like to see the service expanded on the weekends and evenings.

At the Mill Valley workshop, participants discussed the challenge of travelling between Southern Marin towns such as Mill Valley, Strawberry and Tiburon. They were interested in local, direct bus service between these communities so they do not have transfer through Marin City, which is indirect and felt unsafe to many.

Livability/Mobility

Reliability and Wait Times for Transit and Paratransit

Seniors often have difficulties finding rides home from medical appointments. For example, scheduling paratransit to pick patients up from medical visits can be difficult as appointments can often be shorter or longer than expected. JFCS has a van they use for medical appointments, but will not bring clients home unless they are accompanied.

In addition, many seniors go to San Francisco for medical appointments. While there are several options to reserve transportation services in advance, there is a need for short-notice trips to medical appointments.

Evening and Weekend Service

As seniors age their comfort with driving longer distances and at night decreases. As previously noted, many seniors prefer not to drive at night. This situation limits evening trips, particularly for people who are not familiar or comfortable using public bus service.

Several workshop participants who drive said they expected to use Whistlestop Wheels when they can no longer drive; however, Whistlestop Wheels is a paratransit service that is only available for people who are unable to use fixed-route transit. Seniors who do not drive and are not eligible for Whistlestop Wheels have significantly limited transportation options.

Besides driving, most other transportation services such as the Blue & Gold ferry, Golden Gate Transit, and private shuttles/vans have limited service in the evening and on weekends. Many Whistlestop users would like weekend service and same-day scheduling.

Walkable Destinations

According to the *Marin Countywide Plan*, over 50 percent of Marin adults over the age of 60 are overweight or obese and 17 percent of seniors 60 and older never get moderate physical activity.

Many seniors value walking as an important and beneficial exercise to keep healthy, and also walk for commuting and errands. Two main barriers to walking include hills and the lack of seating along walking routes. As noted above, the topography and land use decisions in Marin County cause many people to live in hilly residential areas that are too far or hilly to walk to

commercial areas. Benches, particularly at bus stops, would be helpful for walking trips. Many workshop participants enjoy walking in downtown areas that have pedestrian amenities such as benches, signalized crosswalks and sidewalks.

At the Southern Marin workshop in Mill Valley, several participants noted that Highway 101 was a barrier to walking. Despite having pedestrian overpasses, some participants did not know where they were located or how to access them.

Limited Resources

Many service providers operate their transportation programs on a very small scale. These types of programs are important supplements to Whistlestop Wheels and can often provide services at a more affordable rate because they don't have the overhead cost of supervising and dispatching trips. However, these small scale programs are typically not profitable, depend on County subsidies, and are therefore difficult to expand without additional support. Despite these challenges, several providers said they would like to expand their services because they are not able to meet the demand for their services. Many providers feel that a volunteer driving program would help supplement their efforts, and additional support from the County or contracts with medical providers such as Kaiser, Sutter Health, or dialysis centers would help to cover clients' needs.

Resources for local sidewalk maintenance and repair are also limited. For example, the City of San Rafael allocates approximately $100,000 annually for their sidewalk repair program, which is a small budget for a city of this size. As such, repairs are driven by residents' complaints and general observations by City staff to make improvements. While the City has had an ADA Transition program for many years, it languished until the federal Department of Justice audited the City in 2004. The City entered into a settlement agreement that mandated a series of ADA improvements such as curb ramps, accessible parking and appropriate signage. San Rafael has nearly completed these projects, which have been primarily funded through a series of Community Development Block Grants.

Safety/Comfort

Personal Safety

Bus Service

Personal safety is an important issue for seniors, who are often dependent on others for their transportation needs. Workshop participants indicated that waiting at bus stops, particularly in the evenings or in unfamiliar areas when they did not know how long the wait would be was a major deterrent to using public transit. Many people found the Marin City transit hub and San Francisco bus stops especially daunting, as there is little seating, shade, restrooms, or water, and a perceived lack of safety in these areas. Transferring between bus routes can also be stressful for seniors, when even one transfer leaves a senior waiting in an area where they might feel vulnerable. For example, as there are no direct bus routes between southern Marin towns such as Mill Valley and Tiburon, patrons must transfer through Marin City which is indirect and feels unsafe.

Personal safety becomes increasingly important for seniors with mental impairments, such as dementia. While several service providers offer door-to-door service and an extra level of care for clients with special needs, Golden Gate Transit's regular bus service is not able to adequately

accommodate this user group. As such, some senior housing facilities have discouraged residents from using public transit.

Pedestrian Safety

Walking trips may be encouraged by making senior-specific pedestrian safety improvements. Several location-specific pedestrian issues were discussed at the public workshops, including the following:

- Lighting on marsh boardwalks in southern Marin is needed to keep seniors (and others) safe.
- Efforts to maintain and repair sidewalks are inconsistent among Marin County jurisdictions. These efforts are improving but more is needed. Laws on sidewalk repair need to be enforced.
- Walking routes to transit require particular attention.
- Several workshop participants also noted sidewalk and crosswalk areas that could be improved, including areas of downtown Pt. Reyes Station, downtown Mill Valley, and Strawberry.
- To further encourage safe walking trips, aid in physical fitness and reduce isolation, walking groups of seniors could be organized. However, most seniors do not live close to appropriate walking areas.

Physical Comfort

It can be physically challenging for seniors to get on and off the bus. In particular, the West Marin Stagecoach was identified as uncomfortable. Many seniors choose not to use the Stage Coach because they could not be sure whether there would be space to sit comfortably. School students and weekend tourists often fill the buses to capacity during peak times.

Information and Training

Information and Outreach

Marin County has a patchwork of senior-specific transportation services which may not be fully understood by the general public. These services require coordination, and there are specific opportunities for enhanced coordination for non-ADA paratransit trips. Marin Transit has a new Mobility Coordinator who could assist with this.

Several factors may contribute to a poor understanding of services in Marin County, including a lack of information, or misinformation on transit services, as well as ignorance of the system. For example, several workshop participants said the rules and conditions of Whistlestop Wheels were confusing. They did not understand how to register for the service or were frustrated by the advanced scheduling requirements. Many workshop participants also noted that bus information was confusing and not easy to use. In particular, several participants said it was difficult to navigate the bus schedule and map. If people had more information about bus stop locations and schedules they may be more comfortable using it. Others noted that schedule and route changes have reduced their transit options. Currently, most Whistlestop Wheels clients find out about the service through their doctors and medical providers.

Whistlestop Wheels is about to install mobile data terminals on all vehicles, which will allow dispatchers to see where all vehicles are in the system and improve overall coordination of services. Given additional resources, Whistlestop would like to develop an on-line recognition system and install an audio management system in vehicles that would call-out to patrons when approaching their stop. Such services will help keep clients and care providers informed.

Similarly, focus group participants were confused about certain aspects of the West Marin Stage service. They were not aware that seniors get priority seating on the buses, and they did not understand if the bus could stop at any safe location or whether it only stops at established bus stops. Being uncertain on these aspects of the service discourages use; travel training for seniors in West Marin may increase the use of the bus among seniors.

Training Drivers

Drivers are often asked to go above and beyond their basic responsibilities by helping clients in and out of the vehicle, carrying groceries and packages, escorting clients to the door, and being sensitive to the needs of older adults. While some providers such as the Novato Human Needs Center provides formal training to both paid and volunteer drivers, other organizations' drivers would benefit from additional training.

Affordability

Affordable transportation options are critical for seniors with a limited income. While Marin Transit, Whistlestop Wheels and several other service providers offer subsidized services, these options are not always appropriate for certain trips. For example, Whistlestop Wheels requires advanced reservations and is not suitable for same day service. While taxis are useful for same day appointments, they are prohibitively expensive and mostly used for short trips, such as returning from the grocery store. Workshop participants said they would like to use taxis more if they were cheaper.

Affordable transportation options are also needed for seniors who cannot use public transit and may not qualify for Whistlestop Wheels. For example, seniors living in West Marin have very limited transit options and will often choose to drive beyond their comfort zone or limit their travel instead. Several workshop participants suggested that an organized carpool or volunteer driving service would help meet their mobility needs at an affordable price.

In general, many service providers have suggested that volunteer driving programs are key to providing affordable and flexible services for seniors. Supporting the development of volunteer driving programs and providing subsidies for taxis and other transportation services will help provide more mobility options for seniors.

Mobility Gaps and Affected Senior Groups

The issues outlined in this chapter affect seniors with varying abilities differently. The table below provides a general framework for the types of senior groups affected by these issues, and may be a helpful tool in prioritizing the recommended improvements.

Figure 7-1 Mobility Gaps and Affected Senior Group

Issue	Independent		Assisted Living	Nursing Care	Disabled
	Driving	Limited Driving			
Land Use Issues	■	■	■	■	■
Rural Areas	■	■	■	■	■
Distance to Transit		■	■		
Regional Access		■	■		
Reliability and Wait Times for Transit and Paratransit		■	■	■	■
Evening and Weekend Service		■	■	■	■
Walkable Destinations	■	■	■		■
Personal Safety		■	■		■
Physical Comfort		■	■		■
Information and Outreach	■	■	■	■	■
Limited Resources	■	■	■	■	■
Training Drivers			■	■	■
Affordability	■	■	■	■	■

APPENDIX A

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Appendix A. Stakeholder Interviews

Five stakeholder interviews with service providers were conducted as part of the Marin Senior Mobility Action Plan study to assess gaps and opportunities for improving senior transportation in the County. The results of the interviews were incorporated in the gaps analysis report prepared for this study. The below sections summarize the feedback received in the interviews.

