

Front Cover

Getting Around Bexar County

and the Surrounding Alamo Region: A Guide for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

Photo: People walking to an accessible bus using a walker, holding an umbrella.

Photo: Older woman being lifted into accessible vehicle by a gentleman.

Photo: Gentleman helps older woman by putting her bags into the trunk of a car.

Logo: Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)

Logo: Area Agency on Aging: funded through the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services

Logo: Photo: Alamo Service Connection logo with tagline “Just Ask/Llamenos”

Logo: Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)

Logo: Alamo Service Connection (ASC)

Logo: The Area Agencies on Aging

Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, counties, and special governmental districts that serve the Alamo Area/State Planning Region 18, which covers 12 counties in the Alamo region including Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina and Wilson counties. AACOG's mission is to enhance the quality of life of all residents of the Alamo region in partnership with elected and appointed officials, funders, community partners and beneficiaries.

The Area Agencies on Aging are funded through the Older Americans Act and the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services. The Alamo and Bexar Area Agencies on Aging advocate, plan, and promote the independence, dignity, health, and well being of seniors ages 60 and above and their caregivers. Their mission is to build a community that supports older residents of the Alamo Region, and allows them to age in place with dignity, security, and enhanced quality of life.

The Alamo Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) serves Atascosa, Bandera, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina, and Wilson counties and can be reached at (210) 362-5561 or Toll-Free at 1-866-231-4922.

The Bexar Area Agency on Aging (BAAA) serves the City of San Antonio and Bexar County and can be reached at (210) 477-3275 or Toll-Free at 1-800-960-5201.

Alamo Service Connection (ASC), an Aging and Disability Resource Center for Bexar County, provides information and referral services to seniors, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers. ASC is a community partnership working together to help seniors ages 60 and above and caregivers get answers, find services and obtain benefits. ASC is available by phone, Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at (210) 477-3275 or online at www.askasc.org.

Disclaimer: *This guide is not an endorsement of any of the programs, products, or services listed. It is strictly a resource to provide individuals with information in order to assist them in making decisions about their ability to drive and maintain mobility.*

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Chapter One: Evaluating If You Are A Safe Driver

Let's face it, driving is the only mode of transportation available in many areas. Driving a car helps people maintain independence, allow daily needs to be met and helps people to stay active in the community. However, with age skills can diminish, and responsible adults must be open to opportunities for improvement that help maintain driving skills.

A number of programs are available to help drivers evaluate whether reducing the amount of driving or giving up driving altogether should be considered. For example, you may drive well during the day, but have more trouble seeing at night. Maybe residential streets are manageable for you, but highways are becoming more challenging.

There may be ways to work around these challenges, but first a person has to be aware of the problem, as well as the many available options that can help.

When evaluating your ability to drive safely, consider:

Vision: The greatest functional impact on the ability to drive is eyesight. As we age, our eyesight tends to deteriorate. Regular eye exams can help us maintain the ability to stay behind the wheel. Being able to read street signs and identify potential hazards not only keeps the driver safe, but also impacts the safety of other drivers and pedestrians.

Photo: Eyeglasses placed on top of a book with prominent letters

Strength and Flexibility: Being able to press the foot pedals enough to control speed and brakes can have a profound impact on driving. Being able to turn the head and neck sufficiently to check blind spots or watch while backing up can help to prevent accidents.

Reaction Time: As we age, reflexes become slower. Older adults should make certain that they are able to respond to driving situations that can occur in a moving vehicle.

Driver Ergonomics: Even how we “fit” into our vehicles can have an impact on our ability to drive safely. Can you see over the steering wheel? Are the mirrors adjusted to maximize your field of vision? Is the seat adjusted so that you can reach the pedals

comfortably? All of these factors can help or hinder your ability to drive safely, regardless of age.

Medical Conditions: Discuss your ability to drive with your doctor during your next medical appointment. It is as important as any other aspect of your health. Various medical conditions, illnesses and medications can impact an individual's ability to drive safely – so if you notice changes, talk to your doctor as soon as possible.

Medications: All drivers should understand the side effects of both prescription and over-the-counter medication(s). Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the effects of any new medications you begin taking — can it make you drowsy or less focused, does it slow reaction time or impair judgment? Also ask if there might be problems with certain combinations of drugs that you are taking.

Photo: Various pills

Driver Behavior Warning Signs

You can use these warning signs as an objective way to monitor any changes in driving skills over time. These signs are ranked from minor to serious. Consider the frequency and severity of incidents and look for patterns over time. Two or three minor accidents or one major accident may warrant action. Take notes and discuss with your health care provider.

