

MAKING CONNECTIONS

**Successful Housing
and Transportation
Provider Partnerships**

PANELISTS



Colin Parent
CEO and General
Counsel



Jennifer Sinnott
VP of Health & Social
Services



Diana Pro
Director of Social
Service Coordination

WHO ARE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVIDERS?

- HUD and USDA are the primary providers of housing assistance to low- and very-low-income Americans.
- Assistance can be provided through vouchers or through place-based subsidies to affordable housing providers.
- More than half of HUD Public Housing units are headed by an older adult and HUD has a flagship program Section 202, specifically for individuals who are ages 62+ and/or disabled.
- Many Section 202 affordable housing sites have service coordinators to assist residents to meet their basic needs, including transportation.
- Find Properties in Your Community:
<https://resources.hud.gov/>



SERVICE COORDINATORS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Connect residents to services and resources to assist them with aging well in their communities
- 5,000+ HUD Section 202 properties for older adults with service coordinators
- 500 Public Housing sites serving families with self sufficiency service coordinators



TRANSPORTATION ACCESS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Residents are very low income and as a result less likely to have access to reliable personal transportation

- Average income in HUD senior housing is ~\$1,000/month
- 50% of Area Median Income is what most Public Housing residents earn annually

Lack of transportation can lead to reduced opportunities and social isolation

- Average number of residents per HUD Senior Housing Property is 1.1 per unit



SERVING
SENIORS

“Access Drives Equity:
Connecting Housing &
Transportation for Low-Income
Older Adults”

Jennifer Sinnott, MSW
VP of Health & Social Services



What's Ahead

- Who We Are – Serving Seniors at a glance
- Impact of transportation on older adults
- What's Needed + What We've Tried
- Transportation as a Social Determinant of Health
- Closing and Call to Action

Our Mission

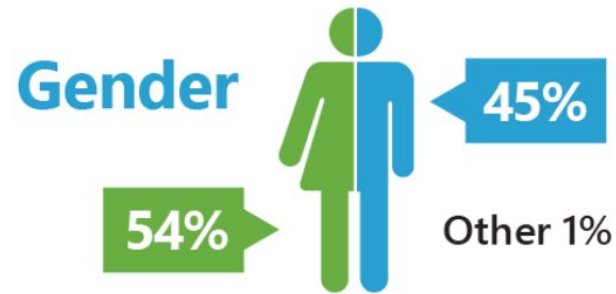
Helping seniors in poverty live
healthy and fulfilling lives



Who We Serve: Demographics

Two in five seniors in San Diego County can't afford basic needs - rent, food, healthcare and transportation.

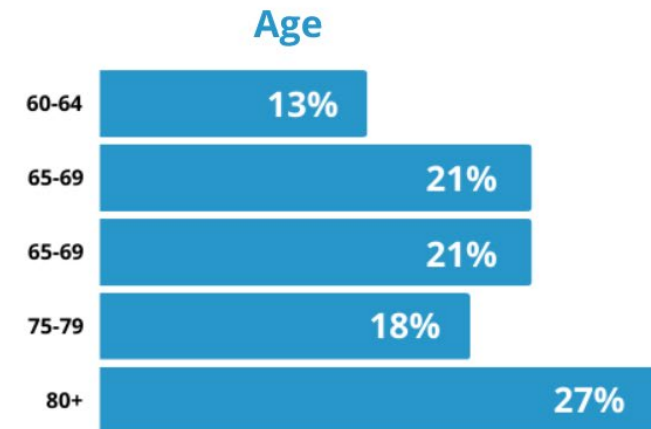
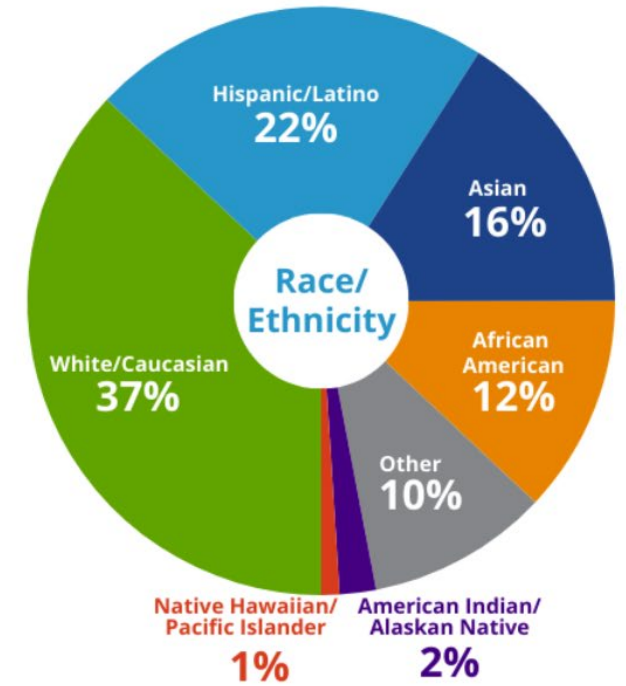
Unduplicated
Seniors Served
10,765



