

Human Services Transportation

PREPARED BY THE LOCAL COORDINATING COUNCIL (LCC) SERVING JEFFERSON COUNTY

We'd like to share a transportation dilemma with you and solicit your help. Our most vulnerable neighbors—those who are elderly, living with disabilities, or who have low incomes—need access to basic transportation. The need for transportation is increasing, but sadly the resources aren't.

Why Support Human Services Transportation?

We all need safe, reliable, affordable, and convenient transportation for every aspect of life. This is especially true for people who don't/ can't, or shouldn't drive. Transportation lets people maintain connections with friends and family, access necessary services, and remain productively employed. Our dilemma is that the systems and resources that provide human service transportation to those without choice are fragmented, shrinking, and hard to get—while the needs are already great and growing fast. Jefferson County needs reliable, long-term funding.

Dependable, affordable transportation is at the heart of a vital economy and engaged community. Our vision for Jefferson County is to have a sustainable, person-centered, coordinated human services transportation system that supports individuals' dignity, independence, and quality of life.

What Does the LCC Do?

The mission of the LCC Serving Jefferson County is to help coordinate human services transportation to provide the most effective and efficient use of systems available. The LCC's function is to respond to existing community transportation needs and anticipate future demands to best serve Jeffco residents.

Local transportation providers, e.g., Seniors' Resource Center, Lakewood Rides, the Developmental Disabilities Resource Center, etc., cannot meet *current* demand—let alone address future needs. The federal funding that subsidizes community transportation has been generally flat and in some cases is diminishing. It's also highly competitive. We need strong local support to fill the gaps and meet the growing range of mobility needs for Jeffco residents.

Are there Population Impacts?

Everyone needs transportation, but it's especially critical for the increasing number of our vulnerable citizens. The statistics hint at transportation needs to come. From the State Demographer's and the American Community Survey, we know that:

- Jefferson County has the largest population of seniors in the state.
- In 2010, we had 102,000 residents 60 years and over, nearly 20 % of our population.
- By 2015, this will jump to over 127,000, a 125 percent increase in just 5 years.
- By 2030, the number of 60+ Jeffco residents will be over 188,000;
- Persons over the age of 85 are among the fastest growing older population. People in this age category have the greatest mobility need.
- Many of us need work well into retirement age; nearly a quarter (24.1%) of the over-65 population were working at least part-time in 2013.
- Nearly 10 percent of Jeffco's total population has a disability—well over 50,000 people. That percentage increases to nearly 33 percent for people 65 and over.
- Low-income households, including many Jeffco seniors, often spend as much as *one third* of household income on transportation.

Are there Plans for Dealing with These Needs?

Jefferson County’s Aging Well Project presented long-range strategies in *Aging Well in Jefferson County, Colorado* (2010). To assist our residents who are older and those with disabilities, some of the transportation goals and objectives guide us to:

- Improve mobility options
- Ensure convenient accessibility to all public and private transportation systems;
- Support collaborative efforts to improve transit and responsible use of resources;
- Promote expansion of transit times, locations, and availability.

Are There Projects or Activities Already Underway?

The LCC is engaged in the following projects and activities. We are:

- Assessing transportation needs and identifying transportation gaps for vulnerable populations;
- Establishing working agreements with partner agencies (such as SRC and Lakewood Rides) to secure and increase county transportation resources;
- Identifying barriers to success, as well as best practices;
- Informing the community about universal and smart design, which are strategies that support independent living, aging in place, and livability;
- Informing the community about transportation modes, options, services, and advocating for policies that support multiple transportation modes.

Is There Anything Regular Citizens Can Do?

Yes! To help the LCC meet transportation and mobility needs so our neighbors can remain in their homes and live engaged, independent lives, please consider:

- Joining the LCC Serving Jefferson County if you are a transportation service agency or your clients use public systems;
- Advocating to law makers and funders for increased transportation funding;
- Promoting safe, affordable options for those who don’t drive themselves.

Who Else is Working on This?

Many transportation and human service agencies meet a range of community needs. Partnerships are key in coordinating services and leveraging available resources. Please consider joining those who participate in the LCC as shown below:



→ WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU COULDN'T DRIVE ANYMORE? ←