

title	Transportation Needs and Safe Mobility of Elderly
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additional	
department	Civil and Environmental Engineering Department
proj_desc	<p>The fastest growing segment of the population nationally is the elderly. According to the US Census Bureau, senior citizens now comprise 1 of every 8 Americans or 35 million people. Millions of baby boomers—the generation of Americans born between 1945 and 1960—are now turning 50 every year. In fact, by the year 2020, between 17 and 20 percent of the entire U.S. population will be over 65, representing more than 50 million Americans. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)</p> <p>Along with the increasing elderly population, there are changes in lifestyle among the US families. One of the most significant changes is the fact that the younger generations no longer live in the same community and in the same household. As a result these growing elderly individuals with no family close by to care for them and look after their needs must become independent not only to maintain their quality of life but, oftentimes, even to survive! In our auto-dependent society, when these populations become incapable of transporting themselves for various activities, the drop in their active lifestyle may be substantial and will have profound physical and psychological implications. Equally important is the safety performance and safe mobility of our graying population. Hence, it is quiet obvious that government, transportation planner and engineers will face increasing challenges in addressing these issues.</p> <p>While studies were conducted to describe the population trends and demographic differences among the older population along with their basic travel patterns and trends, this study is intended to investigate the transportation needs of the elderly in typical small towns where limited or no public transportation is available. To complete this study telephone surveys will be conducted among elderly populations in small towns in California to collect information about their existing travel behavior and their unmet needs. Two types of he surveys will be conducted: the first survey will be designed to capture information about their general health, as well as demographic and attitude questions to explain their travel behavior and needs; and the second survey will be a stated preference survey where the participants' response to a set of hypothetical routing strategies combining public transportation and paratransit will be investigated. The elderly people will also be requested to complete a travel diary for a week to gain information about their destinations of interest. This information will be summarized to better understand the need of small town dwelling elderly and also be compared and contrasted with behaviors of their urban counterpart as obtained from previous studies.</p>
inter_desc	<p>This study investigates the transportation needs and concerns of members of a specific population group. This is interdisciplinary in nature as the study provides a baseline of information to proceed with subsequent transportation engineering and planning as well as decision making that relates to policy debates on providing transportation to the elderly. This study will also be a practical example on how to do social research and includes data collection techniques using surveys and statistical analysis of observational data.</p>
links	
students	2
majors	CE, CRP, SOC, POLS, GEOG
date_added	2007-11-21 16:36:21