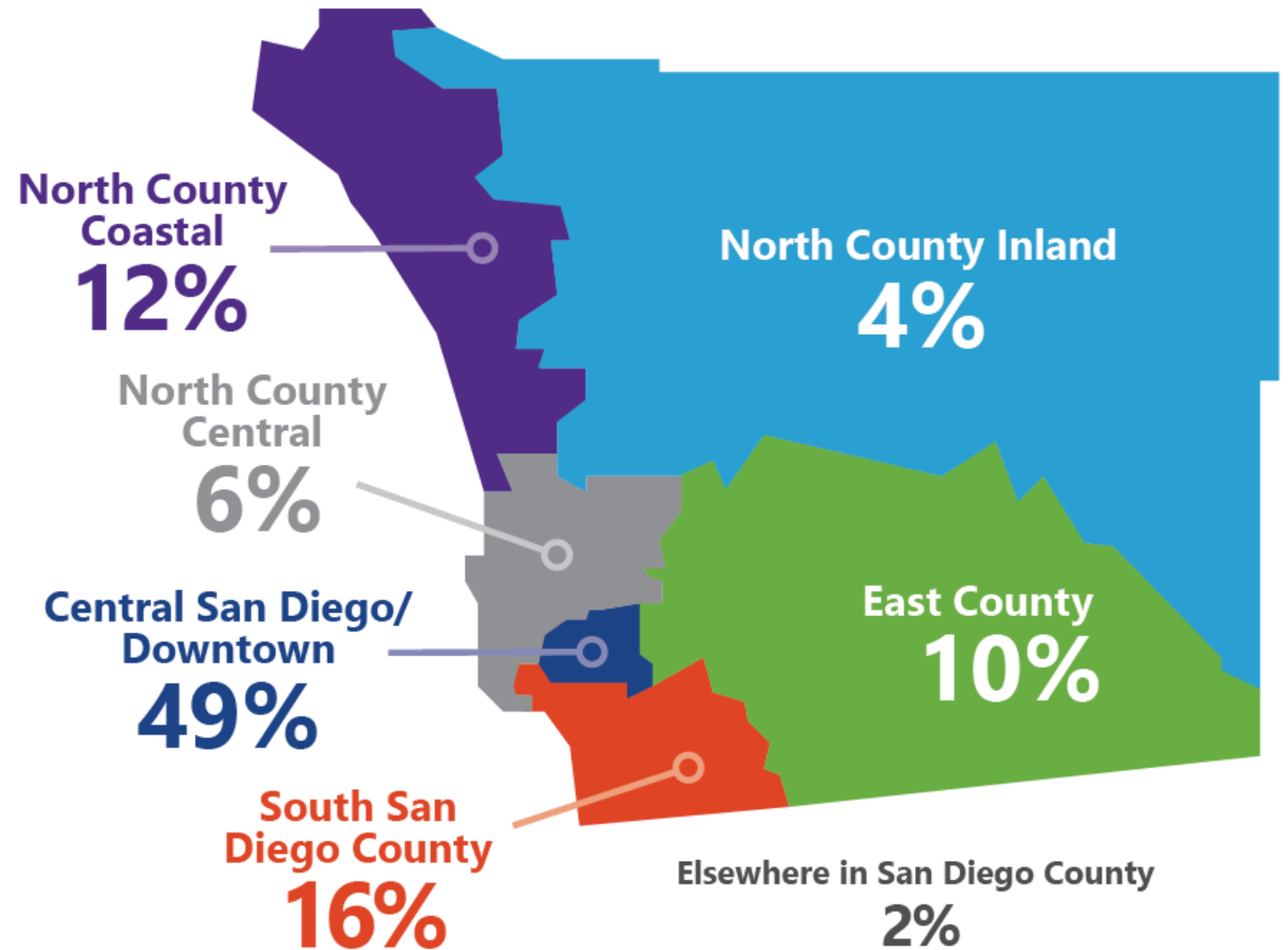
Median Income
\$1,125/month

Below the Federal
Poverty Level

88%



Where Our Clients Live



Programs and Services



NUTRITION



HOUSING



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



ENRICHMENT & ACTIVITIES



ADVOCACY

**“If I can’t get to the doctor, I
just don’t go” ~Maria, age 78**



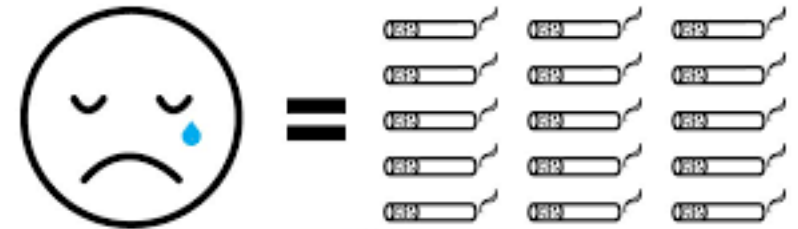
Transportation = Access to...

- More than getting from A to B
- Food, doctors, family, community, shopping, exercise, and case management
- Self-sufficiency
- Independence & dignity
- Overall quality of life

The Cost and Impact of Inaccessibility

- Missed medical appointments
- Poor nutrition and food insecurity
- Loss of independence
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Increased ER use
- Earlier entry into long-term care

**Social isolation is as bad
for your health as smoking.**



source: Holt-Lunsted, 2015 & 2010

What's Needed

"5 A's of Senior-Friendly Travel"

- Availability – transit exists and is available when needed
- Accessibility – can be reached and used
- Affordability – fees are affordable
- Acceptability – clean, safe, and user-friendly
- Adaptability – can be modified or adjusted for special needs



Adapted from AARP Livable Communities and the report ["Moving an Age-Friendly D.C."](#).



How We've Tried to Meet the Need

- Build affordable housing and senior wellness centers on or near transit lines
- Access to free shuttle service vouchers in downtown San Diego
- Offer free bus passes
- Establish taxi accounts
- Provide door-through-door transportation service
- Utilize ride-share options
- Access Medi-caid Managed Care plan transportation benefits

Transportation as a Social Determinant of Health (SDOH)

- Intersects with housing, food security, medical care, and community belonging
- Transportation is the “connective tissue” that holds it all together
- Health equity and housing stabilization require transportation options



Closing and Call to Action

- Transportation access ***drives*** equity
- Partner early and often in planning, funding, and policy
- Explore other models – AARP Age-Friendly Communities & 8 80 Cities