Stakeholder interviewees were:

- Jewish Family & Children's Needs Services
- Whistlestop Wheels
- North Bay Taxi Cooperative
- Novato Human Needs
- City of San Rafael Public Works

Typical questions included:

- What services do you provide to seniors and people with disabilities?
- What role does your organization serve in providing transportation services for seniors? (i.e., paratransit, volunteer driving etc.)
- What destinations do you serve?
- Do you offer flexibility with these destinations?
- Do you feel the destinations meet demand?
- What other destinations would you like to serve?
- How much does your service cost?
- What is your daily senior ridership/patronage?
- What is your annual capital/operating budget for senior services? What are your funding sources?
- Do you partner with any senior service providers, such as hospitals, senior housing facilities, or senior centers?
- Are there any discontinued or trial programs for seniors your organization has experimented with? What resources would your organization have needed for this service to continue?
- What are the biggest challenges for providing senior transportation services currently?
- How do you see your issues/ opportunities changing in the future?
- What resources would you need to meet these challenges or enhance service?
- Do you have any future senior-related projects in the works?
- Do you survey your senior patrons and, if so, what are key themes from their feedback?

Questions for Public Works included:

- Is there a pedestrian citizen's advisory committee for your agency?
- How are sidewalk improvements prioritized?

- What is the process for a community to get street furniture (for example, benches near senior centers or along pedestrian routes to shopping, libraries, and medical facilities)?
- What is the funding source for benches, lighting, bus shelters, and curb cuts?
- (For the County): In our outreach meetings we found that seniors were reluctant to use transit to Marin City because of the lack of benches, shelter, and lighting, as well as some recent crime there. Are there plans to upgrade this transit hub?

Jewish Family & Children's Needs Services

Nancy Masters, Director October 30, 2009

- The focus of JFCNS' transportation program is people who have a very hard time with Whistlestop Wheels: people in pain, or who need additional care and need more personalized escort service to appointments.
- Clients either come through internal referral from JFCNS programs or from other agencies. Clients must register for program. Before enrollment, JFCNS does an assessment to make sure it is safe to transport a potential patron.
- The JFCNS transportation program for seniors is new (about a year old). Right now they are just doing a van program; a planned volunteer program is on hold. They provide 20 to 25 one-way trips per week. About 50 people are registered in the ride program. The van only makes trips to medical appointments. They are getting numerous requests to go into San Francisco for appointments.
- Clients can call up until the day before; JFCNS requests that they call as much in advance as possible. They are typically booked through the following week, even into the month.
- They partner with county agencies like Senior Access, Marin Adult Day Center, and Dialysis Medical Providers.
- The full cost of the entire program is $60-$70,000 a year; JFCNS gets $20,000 from the County, and about $10,000 from clients that pay. Otherwise JFCNS is subsidizing the program. The full cost per ride is $25 each way and the patron's cost is dependent on the subsidy funding source. JFCNS also receives some ADA Act funds, and has a contract with County of Marin for escorted ride program ($20K/year) that funds approximately 400 rides/year. This is provided free to the client, with donations accepted.
- They are not widely publicizing because they do not have the capacity to serve more with one van. Now JFCNS may have up to three calls for the same time. They are trying to develop back-up volunteers to provide rides. They want to recruit volunteers that can be on-call. This is a double-edged sword. They are worried that if they do too much outreach they'll be inundated with calls. If the volunteer driver program is initiated, they plan to do more outreach.
- Ideally a volunteer driver is not working or is retired and available during the day. JFCNS targets retired people and stay-at-home parents. The program will not reimburse volunteers for gas expenses.
- JFCNS feels a multipronged approach is necessary for senior transportation. They have a van, arrange taxis for clients, and also have volunteers.

- They want to make sure they are getting resources to the people who cannot afford the services. However, even at half-price, service is still very expensive. They would like more resources to subsidize programs. They would like to pursue partnering with other agencies.
- Most clients are not Jewish.
- Feedback from clients: Clients like the driver and find him to be courteous, however, they are not always available. It is hard to have only one van. JFCNS has a recorded line, so when clients call the rides line they leave a message and JFCNS calls them back. Ideally they would be taking calls as they come in.

Whistlestop Wheels

Jackie Mulroy, Director of Transportation October 27, 2009

- Jackie clarified the Southwest Marin route: If someone who is ADA eligible requests a trip from Bolinas to Marin City, Whistlestop Wheels will provide service. Whistlestop provides one weekly stop at Dillon Beach; otherwise, Stagecoach provides paratransit services in West Marin. Whistlestop used to operate the Stagecoach ADA services until 2005. Stagecoach will provide both fixed route service and go up to .75 miles off-route.
- Whistlestop also does non-mandated service beyond 300-400 trips per month. (Whistlestop provides 90% of those trips monthly.) Whistlestop looks to taxi overflow, or pushes mandated trips to taxi overflow for the remaining 10%. They do not deny any mandated trip requests.
- Whistlestop uses Trapeze scheduling software. Mobile data terminals (MDT) will be installed on all vehicles over the next couple of months. By using GPS, Whistlestop will be able to see where all vehicles are all the time. This will improve services overall.
- On Whistlestop's wish list: IVR system – voice recognition that calls out to patrons when their stop is coming, as well as an on-line reservation system. Patrons could choose different modes that are appropriate for their trip. With the aging baby boomers there is expected to be a market for on-line scheduling.
- Whistlestop would like to expand the program for non-disabled seniors as well, but funding is the limiting factor. Potential ideas include a volunteer driver program and partnering with agencies that have additional vehicles available.
- Whistlestop contracts with various providers including:
  - Health Express – Novato services for Sutter
  - Handleton Shuttle
  - Three shopping shuttles in San Rafael for EAH Senior residential facilities (including Parnell House and Maria Defrias)
  - Life Long Medical and Senior Access – contracts ended because this was not working financially. Whistlestop now pays an hourly rate.
  - Whistlestop is working on a contract now with Regional Center for People with Developmental Disabilities.

  - Future: Whistlestop would like to discuss opportunities for hospitals to sign contracts with them for transportation.

- The biggest challenge is paying for services. There are many gaps. Whistlestop is trying to find the right kind of transportation at an affordable rate. Not everyone is eligible for ADA paratransit who can no longer ride the bus. Jackie asked: what should that service look like and who should pay for it? There is a need to organize resources that are not duplicating services. Paul Branson's role as "mobility manager" can help meet that need – to help create a "one stop shop" concierge service for residents.
- Whistlestop solicits feedback through comment cards on the bus, intake forms for complaints, and phone calls. There has not been a formal survey in quite a few years. They have received much positive feedback, but also negative. Frequent complaints include: "Driver didn't show up on time", or that "schedulers change the time too much", and "waited too long, didn't get to the destination on time." All comments are logged. To help alleviate the situation, all negative comments are responded to.
- Jackie notes they need better communication about the services they provide: Whistlestop is for people who can no longer drive and also cannot take the bus.

North Bay Taxi Cooperative

Lucinda Daniel October 28, 2009

- The North Bay Taxi Cooperative is a driver-owned company. The company is owned by seven people with 20 cars total. North Bay Taxi makes money based on driver hours.
- One of the owners bought two wheelchair accessible vans (rear-loaders). To reserve these vehicles, customers should reserve as soon as they know they need a ride. Vans are available 5am-midnight. Lucinda feels that the word is not out that they have wheelchair accessible vans. On average, North Bay Taxi serves less than five wheelchair users per day. They perhaps have twice as many requests but are unable to accommodate all requests. Clients can reserve a vehicle but North Bay Taxi cannot guarantee a ride as a van can break down.
- North Bay Taxi is only allowed to pick up in Marin County but can go everywhere. Frequent destinations include Kaiser facilities, Marin City to satellite dialysis in Greenbrae, and Marinwood to Northgate.
- Cost is $2.50 starting fee, then $3.50/mile
- Larry is the owner who bought the vans several years ago (maybe 2006) before the County suggested that they buy accessible vehicles. Afterwards, the County offered purchase of vehicles at a discount to a North Bay Taxi competitor and their competitor got a lot of business.
- Lucinda noted that it is hard to convince taxi drivers that driving accessible vans is worthwhile because gas is so much more expensive. Also, seating and comfort capacity is lower than for a regular sedan. There is also a limit to what North Bay Taxi drivers can do because they are not paramedics. She also suggested that it takes a certain type of personality to work with seniors – patience and a need to see the bigger picture. Loading and unloading also takes time and they cannot charge for that – this is a barrier to drivers who are not on a payroll.