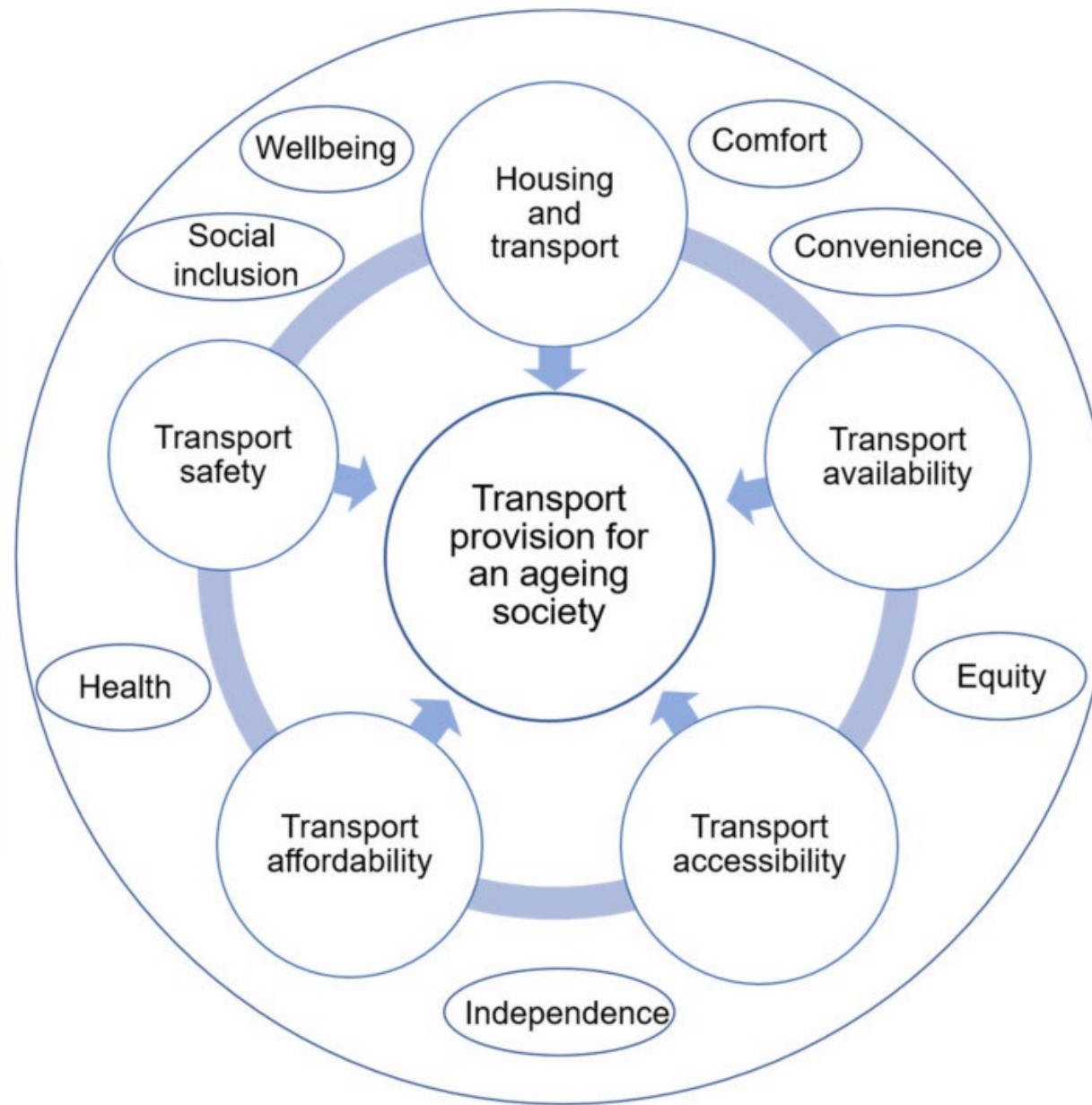


Figure 1, “Transport and Mobility Needs for an Ageing Society from a Policy Perspective: Review and Implications”, Dong Lin, Jianqiang Cui, International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, November 2021.



SERVING
SENIORS

THANK YOU!

Advocate | Donate | Volunteer

www.servingseniors.org

RETIREMENT HOUSING FOUNDATION



Older Adults, Housing, and Transportation Mobility

Diana Pro, MSW
Director, Social Service Coordination
Diana.Pro@rhf.org
P:562-257-5360
C:562-233-2166

RHF's Mission Statement and Service Coordination



Our Mission is to provide Affordable Housing and Service Coordination for persons with limited incomes in an inclusive environment that enhances their quality of life physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Social Service Coordinators in Affordable Housing



- ❖ How do Social Service Coordinators Help
- ❖ Social Service Coordinator Goals
- ❖ Appropriate SSC Activities
- ❖ Inappropriate SSC Activities
- ❖ Social Service Coordinator Code of Ethics

A vertical flyer for the Social Service Coordinator Program. The top section shows a photograph of four elderly people sitting around a table, engaged in a meal or activity. Below the photo is a dark red banner with white text. The text is organized into three distinct sections: the program name, the organization name, and contact information.

**Social Service
Coordinator
Program**

**Retirement Housing
Foundation**

911 N. Studebaker Rd
Long Beach, CA 90815

562-257-5100

TDD 1-800-545-1833 x359
Language Assistance Services
562-257-5255

Social Service Coordinator Programs



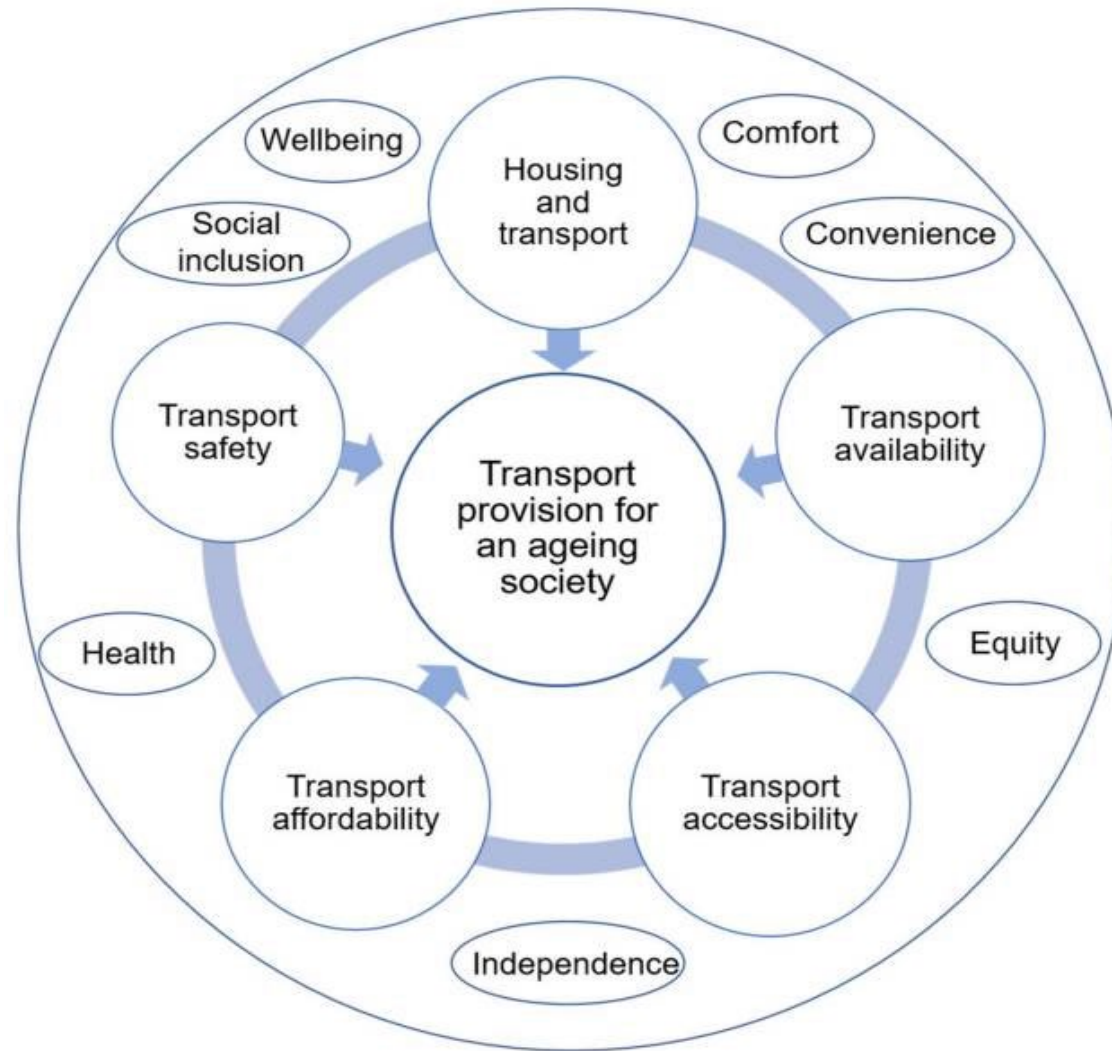
- ❖ Health screenings
- ❖ Vaccine clinics
- ❖ Computer Literacy
- ❖ Intergenerational Programs
- ❖ Isolation Prevention
- ❖ Exercise Classes
- ❖ Fall Prevention
- ❖ Resident Self-Advocacy
- ❖ Emergency Preparedness
- ❖ Scam and Fraud Prevention
- ❖ Food Banks
- ❖ Civic Engagement
- ❖ Project H.A.N.D.S.®
- ❖ RHFCF Scholarships
- ❖ RHFCF Grants
- ❖ Outside Scholarships
- ❖ Educational Programs
- ❖ Transportation Services