- When Whistlestop is at capacity, North Bay taxi company is called for overflow. Their client base is about 50%/50% Whistlestop and direct customer calls for wheelchair vans. They also have accounts with retirement homes. Whistlestop requires a higher insurance rate. Retirement homes will call to make reservations and sometimes the client will pay directly. Other times the bill goes straight to the account. Project Independence also has an account. They authorize trips for their clients and get billed on a monthly basis.
- Recently they have not seen the calls coming from Whistlestop, or see them very sporadically. Drivers have cut back their hours in those vehicles. Lucinda feels the public does not understand that drivers are working for themselves and that it is not a bus service. North Bay Taxi would like vehicles to be out there all the time.
- Wish list: Lucinda would like to have more people know about them. The Marin Transit website says to call Radio Cab, but not North Taxi. That "is frustrating". Lucinda suggested that customers should have all the options. They want the public to know about them, and want ways to get the information out. They have some "really great drivers" but do not have their own marketing person.

Novato Human Needs

Deanna Euritt, Executive Director November 2, 2009

- Novato Human Needs struggles to maintain a transportation department because they are small, but Deanna asserts they play an important role because they serve disabled and seniors.
- Novato Human Needs receives funding from Lifelong Medical Center (this replaced what Senior Access used to do in Novato – i.e. provide adult day care for people with dementia), plus Senior Access. The Division of Aging and the County have also provided funding. Rates are significantly lower than Whistlestop Wheels which enables affordable contracts with senior programs.
- Novato Human Needs has been dependent on Whistlestop in the past, because they used to manage contracts with Senior Access/Lifelong. Whistlestop would do some routes, and Novato Human Needs worked in partnership in the past. Whistlestop will no longer be available for back up, so now Novato Human Needs has volunteers scheduled for back up.
- Novato Human Needs has always lost $30,000 per year. They have a reasonable rate and expanded contracts with Lifelong and think they will balance their books this year. It makes sense for them to expand and break even. They serve Novato, which is unique, and also go to seven low-income senior housing facilities in Novato and take residents to shopping malls. Service now goes all over the county except to West Marin.
- Deanna is concerned that there are seniors in their homes that cannot sell their homes or want to remain independent in their homes. These seniors typically like volunteer drivers. Novato Human Needs has a formal volunteer program. Volunteers have training, background, and physical tests.
- According to Deanna, an important need is making the connection from Novato dial-a-ride to other areas outside of Novato. Local access is better met; countywide and regional access is a larger challenge. For example, there is a need for trips to go to Terra Linda Kaiser from Novato. Novato Human Needs used to provide that service but no longer

does. They would be interested in a contract with Sutter Health and/or Kaiser to provide service to the Terra Linda facility and to the Novato Kaiser clinic. Novato Human Needs would need funding for this. Also, mid-day service is a gap.

- Wish list:
  - Individual volunteer service would be extremely valuable.
  - It would be helpful to have more financial support to make sure their program does not lose money.
  - They would like to hire a transportation supervisor who could manage training and dispatch.
  - They would like advice on how to make these smaller scale service providers viable.

Novato Human Needs does a survey every year. Clients are thankful for the service, like the drivers, and the vans are new so they are still comfortable.

City of San Rafael Public Works

Richard Landis, Public Works Administrative Director November 5, 2009

- The City of San Rafael has had a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee since 2002/2003.

How are sidewalk improvements prioritized?

- The City of San Rafael is extremely underfunded. They have a miscellaneous sidewalk repair program and spend approximately $100,000 per year. There is no prioritized system for making improvements. The City's street maintenance group bases improvements on calls from citizens or observations.
- Funding sources: The City receives about $500,000 from Measure A, plus gas tax money, vehicle registration fees: $196,000, construction vehicle impact fees: $600,000-700,000, prop 1D: $800,000-900,000 in past years, and now there is federal stimulus money for current resurfacing projects.

Does the City have an ADA Transition Plan?

- The ADA transition program initially languished. But then in 2004 the Federal Department of Justice did a survey of the City's public right of way through "Project Civic Access." The Department of Justice provided a blueprint of what the City of San Rafael needed to do to meet ADA standards. The City entered into a settlement agreement and now has an active program in place. They report to the Department of Justice every year.
- Parking structures were also not accessible, and ADA City Hall parking spaces were non-compliant. The City was required to redevelop them. There were also signage, curb ramps, and parking issues. The City agreed to construct 800 curb ramps, and also build curb ramps when streets are repaved. ADA projects are funded with a Community Development Block Grant of $300,000 per year, plus City money. The City has almost completed the ADA list agreement

What is the process for a community to get street furniture, for example, benches near senior centers or along pedestrian routes to shopping, libraries, and medical facilities?

- Last year the City completed a project that ran from D Street/4th Street to Miracle Mile - a total renovation of the neighborhood which includes some street furniture. Funding is not an issue for the occasional bench. Residents should call City Hall or Public Works to request. They need adequate sidewalk width to install benches. If the City can do it they will.

What is the funding source for benches, lighting, bus shelters, and curb cuts?

- Bus shelters are a special category – the City contracts with CBS Outdoor to install shelters. The City does not pay for that but does get revenue. Shelters are not installed in areas without adequate sidewalk width.

FINAL REPORT

MAY 2010

Marin County Division of Aging & Adult Services and Marin Transit

SENIOR MOBILITY ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Nelson|Nygaard
consulting associates

Marin County Senior Mobility and Implementation Plan Advisory Panel

We would like to thank the Advisory Panel and team who worked with us on this project.

Organization	Name	Title
Aldersly Garden Retirement Community	Gina Pandiani	Activity Director
Canal Alliance	Bob Jackson	Director, Economic Development & Technology
Commission on Aging, League of Women Voters	Sue Beittel	Vice Chair
Community Health and Social Justice, Marin Community Foundation	Wendy A. Todd	Program Officer
Golden Gate Transit	Harvey Katz	Access and Compliance Planner
Jewish Family & Children Services, Marin	Nancy Masters	Site Director
Marin Center for Independent Living	Eli Gilardin	Executive Director
Marin City Senior Center	Marie Gaines	Executive Director, Senior Services
Marin County Board of Supervisors, Marin Transit Board, MTC Board	Steve Kinsey	Supervisor
Marin County Department of Public Works	Dan Dawson	Principal Transportation Planner
Marin County, West Marin Service Center	Angelo Sacheli	Program Manager
Marin Paratransit Coordinating Council	Rocky Birdsey	Chair
Novato Human Needs Center	Deanna Euritt	Executive Director
Redwoods Senior Community	Barbara Solomon	Executive Director
Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM)	Karita Zimmerman	Manager of Planning
West Marin Senior Services	Joan Corbett	Executive Director
Whistlestop	Jackie Mulroy	Director of Programs & Services

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Introduction

In partnership with Marin Transit and other community agencies, the Marin County Health and Human Services Department, Division of Aging and Adult Services has sponsored the Marin Senior Mobility Action and Implementation Plan to identify measures that can be taken by Marin County and transportation agencies to support the mobility of the growing older population beyond their driving years. The Plan is a joint effort to keep older people safe and connected to their communities as problems related to aging make it harder for them to get around. The purpose of this report is to identify the major gaps in transportation services to older adults in Marin County and to develop specific strategies to close those gaps.

The report is in two volumes: the first is the Existing Conditions Report, which looks at current and future demographics in Marin, describes the current state of senior transportation, presents examples of best practices in senior mobility, reports on outreach activities conducted as part of this project, and identifies transportation gaps in Marin.

This document is the second volume, the “Action and Implementation Plan”, which discusses in detail strategies proposed to meet the transportation needs of older adults in Marin County, identified through the research and outreach conducted for this project.

Criteria used to prioritize the strategies, agreed on by the team and Advisory Panel, are reviewed. The strategies are divided into Tier I – likely to be implemented, or already in the pilot stage; and Tier II strategies, which, while meeting the needs of some groups of older adults, may be more difficult to implement due to various reasons. The discussion of each strategy includes implementation steps and recommendations for funding opportunities. Following the strategy discussion are recommendations for near-term steps to implement the strategies.

Marin Mobility Strategies

Through the public outreach process described previously, strategies were identified to meet the mobility needs for Marin residents. These strategies supplemented some that are already being implemented in the County. Both existing and proposed strategy designs were further refined through the focus group process, and evaluated using objective criteria, to determine the highest priority strategies to pursue. These criteria are described in the next section.

Transportation Strategy Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria were used as a guide for evaluating strategies based on the transportation gaps identified in this project. These criteria were reviewed and approved by the Advisory Panel, and applied by the consultant staff.

The criteria are intended to be flexible, so that differences among different communities can be taken into account. The order of presentation does not correspond to order of importance—no one category is considered more important than the others.

These criteria may also be used to evaluate projects resulting from the strategies arrived at through this process, and the criteria below use the terms “strategy” and “project” interchangeably. In

evaluating projects, specific funding requirements for particular sources may also have to be considered. For example, New Freedom funds must support new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives that exceed the requirements of the ADA and "must (1) be targeted toward individuals with disabilities; and (2) meet the intent of the program by removing barriers to transportation and assisting persons with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment services." (FTA C 9045.1, May 1, 2007.) Thus projects meeting these requirements might be ranked more highly than those that did not.