Aging Population Overview

- ❖ The world population is ageing, presenting significant challenges for health and social systems.
- ❖ Mobility is closely linked to independence, wellbeing, and quality of life for individuals.
- ❖ An ageing population poses long-term challenges for various aspects of nations, including transport.
- ❖ Major concerns have emerged about how future policies can effectively respond to the mobility needs of older adults.
- ❖ Transport and housing planners, operators, and decision-makers are focused on delivering effective mobility solutions for an ageing population.
- ❖ Emphasis on providing accessible, safe, and affordable transport options near affordable housing for older adults.

Aging Population, Housing, and Transport



Source: [Transport and Mobility Needs for an Ageing Society from a Policy Perspective: Review and Implications - PMC](#)



Why is it Important for Transportation to be in Close Proximity to Housing for Older Adults

❖ Access to Healthcare

- ❖ Older adults often have increased medical needs. Living near reliable transportation helps them reach doctors, clinics, pharmacies, and hospitals without relying on others.

❖ Independence and Autonomy

- ❖ Transportation access enables older adults to maintain their independence, reducing isolation and increasing their ability to manage errands, attend events, and stay socially connected.

❖ Improves Safety and Mobility

- ❖ Older adults are at greater risk for injury as pedestrians. Well-designed, transit-rich areas are safer than car-dependent areas due to better sidewalks, crossings, and lighting.



Why is it Important for Transportation to be in Close Proximity to Housing for Older Adults

❖ **Reduced Financial Burden**

- ❖ Many older adults live on fixed incomes. Proximity to public transit reduces the need for car ownership or expensive ride services, which helps manage limited budgets.

❖ **Social Engagement and Mental Health**

- ❖ Easy transportation options encourage participation in community activities, social groups, and religious services, which can combat loneliness and improve mental well-being.

❖ **Access to Essential Services**

- ❖ Being near transit hubs allows older adults to reach grocery stores, government services, and other essential amenities that may not be within walking distance.

Why is it Important for Transportation to be in Close Proximity to Housing for Older Adults



❖ **Support Aging in Place**

- ❖ Affordable housing with good transportation links allows older adults to age in place rather than move into institutional care, preserving comfort, familiarity, and dignity.

❖ **Advances Equity and Inclusion**

- ❖ Aligns with age-friendly, ADA-compliant, and equitable transportation goals.
- ❖ Ensures older adults are not left behind in planning and development.

Affordable housing paired with accessible transportation creates a foundation for healthier, more independent, and socially connected lives for older adults. It supports their ability to thrive in the community while managing the challenges that come with aging.

Why is it Important for Transportation to be in Close Proximity to Housing for Older Adults



S

Affordable housing paired with accessible transportation creates a foundation for healthier, more independent, and socially connected lives for older adults. It supports their ability to thrive in the community while managing the challenges that come with aging.





Door-to-Door Transportation Support for Residents

- ❖ Ride share
- ❖ Taxi vouchers
- ❖ Shuttle vans
- ❖ Shuttle buses
- ❖ Paratransit
- ❖ Non-emergency medical transportation

Transportation Support for Residents



Public Transportation Support for Residents

- ❖ Public Transportation

 - ❖ Buses

 - ❖ City Shuttles

 - ❖ Metro

 - ❖ Train



- ❖ Social Service Coordinators provide education and referrals to discounted or zero out of pocket cost transportation programs.

References



AARP. (2025, May 8). *AARP Livable Communities*. AARP. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/>

Chisholm-Smith, G. (n.d.). *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)*. Transportation Research Board. <https://www.trb.org/TCRP/TCRP.aspx>

Dangerous by design 2022. (n.d.-a). <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Dangerous-By-Design-2022-v3.pdf>

Get the facts on economic security for seniors. Get the Facts on Economic Security for Seniors. (n.d.). <https://www.ncoa.org/article/get-the-facts-on-economic-security-for-seniors/>

Lin, D., & Cui, J. (2021, November 10). *Transport and mobility needs for an ageing society from a policy perspective: Review and implications*. International journal of environmental research and public health. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8625775/>

Smart Growth America. (n.d.). Dangerous by design 2022. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Dangerous-By-Design-2022-v3.pdf>

Social isolation, loneliness in older people pose health risks | National Institute on Aging. (n.d.-b). <https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/social-isolation-loneliness-older-people-pose-health-risks>

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Global age-friendly cities: A guide*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241547307>

RETIREMENT HOUSING FOUNDATION



Questions?