Financial Criteria

Cost: Is the overall cost within a range that can realistically be funded with available sources, taking into account grants from the private or public sector or user fares/fees?

Cost per beneficiary: A broad range of a small to a large number of beneficiaries is compared to the cost of a program. Even though a program's total cost is low, if it reaches very few people it might still have a high cost per beneficiary. This would not necessarily eliminate a project from consideration if it ranked highly on other criteria including those listed under "Transportation Benefits Criteria" and "Community Criteria." Similarly, even though a program's total cost is high, if it reaches many people it might still have a low cost per beneficiary.

Funding availability and sustainability: To the degree possible, strategies and related projects should have stable sources of funding to cover match requirements. In the case of pilot, demonstration, or capital projects, there should be reasonable likelihood of continued funding for operations. It is recognized that continued funding can never be guaranteed, as it is subject to budget processes, as well as decisions and priorities of funders.

Leveraging resources: It is desirable for strategies and projects to help tap into other funding sources, especially new sources not previously available. Displacing existing funding is discouraged.

Implementation Criteria

Implementation time-frame: Strategies that will produce results quickly are preferred, as long as they are also sustainable. Projects with long-term payoffs should have some form of measurable accomplishments in the short run.

Staging: Can the improvement be implemented in stages?

Coordination: Strategies that involve coordination, for example multiple organizations working together to address a need, are desirable.

Transportation Benefits Criteria

Number of problems and trip types: Strategies that address multiple problems and serve multiple customer groups and trip purposes are preferred.

Number of beneficiaries: In general, improvements that benefit many people are preferred to those that benefit few. However, the needs of relatively small groups might be considered particularly critical based on criteria under the heading "Community."

Unserved needs: Projects are preferred that address gaps left by other services rather than duplicating, overlapping with, or competing with other services. Note that the relative importance of various needs is a matter for local priorities as addressed under "Community."

Measurable benefits: As much as possible, there should be ways to measure how a strategy is benefiting target groups, whether in terms of numbers of people served, numbers of trips provided, improved measures of service quality, etc.

Community Criteria

Community support: Community support may take the form of formal endorsement by organizations and individuals, support by elected governing bodies, a potential project sponsor ("champion") with staff or vehicles, and connections to adopted plans to carry out the strategy.

Acceptability: While a strategy may look good "on paper", there may be more subtle reasons – for example, cultural, practical, or financial – that it would not be successful if implemented. The strategy must be acceptable to the target population. That is, will the target population actually use this service being offered?

Acute needs: The importance of needs will normally be reflected in community support, but also in priority designation in locally-adopted plans or policies. Acute needs may include needs of small groups who have been left unserved by other programs due to expense or other difficulties.

Unserved groups: Identifiable groups that are not able to use existing services may include people who face language and cultural barriers.

Strategies for Marin Senior Mobility

Actions have been identified to address transportation faced by seniors based on suggestions by workshop and focus group participants, input from the Advisory Panel, and best practices from other locations. Implementation of these strategies will require coordination and partnership between county agencies and Marin's cities, transit agencies, community organizations, state and federal agencies, and private citizens.

Based on the criteria above, strategies were divided into Tier I and Tier II strategies. Ten Tier I strategies are briefly summarized in a matrix on the following page, followed by a longer description for each strategy, including the objective of the strategy, potential roles and partnerships, implementation steps, and funding. Following this section, Tier II strategies are also briefly described.

As noted above under Financial Criteria, funding for public transportation is never guaranteed. While funding sources are suggested for each strategy, it should be noted that federal transportation law will be rewritten in 2011. As a result of that process, federal funds, including New Freedom Funds, may not be continued.

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Figure 1 Senior Mobility Action Plan – Summary Matrix of Mobility Strategies

Tier I Strategy	Need Addressed	Potential Lead or Participating Agencies	Potential Funding Sources	Next Steps
Transit-based Strategies				
1. Community Bus for Seniors Local fixed-route shuttles to serve short trips within communities. Open to all with emphasis on seniors.	Brings transit closer to seniors who live too far from transit to walk.	Marin Transit, cities wanting local service Also: SMART (shuttles), Kaiser	5310 Capital funding for vehicles 5217 New Freedom Funds	Inventory existing shuttles Identify routes Develop pilot service
2. Flexible Transit Services Fixed-route services that will deviate on request	Brings transit closer to seniors who live too far from transit to walk.	Marin Transit, cities wanting local service, senior centers and housing	Partnership with senior centers 5317 New Freedom Funds Area Agency on Aging	Identify likely origins and destinations near but not on transit routes Market to residents and businesses
Walkable Communities				
3. Walkable Communities for Seniors Identify priority improvements in neighborhoods with high concentrations of seniors and walkable destinations; Utilize ADA transition plans as foundational project lists.	Safe walking access to transit and neighborhood destinations	Marin County Commission on Aging County ADA Compliance Manager Marin County DOAAS DPWs of Marin communities Citizen groups	Caltrans NMTPP Reauthorization FTA 5310 / funding swap for local dollars Public/private partnerships SR2S and TLC funds from MTC	Inventory ADA Transition plans Develop senior-oriented prioritization criteria for repairs to sidewalks Develop consensus on criteria Inventory sites Prioritize and make repairs
Demand-Response Service				
4. Subsidized Taxicabs Build on results of current subsidized taxi pilot program.	Low-income seniors cannot afford market-rate taxis.	Marin Transit / Office of Mobility Management	5317 New Freedom Funds	In progress; next steps include: Assess results of pilot, including pricing, choice of communities, marketing methods
5. Community-Based Volunteer Driver Program Continue efforts to establish non-profit, community transportation network with public and private funding. An alternative to Whistlestop Wheels for seniors who can't drive or use transit.	Non-driving seniors may not be able to get to transit, or transit may not serve their destination.	Marin Transit / Mobility Manager Local community organizations Cities	New Freedom Funds have been granted for 2011 Lifeline Transportation Program (MTC) Area Agency on Aging	Once funding is received: - identify non-profit to administer program - determine reservation system - develop plan for recruitment and training of volunteers - publicize

Tier I Strategy	Need Addressed	Potential Lead or Participating Agencies	Potential Funding Sources	Next Steps
Information				
6. Encouraging Use of Transit "Try Transit" brochure and promotions, video, organized trips, tailored service descriptions. Communicate to seniors that transit is safe, modern, senior-friendly, and provides independence.	Older people who have always driven may be reluctant to use public transit, even when it is available and they are physically able.	Marin Transit Cities / communities Senior centers, senior housing	Sponsorship by health care organizations Marin Transit marketing funds	Identify a lead coordinating agency Prioritize programs Partner with others for in-kind or funding assistance Develop marketing plans for participatory programs
7. Safe Driving Driver training, driving retirement, adapting cars for older drivers. Older Driver Wellness Program	Older adults who stop driving prematurely have limited mobility and may not be aware of their options.	Training providers, healthcare providers CA Department of Motor Vehicles	Minimal, Marin Community Foundation	Identify programs Publicize through existing related County web sites, regular senior-focused meetings
8. Information & Assistance As part of Mobility Management function, multi-modal telephone information, web site, literature distribution, seminar hosting for agency staff that work with older people.	Older people are not always aware of the full range of their available transportation options.	In process through Marin Transit / Paratransit Program, Special Needs Services	Could be minimal; New Freedom Funds	Research other programs for framework appropriate to Marin Identify lead and partner agencies funding needs and resources Execute partnership agreements and hire or designate staffing
9. Walking Groups for Seniors Coordinated groups, possibly organized around senior center or culturally based organizations, include accessibility audits of path-of-travel	Seniors may not feel comfortable walking alone and would be supported through walking groups.	Marin County (Walk Bike Marin)	Minimal, Marin Community Foundation	Work with WalkBikeMarin to add senior walking info to their site Contact senior organizations for walking group info Present info through senior clubs
Planning Policies				
10. Planning Policies for Senior Housing Planning reviews for senior housing and other senior-related facilities should require close-in locations and a transportation element.	Current policies regarding the location of senior housing and other facilities are inconsistent and do not necessarily take mobility into account	Marin County Commission on Aging, Marin County Community Development Marin Community Foundation	Minimal	Research / document policies on locating senior housing in Marin Propose policies to incentivize placement in walkable areas Develop outreach strategy to reach decision-makers Draft sample policy language

Strategy 1: Community Bus for Seniors

Transportation Needs Addressed

Golden Gate Transit and Marin local service can be difficult or time consuming to use for local trips within communities. Bus service in the hills and in neighborhoods is generally less frequent than main line service. Seniors in particular may have difficulty walking the distance to a bus stop and waiting. Neighborhoods can be difficult to serve with large buses and may produce limited ridership.

Project Objectives and Description

Community bus services follow fixed routes and are designed to provide door-to-door service. They would accommodate short distance trips within communities, linking senior housing and centers to shopping, regional bus and ferry services. The emphasis in service design is on improving proximity, rather than minimizing ride times as in conventional transit services. Small buses or vans would be utilized on routes designed to connect local points of interest and reduce walking distances to access service. There should be provision for trips between cities, whether by means of coordinated service involving two or more cities or by means of connections at transit hubs. Service would be available to the general public but designed and marketed with an emphasis on seniors. In some communities, service may include demand-responsive deviations. Fares may be charged but should not be a barrier to usage, whether financially or through inconvenience of fare media.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Cities: Establish service design and priorities; contribute to funding; market locally.

Marin Transit: Coordination, technical assistance, planning, marketing in coordination with regional services. (Note that Marin Transit has no funds at this time to cost-share or provide community buses.)

SMART Shuttles: SMART, a commuter rail service now in the planning stages, intends to provide shuttles between their stations and communities along major corridors. Focused on morning and evening work trips, there may be potential for adding mid-day senior-oriented service.

Medical facilities: Kaiser Permanente has shown interest in a shuttle service to bring patients to their facility in Terra Linda. This might establish the start of a larger shuttle system for seniors.

Implementation Steps

- Inventory existing shuttles, including those operated by cities, Marin Transit, and private institutions and employers to identify under-served senior locations and establish service parameters (service area, users and user requirements, vehicle ownership and management, funding and fares), potential service enhancements, and opportunities for coordination and improved cost effectiveness.

- Identify routes not currently served by transit which would connect origins and destinations of interest to seniors.
- Develop pilot services in some cities and secure funding or execute MOUs, if necessary.
- Establish a countywide community bus plan to enhance coordination and funding opportunities.
- Expand services.

Funding

Funding for this strategy would come from new sources as Marin Transit does not have funds to provide or share costs on this service.

- FTA Section 5310, Elderly and Disabled Specialized Transportation Program funds, can be used for capital projects such as vehicles
- FTA Section 5317 New Freedom funds may be used for this type of service

Strategy 2: Flexible Transit Services

Transportation Needs Addressed

The distance between home and transit, and transit and one's destination (sometimes referred to as the "last mile" problem) can present a barrier to seniors who would be willing to take public transit, but can't walk the required distances.

Project Objectives and Description

Flexible, or "route-deviation" service, is typically a hybrid configuration adapting features of both fixed route and fixed schedule transit systems as well as demand-responsive curb-to-curb systems. Riders can request that the route deviate, either for pick-up or drop-off, within a specified distance. After accommodating off-route requests, the vehicle returns to the stop at which the deviation started (or in some systems, the next stop) and continues along the advertised route. Often these services use same-day or previous-day reservations for pick-ups, while riders can request deviations to be dropped off while on board the vehicle. Flexible systems often will also pick up passengers when flagged down along the route in a safe place.

Deviations can be limited in distance, from one block to several miles in more rural areas. In addition, they can be limited to non-peak hours so that deviations do not impact commuters.

This kind of service can provide needed mobility for those who otherwise could not use transit; however, it can also result in slightly longer travel times for passengers not requesting deviations. Adequate flexibility should be built into the schedule so that the bus can continue to run on time. Allowing "standing orders" for pickups and drop-offs can reduce the schedule uncertainty for these systems.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Marin Transit: Deviation routes would most likely be Marin Transit local routes other than the West Marin Stagecoach, which already deviates to pick up ADA-eligible passengers if arranged the prior day.

Cities: Contribute to service design and priorities; contribute to funding; market locally.

Senior Centers/Healthcare Facilities: Contribute financially to the incremental increase in cost to serve their facility.

Implementation Steps

- Identify senior housing, senior centers, and likely destinations near but not on existing routes.
- Market the flex services to residents and senior-serving businesses and agencies along the bus route .

Funding

Since these are existing routes that are deviating, funding would be needed to cover the incremental cost of providing additional hours of service to accommodate the deviations.

- Senior centers served through the deviated service may be willing to partner on the incremental cost of service.
- 5317 New Freedom Funds can be applied to assist individuals with disabilities in accessing transit, and may be applicable for the extra operations cost for deviation.
- The Area Agency on Aging may have funds that could be used for this service.

Strategy 3: Walkable Communities for Seniors

Transportation Needs Addressed

In Marin County, walking for recreational and utilitarian trips as well as to access transit is limited in communities designed with an orientation to the auto as the primary means of transportation. This suburban building pattern typically places housing far from local stores, services, and transit. The ability of older adults to walk (or go by wheelchair) to local stores and services is often limited by issues such as:

- lack of sidewalks or pedestrian pathways
- poorly maintained sidewalks
- lack of pedestrian amenities such as benches and street trees
- lack of or substandard curb ramps
- inconvenient or inaccessible transit stop and transit facilities with respect to key destinations for seniors

- short signalized crossing times
- widely spaced or inconveniently located marked crosswalks
- high speed traffic and wide intersections/crossings (often without median refuges)
- failure of drivers to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in crosswalks
- confusing intersections or signal phasing (especially when pedestrian push button use is required), and
- concerns for personal security when walking in some areas

Better walking conditions could improve access to goods and services and transit, and support increased physical activity, with benefits for health and driving ability.

Marin County has prioritized accessibility of County buildings as a key initiative, and budgets $3 million annually for this effort. Outside of County property, wherever road work is done, sidewalks are improved to ADA standard. In addition, the Safe Routes to School program upgrades sidewalks to ADA standards. Marin County was a grantee in the Federal Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Project (NMTPP) and received approximately $25 million to build bicycle and pedestrian pathways.

Project Objectives and Description

Federal regulations require jurisdictions to develop ADA Transition plans to guide upgrading of streets and sidewalks to ADA standards. The plans are required to name an official responsible for implementation, list structural modifications needed in facilities, and indicate when these changes will be accomplished. New or updated ADA Transition Plans offer an opportunity to strategically enhance pedestrian accommodations for seniors.

Many jurisdictions are also developing “complete streets” policies and implementation plans to institutionalize the accommodation of all modes and all users into routine maintenance and roadway design efforts.

Finally, the growing movement of “Safe Routes for Seniors” offers an opportunity to target funding and education, enforcement, engineering, and encouragement strategies to benefit seniors who choose to walk and bike.

As a first step, the ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plans for Marin County as well as the communities within Marin would be inventoried and their status determined. A set of guidelines for priorities for future ADA updates would be developed that emphasize creating “complete streets” in areas near senior housing, senior centers, and routes connecting these locations with popular destinations (pharmacies, libraries, shopping, post offices) as well as transit. Data gathered for this report showing collisions between senior pedestrians and vehicles would also be factored into the priorities.

Moving beyond the Transition Plan context, the County would develop a “complete streets” or routine accommodations policy and also establish a Safe Routes for Seniors program. An ongoing stakeholder collaboration effort may include establishing a reporting/feedback process to encourage seniors to “self-evaluate” pedestrian conditions in the County.

Envisioned projects to enhance pedestrian facilities would include installation of/ upgrade curb ramps, driveway cross slope mitigations, countdown pedestrian signals and extended signal phasing, bulbouts, median refuge islands, sidewalk repair, benches and street trees, and connecting sidewalks where there are gaps. The County would also collaborate with Marin Transit to review bus stop locations and relocate bus stops where feasible to better serve key destinations for seniors.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

The Marin County Commission on Aging: This advisory council may play a role in conducting an inventory of sites.

County ADA Compliance Manager: Conduct the inventory of ADA plans; develop draft and final prioritization criteria; coordinate among other agencies and jurisdictions

Marin County DOAAS Represent the needs of seniors in developing priorities. Develop training materials for residents to evaluate walking conditions and facilities.

Cities: City departments, Departments of Public Works (DPWs) in particular, would provide relevant traffic engineering expertise, and program those improvements that can be implemented with available funds. Cities can also enforce the ADA requirement that when a business is remodeled, sidewalks must be brought into compliance.

Neighborhood associations, community groups, and senior organizations: Organize residents to evaluate conditions and prioritize desired improvements, to be reported to the DPWs of the jurisdictions.

Implementation Steps

- Inventory the ADA Transition plans for Marin County jurisdictions
- Develop senior-oriented criteria for prioritization of ADA-required repairs to sidewalks and intersections
- Work with Marin County jurisdictions to get consensus on prioritization criteria
- Inventory the sites
- Marin County and cities within Marin would then prioritize repairs and upgrades within their jurisdictions based on agreed-on criteria

Funding

- Caltrans may be a source of funding or may implement requested sidewalk gap closure projects on State routes.
- If the NMTPP is reauthorized, this would be a likely source for funding to improve pedestrian access and amenities near senior centers and senior housing FTA Section 5310 funds capital projects focused on the elderly and disabled, so this may be a possible source of funds for ADA upgrades near senior housing and destinations.

- Using federal finding for sidewalks can require considerable administrative overhead. Another possibility is to trade federal dollars granted through the NMTPP or the FTA 5310 with local dollars generated through the SMART sales tax.
- Shared public/private funding for enhancements associated with new developments and building permit requests
- Safe Routes to Transit funding from MTC
- Transportation for Livable Communities funding from MTC
- Shared funding from related projects (such as station area planning projects associated with the SMART commuter stations)

Strategy 4: Expansion of Subsidized Taxicab Pilot Program

Transportation Needs Addressed

Taxicabs are a widespread form of alternative transportation that seniors can use when they do not drive. Taxis are available on short notice, in areas with limited bus service, and at times when bus service is infrequent or there is no bus service. However, taxi service is expensive, especially for people with limited incomes. In addition, many older people are not comfortable taking taxis because of concerns about service quality, safety, and driver behavior. Very few taxi companies operate vehicles that are accessible to people in wheelchairs.