Homes Near Transit

*A win-win-win for economic
development, climate, and affordability*



Colin Parent

Phone: (619) 567-6856

Email: cparent@circulatesd.org
@ColinParent

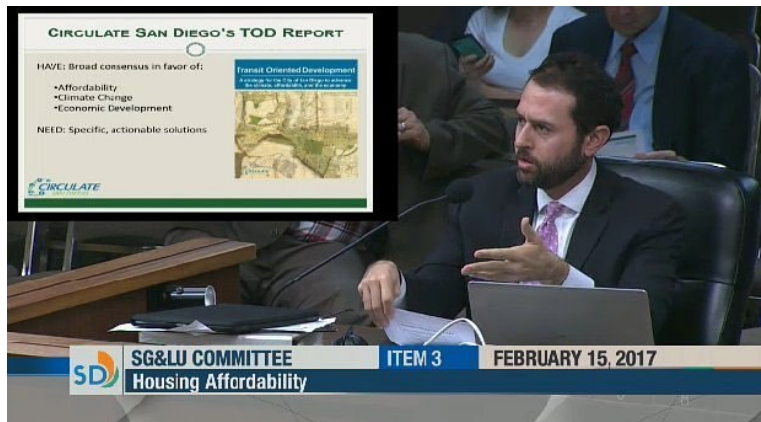
- **Advocate:** Circulate San Diego, *Executive Director and General Counsel*
- **Former Elected Policymaker:** City of La Mesa, *Councilmember*
- **Previous Public Sector:** San Diego Housing Commission, CA Dept. of Housing and Community Development
- **Previous Private Sector:** DLA Piper US LLP



Transit



Sustainable Growth



Safe Streets



WHAT WE DO – Circulate Planning





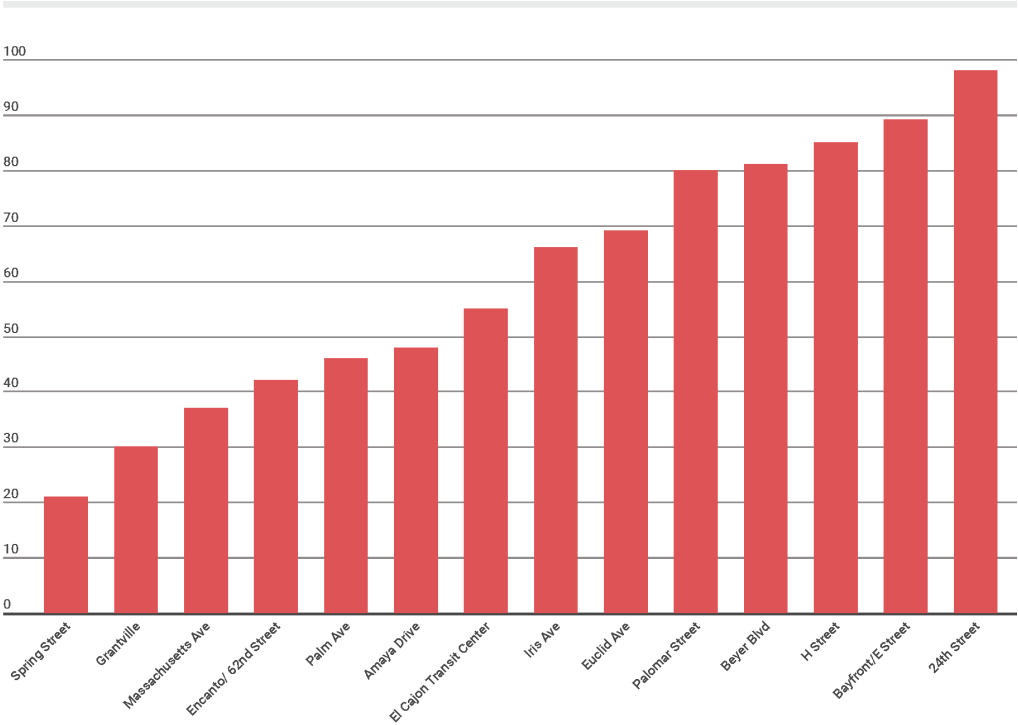
Research: Locating Affordable Homes Near Transit