Project Objectives and Description

Agencies in Marin County have started filling the needs for both accessible cabs and for reduced fares for seniors and people with disabilities. There are a total of six accessible cabs in Marin; four are owned by Marin Transit and are leased to On the Move, the parent company of several local taxi companies, and the other cabs are owned by North Bay Cooperative Taxi Company. A trip in an accessible cab can be arranged through North Bay Cooperative Taxi, Belaire Cab, Radio Cab, and Marin Yellow Cab. Rates are the same as with any taxi ride.

Under a demonstration project, a pilot taxi voucher program was established in Marin County to test the appropriateness of the taxi voucher alternative as a cost-effective means of meeting the needs of seniors. The pilot, in operation from December 2009 through June 2010, focuses on seniors 65 and over in two communities in central Marin. Participants must attest to the fact that they have limited their driving, are considering not driving, or are not driving now; paratransit-eligible seniors are included in the program. The program offers a 50% subsidy on the purchase of coupons. Taxi rides are limited to Marin. The program was marketed through direct mail to target households, publicity through the local newspaper, and flyers distributed to senior residential facilities. Whistlestop is handling the applications and booklet distribution. The proposed strategy will build on the existing pilot, possibly considering different geographic locations and subsidy levels.

While the current program is based on geographic area, another approach might be to distribute vouchers through medical facilities so that people could use them to get rides home from appointments.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Marin Office of Mobility Management: Marketing, printing and distribution of coupons, rider screening, program administration.

Taxicab Companies and Drivers: Consultation in program design; service delivery.

Implementation Steps

- Evaluate the pilot demonstration to determine how this type of program might be administered in the future.
- Identify one or more cities interested in building on existing pilot program.
- Conduct detailed planning, operation, and evaluation of the expanded pilot.
- Implement the more developed taxi program throughout Marin County.

Funding

- FTA Section 5317 New Freedom Funds
- Local funding sources to be identified

Strategy 5: Community-Based Volunteer Driver Programs

Transportation Needs Addressed

Seniors who do not drive have transportation needs that may not be met by conventional transit services, including ADA paratransit like Whistlestop Wheels. Some seniors who do not drive are not eligible for ADA paratransit and live in areas with limited bus and rail service, or need to travel when transit service is infrequent. Others are frail or need personalized assistance that is difficult to provide on Whistlestop Wheels, or need transportation arranged on short notice.

Implementation of the volunteer driver program currently being undertaken by Marin Transit will provide a more customized transportation option for these seniors.

Project Description

The volunteer driver program will be managed by the Marin Mobility Manager office. While initial steps have already been taken to implement the program, some variations could incorporate elements of the following two models. In one model, Marin Transit (or a contractor) would screen

seniors for eligibility and would provide oversight, coordination with other participating CBOs and public transit providers, technical assistance, mileage reimbursement for drivers, and possible umbrella liability coverage. The agency could also act as an applicant for foundation, private-sector, or community support. Such a project could begin with one or two communities, with the intention of expanding throughout the County if it proves successful. In this model the main source of rides would be volunteers recruited by seniors themselves (friends, neighbors, family) with assistance from community organizations. Drivers could also be recruited directly by participating community organizations or a coordinating organization. Typically in these programs, volunteers use their own vehicles; this can result in there being few if any accessible vehicles available to the program.

In another model, the agency would use purchased vehicles (which may be wheelchair accessible) and volunteer or paid drivers who can provide a reliable, self-sustaining service in which seniors who can afford to will pay the full cost of transportation. In this model, rides could also be provided at reduced prices based on sponsorship by business, drivers who operate vehicles in exchange for future ride credits, and vehicle donations in exchange for future ride credits.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Coordinating Organization: The office of the Marin Mobility Manager will be the central coordination agency and could offer technical assistance.

Local community organizations: Likely partners include non-profit senior centers, ethnically-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and service organizations. They would conduct community outreach, make initial contact with seniors needing rides, help seniors recruit volunteers, and possibly recruit and coordinate volunteers themselves.

Cities: Likely partners include city-based community and senior centers.

Transportation Authority of Marin: TAM administers the “School Pool” program, which coordinates carpools for school children. This program is being expanded to include commuters, and could also be expanded to include matching senior riders and drivers.

Implementation Steps

This strategy is undergoing implementation by the Mobility Manager’s Office and has already secured $70,000 in New Freedom Funds for the first year (starting late 2010). Once funding is received, a non-profit agency will be contracted to administer the program. Administration will include screening and training drivers, who will use their own cars for transporting seniors. Reservations might be handled by the paratransit dispatching center.

Additional Funding

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Lifeline program funds transportation projects aimed at filling gaps for low-income communities; funded programs may be targeted to low-income seniors. This may be a source of funding for communities deemed low-income.

Another possible funding source is the Area Agency on Aging, which has funded a similar program in Sonoma County.

Strategy 6: Encouraging Use of Transit

Transportation Needs Addressed

Many older people have little recent experience using public transportation, particularly in a suburban area like Marin. Having driven for decades, they may be unaware of transit services or have inaccurate perceptions based on experiences from long ago or images from the media. As a result, they may not use transit when they begin to have difficulty driving, even though they are still physically and mentally fully capable of doing so. Failure to take advantage of available transit services can make older people more dependent than necessary on family members and may contribute to premature reliance on paratransit service.

Some aspects of this are related to Strategy 9, Information and Assistance.

Project Description

Promotions and community efforts will be developed to communicate to older people that transit in Marin County is safe and comfortable, uses modern equipment, provides convenient service to many places, includes features such as kneeling buses to make transit “senior friendly,” and can help them maintain personal independence beyond their driving years.

Marin Transit started a pilot “Transit Ambassador” program in 2007, where volunteers who are knowledgeable about transit service in Marin personally train others, particularly seniors, on how to use the bus system. This program became dormant over time, but since late 2009, Marin Transit ‘s Mobility Manager has begun to recruit volunteers, and has publicized the program through transit presentations at senior housing complexes close to transit. The presentations cover older driver safety, transit, and paratransit. Once Ambassadors are recruited, they would attend these meetings and follow up personally with those expressing interest in learning how to take the bus.

Beyond the Ambassador program, some examples of potential efforts include:

- Organize group bus trips on public transit. These could be organized by senior centers, housing complexes, or “senior transit ambassadors” on special trip or regularly scheduled service.
- Market to older people using advertising in free newspapers, columns in these papers by seniors, tables at shopping locations patronized by seniors.
- Conduct focus groups with seniors about desired features of transit service and how to market transit service to older people.
- Create a video about older people using transit, possibly through a contest for high school or community college students, with sponsorship by public access television and local businesses. Show it on cable television, distribute it to senior centers and housing complexes, and provide it to senior transit ambassadors to use at events.

- Create city-focused map-schedules, with sponsorship by local businesses, showing local destinations of interest to older riders.
- "Try Transit" promotions targeted to seniors with participation by businesses.
- Post enlarged route maps at senior centers, focusing on the routes serving that location.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Marin Transit: Marin Transit's Marketing Department would play a lead role in most efforts.

Cities: Cities may be involved in promotions targeted to local service, such as city-focused map-schedules, and organizing trips from senior centers or community centers.

Others: Partners in various efforts may include senior centers and senior housing, Cable Channel 26 TV, service organizations, local businesses, and healthcare providers.

Implementation Steps

- Identify a lead coordinating agency
- Prioritize and establish timelines for programs to implement
- Partner with other agencies as appropriate for in-kind or funding assistance
- Develop marketing plans for participatory programs

Funding

- Health care organizations such as Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Hospital may be interested in sponsorship opportunities.
- Within the existing Marin Transit marketing budget, a portion may be available for efforts targeted to older people.

Strategy 7: Safe Driving

Transportation Needs Addressed

Driving is the preferred means of transportation for most older people. Many older people can drive safely even after physical limitations make it difficult or impossible for them to use public transportation. As a result, when they do have to limit or stop driving, they are dependent on family members, ADA paratransit, and other community services. Helping older people continue to drive safely will help them maintain independence and mobility, and reduce dependence on public services, including ADA paratransit. Helping them drive safely and recognizing when it is time to limit or stop driving will also reduce the rate of accidents involving older people. Widespread misconceptions about older drivers result in older people failing to get needed help and advice.

Project Description

A variety of organizations provide driving safety programs. Local volunteers would provide the AARP Driver Safety course; the California Highway Patrol is testing a new driving safety program; and the AAA of Northern California is training people for the CarFit program to help older people adjust their cars for safety.

The American Society on Aging and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) created the "DriveWell" program, which is a more holistic approach for seniors. Topics include nutrition, physical health, and modifications to the senior's car that can keep them driving longer, as well as information on how to talk to older adults when it's time to give up the keys. NHTSA also trains people to train others at a minimal cost.