- ◇ **Low Income Households Near Transit v. Not Near Transit:**
 - ◇ Drive 25-30% fewer miles when $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from transit
 - ◇ Drive 50% fewer miles when $\frac{1}{4}$ miles from transit
- ◇ **Higher Income Households**
 - ◇ Twice as many miles and vehicles compared to Low Income Households





Utilization Rates at MTS Opportunity Sites



Real Opportunity

How San Diego's Metropolitan Transit System can transform empty parking lots into affordable homes



A #PlanDiego
Report

Supported by

TransitCenter



Squeaky Wheel!



TRANIST TRAININGS



Colin Parent

CEO and General Counsel

Phone: (619) 567-6856

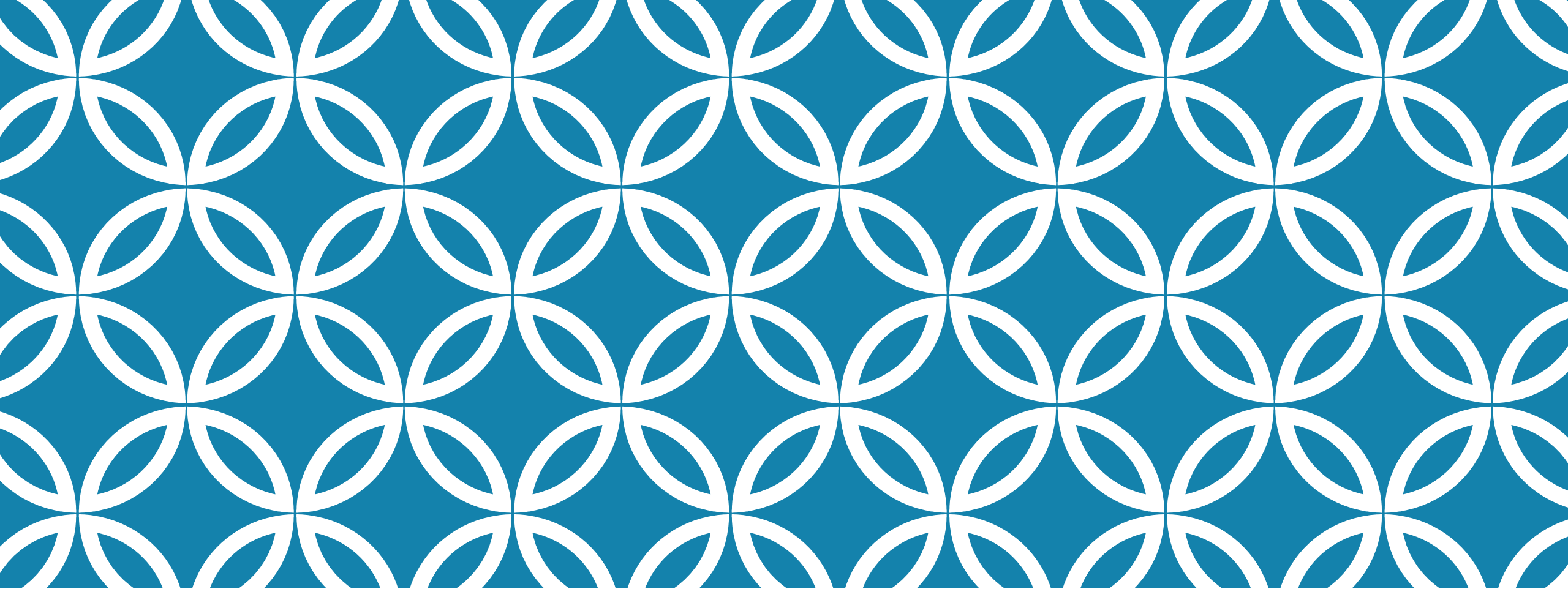
Email: cparent@circulatesd.org
@ColinParent

Support!

www.Circulatesd.org/Donate

www.Circulatesd.org/Corporate





PANEL DISCUSSION