Additional initiatives might include:

- Expanding the availability of older driver safety programs by recruiting and training older people as instructors, developing additional course locations, expanding the availability of training in languages other than English, and expanding availability of self-assessment aids such as the AAA's Roadwise Review.
- Developing additional resources to help people obtain confidential, expert assessments of their driving ability, at a reasonable price, and how they can make needed modifications for safer driving.
- Making information about driver safety programs available through numerous channels such as resource booklets distributed at senior centers, libraries, housing complexes, medical offices, and pharmacies; the Network of Care and Marin Transit web sites; and local public television. Informational materials will identify the strengths of the various driver safety programs.
- Identifying resources to help people make recommended modifications to their cars.
- Creating maps of easy-to-drive routes to common destinations with, for example, fewer lane changes and left-hand turns.
- Increasing public information to enhance general understanding of older drivers, their abilities, and needs.
- Including demonstrations of Marin Transit bus service as part of driving safety events.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Training Providers: AARP and California Highway Patrol volunteers; AAA. Events are hosted by senior centers, community centers, and other organizations.

Community Awareness and Driving Fitness: Research local health providers such as Sutter and Kaiser for driver wellness programs; senior centers for availability of the AAA Roadwise Review.

Information Dissemination: Marin County Division of Aging and Adult Services; Marin Transit; Family Services Agency and other community organizations; ethnically-based organizations; senior and community centers; medical offices and pharmacies; Channel 26 Cable TV.

CA Department of Motor Vehicles: The DMV could publicize online and local programs through mailings or other media targeted to older drivers.

Implementation Steps

- Identify programs most applicable to Marin seniors
- Publicize thorough existing means such as the aforementioned Marin Transportation Guidebook, senior service directories, any other relevant County of Marin or agency-sponsored web sites, or any ongoing meetings focused on seniors

Funding

Funding needs are expected to be minimal. The cost of materials and refreshments for some events may be paid for by local medical centers, senior centers, or DOAAS.

Strategy 8: Information and Assistance

Transportation Needs Addressed

Older people and those they turn to for information are not always aware of the full range of available transportation options, including Marin Transit bus service, Whistlestop Wheels, community transit services, rides that can be arranged through community-based organizations, and driver safety training, including modifications to cars to make them safer for older drivers. Existing sources of information serve their primary purposes, but do not address all the transportation needs of older people. Resources for non-English speakers are limited.

Project Objectives and Description

Information about transportation resources for older people needs to be easily available, current, and accurate, so that older people can plan for a time when they have to limit or cease driving, and so that people who suddenly find themselves needing alternative transportation can find out what is available. A lead agency will gather, disseminate and update information about all forms of transportation available to older people and make it available through multiple channels, including a countywide telephone information number; a comprehensive guidebook on senior transportation services in Marin (similar to those in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties); brochures and flyers distributed through senior centers, community centers, libraries, community agencies, and healthcare providers; a web site; and periodic seminars for staff of agencies that serve seniors. Information will be made available in forms that can reach people who do not speak English.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Lead Agency: The Marin Transit/Office of the Mobility Manager may be the most appropriate agency to lead this effort and be the clearinghouse for all transportation information.

Information Gathering: Although a lead agency would gather information, Marin Transit, cities, and community organizations that provide services would have significant responsibility for providing accurate information to the lead agency.

Countywide Telephone Information: This function could be provided by a County-sponsored senior information line, Family Service Agency, 211, or some other community-based organization.

Web Site: A web site about senior transportation could be located within websites of Marin Transit, 211, Network of Care (seniors services website sponsored by the Marin County Division of Aging and Adult Services), 511.org, or a County of Marin website, Marin.org. Funding permitted, another approach is to create a Marin Seniors web site that covers all aspects of senior living in Marin, including housing, transportation, health, leisure activities, and social opportunities.

Literature Distribution: Cities would distribute brochures at community centers, senior centers, libraries, and possibly healthcare providers, and pharmacies. Community agencies would distribute information at their sites. As appropriate, literature in languages other than English would be distributed.

In-person Communication: Organizations that work with seniors, including ethnically-based organizations that work with non-English speakers, would designate staff who can stay current about transportation options and provide this information to their clients.

Implementation Steps

- Research Information & Assistance programs to identify an organizational framework, service plan and potential funding sources appropriate to Marin County
- Identify lead and partner agencies funding needs and resources
- Execute partnership agreements and hire or designate staffing
- Review, update, and organize information, starting with existing resources
- Establish and advertise telephone information and a web site; print brochures
- Host periodic training sessions

Funding

- There would be additional cost for printing, telephone, and web site administration. These would be minimized if performed by an office that already performs similar functions.

Strategy 9: Walking Groups for Seniors

Transportation Needs Addressed

Walking can be the most convenient form of transportation once older drivers lose licenses. Even if they live in walkable areas, older adults may not feel safe walking alone, and this contributes to isolation from community. Walking is one of the easiest and least costly pastimes, providing significant benefits for physical health, mental health, and social engagement.

Project Objectives and Description

This project would create walking groups for seniors by encouraging walking and by providing a means by which seniors could find others in their neighborhoods to walk with. Groups could be organized through senior housing, senior centers, existing senior social clubs, and neighborhood associations. If there were a senior-oriented web site as described above, it could refer seniors to some of these other sites to find walking partners. Besides the direct benefits of walking, the groups can also be used to help identify locations in the community where barriers to walkability exist, such as cracked sidewalks, short traffic signal crossing times, or lack of curb cuts and benches.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Information Gathering: Although a lead agency would gather information, Marin Transit, cities, and community organizations that sponsor groups would have responsibility for providing accurate information to the lead agency.

Web Site: There are many web sites focused on both seniors and on recreational activities in Marin, including www.walkbikemarin.org/, a web site focused on bicycle and pedestrian activities in Marin County. WalkBikeMarin, a project of Marin County, would be a good site for information and referrals to senior walking groups (as well as other walking groups)

Literature Distribution: Cities would distribute brochures at community centers, senior centers, libraries, and possibly healthcare providers, and pharmacies. Community agencies would distribute information at their sites. As appropriate, literature in languages other than English would be distributed.

Implementation Steps

- Contact Marin County DPW about adding a Walking page to their WalkBikeMarin site, with a section focused on senior walkers
- Contact senior-focused organizations in Marin and ask them for any information on walking groups
- Present information on walking and its benefits at senior centers and social clubs

Funding

- This effort would require minimal funding and may be accomplished through existing sites and through volunteer efforts.

Strategy 10: Planning Policies for Senior Housing

Transportation Needs Addressed

The topography and land use decisions in Marin County cause many people to live in hilly residential areas that are not served by transit, or are too far or hilly to walk to commercial areas.

Many residents "age in place" and lack sufficient transportation options. Seniors who live in these areas often feel isolated and are frustrated by the constraints on their mobility.

In addition to the dissatisfaction of residents, public transit cannot serve these areas efficiently and usually doesn't serve them at all. County and local planning documents explicitly state that senior housing is well-suited for infill development and should be targeted for more densely populated downtown areas; despite this, developers continue to submit plans for senior housing on remote hillsides. Placing senior housing in downtowns and on major transit corridors will enable senior residents to walk and take transit, remaining connected to their community and getting healthful exercise while remaining independent.

Project Objectives and Description

The goal of this project would be to research and coordinate land use planning policies in Marin so that municipalities are united in requiring that senior housing and other senior-oriented facilities be planned for walkable areas on main corridors close to transit and services seniors need. By creating consistent county-wide policies in the placement of new senior housing, Marin County could ensure that senior housing is placed close to transit, shopping, civic uses, and recreation. Policies should support senior-friendly housing in downtowns. Plans for senior housing and other senior-focused facilities should be required to include a transportation element, showing how residents and staff will reach the location without having to drive. The transportation element should show how the location of the site relates to existing transit routes, and the site should accommodate buses, including bus and van turnaround locations if necessary. The Transportation element of the development plan should be reviewed by Marin Transit to insure that it accommodates transit.

Potential Roles and Partnerships

Lead Agency: The Marin County Commission on Aging wrote a white paper entitled "Recommendations for Affordable Housing in the County of Marin and its Cities and Towns" which the Board of Supervisors adopted on March 16, 2010. Therefore, it may be an effective lead entity with understanding of the interplay between these elements and a stake in the outcome.

Marin County Community Development Agency: The CDA could contribute to this effort by offering informational workshops to planners in all jurisdictions that focused on planning for seniors. They may also play a role in modifying codes to restrict senior housing to areas connected by existing walkable streets near services and transit.

Marin Community Foundation: In 2009, the MCF initiated a $10 million affordable housing plan for low-income families and seniors. As part of this initiative, they researched the housing laws in all jurisdictions of Marin. This might form the foundation of research into how communities vary in policies regarding senior housing.

Implementation Steps

- Research and document county and community policies on the location of senior housing developments

- Propose changes, additions or new policies to incentivize decisions that place senior facilities at locations with transit access and within walkable distance to services such as pharmacies, medical facilities, groceries, and libraries
- Develop an outreach strategy to reach decision-makers; this may include a "summit" or similar meeting to educate decision-makers on the ramifications of siting of senior housing and centers
- Draft sample policy language

Funding

- If the Commission on Aging adopted this strategy, the funding needed for staff support to supplement the volunteer work of the Commissioners may be moderate.

Tier II Strategies

The following strategies are less likely to be implemented in the short term because they did not rank as high as the Tier I strategies outlined above; often, the high capital expense or lack of an identified funding source was a factor.

Transit	Countywide general public demand-response service (Dial-a-Ride similar to Novato's service)
Transit	Inter-county transfers to Petaluma and San Francisco from West Marin
Transit	Medical service to and from Kaiser/Sutter
Transit	More amenities at bus stops
Policy	Make parking lots safer
Policy	Require private health providers to transport clients
Demand-Response	Casual carpooling at senior facilities, and senior ride-sharing

Countywide general public demand-response service (Dial-a-Ride in the County in addition to Novato)

The recently-initiated Novato Dial-a-Ride service has been successful. This service is for anyone within Novato (not just seniors), and runs during morning and evening peak hours. Fares are $2 each way, or $1 for seniors. Residents of other communities would like to have the same kind of service. Marin Transit might be able to assist communities in designing and funding similar service within their boundaries.

Inter-county transfers to Petaluma and San Francisco

In West Marin and north West Marin, the closest shopping area is Petaluma. Currently there is one "Shopping Shuttle" that takes people from Tomales to Petaluma once a week. Residents of this area would like to have more transportation options to get to Petaluma without have to

triangulate through San Rafael on public transit. While it would be operationally possible for Marin Transit to provide transit from Point Reyes and/or Tomales to Petaluma, the service is funded with Marin County sales tax revenue, so there is some political difficulty in using these funds to transport shoppers out of the County.

Medical service to Kaiser/Sutter

During outreach for this project, and noted in the recent West Marin Needs Assessment Study (Marin Transit, 2009), residents of all areas of Marin expressed a need to get to Kaiser Medical Center in Terra Linda, or Sutter in Novato (Kaiser San Rafael is already served by the West Marin Stage). This is consistent with a request from Nicasio for service, since it lies directly between Point Reyes and Novato. However, this option would require new service from Point Reyes. Residents indicated that any service, even two days a week, would be helpful. This strategy may be eligible for rural transportation funding.

More amenities at bus stops and on main streets

The lack of amenities at bus stops poses a real barrier to seniors otherwise willing and able to use transit. Waiting for extended periods at a stop with no bench or shelter is physically challenging, as is walking more than ¼ mile to shopping, services, and transit. The lack of a resting place between home and walkable destinations such as grocery stores, the post office, or a pharmacy, was cited by project participants as a primary reason they did not walk to these locations. Amenities that would assist seniors who walk and those who use transit include benches, trash cans, lighting, and shelters at stops. Bus stops are sometimes paid for through contracts with advertisers, while street “furniture” would be the responsibility of the city in which it is placed.

Make parking lots safer

In suburban areas such as Marin, shopping centers are often surrounded by very large parking lots, with no clear path to get from the street (where transit may run) to the front door of the buildings. This creates conflicts between pedestrians and cars backing out of spaces, or cruising the lot looking for a space. There are two measures that could be taken to help with this issue: first, establish design criteria at the county level for placing buildings at the street, rather than as an island in parking, thus helping all pedestrians, not just seniors. Secondly, Marin Transit might review its routes to see where buses might travel next to the buildings rather than at the perimeter of the shopping area.

Expand previous efforts to require private health providers to transport clients or share costs

Private for-profit health clinics, particularly dialysis clinics, rely on their patients being transported using public transit or social service-sponsored transit. Patients who undergo dialysis are in a particularly fragile condition after treatment; if they are using paratransit or public transit, the ride back home can be unnecessarily lengthy. This strategy, which has already been attempted in the past by Whistlestop, would require private for-profit medical facilities to either provide transportation for those patients who would normally use paratransit; or to contribute financially to paratransit and public transit systems. Further research should be conducted to identify systems where cost-sharing has been achieved, and explore their applicability in Marin County.

Casual carpooling at senior facilities, and senior ride-sharing

Some seniors living in senior housing continue to drive, especially during the day. This strategy would encourage and formalize ride-sharing at senior housing complexes and senior centers. Within one facility or housing development, ride requests/offers could be posted on a bulletin board or sign-up sheet in a central location. Extending beyond centers, it may be possible to set up ride-sharing for seniors within the neighborhood through an internet-based ride-sharing site, particularly in the West Marin region. This might be a feature of the volunteer driver program, since it is assumed that members of that service would have undergone a background check to verify that they have a valid license, insurance, seatbelts, etc.

Initial Steps for Implementation

This section suggests initial steps for implementing the Tier I strategies, using a timeline from Summer of 2010 through the Spring of 2011; these dates are flexible – implementation of most of these strategies would not proceed until this plan is presented to Marin Transit Board of Directors and the Transportation Authority of Marin Board.

The ten Tier I strategies outlined in this report vary considerably in required level of collaboration, funding, and time to implement. For many, the first step will be to identify an agency that can initiate and oversee the strategy. Identifying funding will also be required for many, although there are some that may not be very costly and could be implemented through existing programs and agencies.

As a result of the project which produced this plan, the Marin Transit Office of Mobility Management is proposing that the Advisory Panel or some subset of it continue as the Marin Mobility Consortium. The role of this group would be to meet regularly and continue to advise and partner on moving forward with the actions proposed in this plan. The group is expected to meet in April of 2010, and would play a key role in moving forward with the implementation steps outlined below. An initial step for this group would likely be to prioritize the proposed transportation measures, and then identify lead agencies, partner agencies, and funding, if necessary.

Timeline for First Year Implementation Steps

Tier I Strategy	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1	2011 Q2
Transit-based Strategies				
1. Community Bus for Seniors Local fixed-route shuttles to serve short trips within communities.	Identify possible funding sources; apply for grants.	Inventory existing shuttles Identify underserved routes connecting seniors and destinations of interest		Once funding is secured, design pilot services in a limited area
2. Flexible Transit Services Fixed-route services, deviate on request	Identify senior origins and destinations near but not on existing routes Analyze schedule for "slack time" to allow for flexing route	Pilot route most likely to be used. Market flex services to residents and destinations near proposed flex route, in conjunction with transit training		Continue with pilot, evaluating impacts on schedules which may require adjustments. If extra service hours required, seek funds from served origins/destinations.
Walkable Communities				
3. Walkable Communities for Seniors Prioritize pedestrian improvements in neighborhoods with high concentrations of seniors & walkable destinations. Utilize ADA transition plans as foundational project lists.	Establish coordinating agency. Meet with County ADA coordinator and corresponding staff in cities to explain approach. Seek supportive funds for analysis of transition plans.		Develop task list, timeline, and partnerships. Inventory transition plans and determine status.	With partner agencies, develop and get consensus on senior-oriented criteria for prioritizing projects. (Next: Inventory project sites, prioritize work using new criteria).

Tier I Strategy	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1	2011 Q2
Demand-Response Service				
4. Subsidized Taxicabs Build on current subsidized taxi pilot program.	Evaluate pilot, adjust pricing, geographic area, and other factors as necessary.	Locate on-going funding for County-wide service.		
5. Community-Based Volunteer Driver Program Continue efforts to establish non-profit, community transportation network with public and private funding.	(New Freedom Funds have been approved; project can start when funds are received). Establish model for program. Identify scope of work for contractor and reservations agent.	Release an RFP for non-profits to administer program. Select contractor. Develop and initiate program. Recruit volunteers Market service to public (Ongoing) Evaluate program, recruit volunteers, market service to public		
Information				
6. Encouraging Use of Transit "Try Transit" brochure and promotions, video, organized trips, tailored service descriptions.	Identify a lead agency. Examine more closely options for programs, including cost and potential partners. Prioritize projects.	(Next steps would depend on which projects were selected for implementation.)		
7. Safe Driving Make Marin older drivers more aware of driver training, driving retirement, adapting cars for older drivers.	Identify lead agency. Identify partners in Marin to hold informational sessions. Identify most promising programs.	Publicize programs through existing related websites, organizations, senior fairs, etc. Ongoing publicity		
8. Information & Assistance Mobility Manager: multi-modal telephone information, web site, literature distribution including Senior Transit Guidebook, seminars for agency staff working with older people.	Determine an organizational framework, service plan and potential funding sources Identify components which would not need funding. Prioritize program components.	(Next steps would depend on which programs were selected for implementation.)		

Tier I Strategy	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1	2011 Q2
9. Walking Groups for Seniors Coordinated groups organized around senior center or culturally based organizations; accessibility audits of path-of-travel	Decide on format for the program: centralized, many individual programs, etc. Network among county agencies to leverage existing transportation-oriented web sites.		(Ongoing) Present information on walking and its benefits at senior centers and social clubs. Develop/deliver training on accessibility audits .	
Planning Policies				
10. Planning Policies for Senior Housing Planning reviews for senior housing and other senior-related facilities should require close-in locations and a transportation element.	Identify lead agency. Identify volunteer or paid staff to conduct research.	Research / document Marin policies on location of senior housing developments.	Propose changes, additions or new policies to incentivize placement of senior facilities in walkable locations.	