1. Decrease in confidence while driving	18. Delayed response to unexpected situations
2. Difficulty turning head or neck to see when backing up	19. Moving into wrong lane
3. Riding the brake	20. Difficulty maintaining lane position
4. Easily distracted while driving	21. Confusion at exits
5. Other drivers often honk horns	22. Ticketed moving violations or warnings
6. Incorrect signaling	23. Getting lost in familiar places
7. Difficulty parking within a defined space	24. Car accident
8. Hitting curbs	25. Failure to stop at stop sign or red light
9. Scrapes or dents on the car, mailbox or garage	26. Confusing the gas and brake pedals
10. Increased agitation or irritation when driving	27. Stopping in traffic for no apparent reason
11. Failure to notice important activity on the side of the road	28. Concern expressed by family or friends
12. Failure to notice traffic signs	29. Night blindness from car lights.
13. Trouble navigating turns	<p>Should you experience any of these issues, be sure to let your doctor know.</p> <p>For more information see: http://hartfordauto.thehartford.com/Safe-Driving/Car-Safety/Older-Driver-Safety/Dementia-Activity/ (Source: Hartford)</p>
14. Driving at inappropriate speeds	
15. Not anticipating potential dangerous situations	
16. Bad judgment on and/or reluctance to make left hand turns	
17. Near misses	

Driver Safety Tips

Photo: Older smiling gentleman in a classic car from the 1940s

Tip #1 Drive With Care

Always:

- ✓ Plan your trips and decide which roads to take ahead of time.
- ✓ Try to avoid heavy traffic, poor weather and high-speed areas.
- ✓ Wear your seat belt correctly (over shoulder and across lap).
- ✓ Be sure you “fit” well in your car (i.e. you can see all mirrors, etc).
- ✓ Drive at the speed limit – neither too fast or too slow.
- ✓ Be alert – pay attention to traffic at all times.
- ✓ Keep enough distance between you and the car in front of you.

- ✓ Be extra careful at intersections.

- ✓ Always use your turn signals, even if you don't see other cars on the road.

- ✓ Be careful with left hand turns – allow time to pass intersections.

- ✓ Be extra careful at train tracks, remembering to look both ways.

Be Sure:

- ✓ When you take a new medicine, ask about side effects since driving can be affected even if you feel fine. If your medicine makes you dizzy or drowsy, talk to your doctor to find alternatives.

- ✓ Ask your optometrist if tinted glasses may be beneficial to you to reduce glare of sun and traffic lights when driving.

- ✓ Set your rear-view mirror to glare-resistant setting if available.

- ✓ Take advantage of free physical fitness and computer classes at senior centers to keep your body and mind active and working at its best, which can help make you a better driver.
- ✓ Check how well your car will do if involved in a crash. This information is on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website: www.safercar.gov

Never:

- ✓ Never drink and drive.
- ✓ Never drive when you feel tired. If you start to feel tired, stop your car somewhere safe and take a break until you feel more alert.
- ✓ Never use a cell phone or text when driving (even at stoplights). Buy a headset to keep on hand if you must talk on rare occasion.
- ✓ Never eat, drink or do other activities while driving.

If:

- ✓ If you don't see well in the dark, avoid driving at night/during storms.

- ✓ If glare from the sun and car lights are bothersome, consider tinted windows, using sunglasses and a fitted cap when driving.

- ✓ If you have trouble making left turns at an intersection, try an alternate route that has protected turns.

- ✓ If you can, avoid driving in bad weather such as rain, sleet or snow.

- ✓ If certain routes always causes you stress, try to find an alternate routes and consider buying a GPS system to help you in new areas.

- ✓ If someone in the car is bothering you (e.g., noisy grandchildren) ask them to stop that behavior so you can focus.

Tip #2: Take Care of Your Car

- ✓ Make sure your car always has enough gas.

- ✓ Make sure your tires have the right amount of air and are rotated and check them each month for any wear or damage.
- ✓ Get your car tuned up regularly.
- ✓ Keep your windshields and mirrors clean.
- ✓ Replace your windshield wiper blades when they get worn out.
- ✓ Consider using Rain-Z or a similar product to keep windows clear.
- ✓ If you are shopping for a new car, look for a car with power steering and automatic transmission.

Tip #3: Know Where You Can Find a Ride

- ✓ How do you get around when your car is in the shop? If you don't know the answer to this question, it's time for you to put together a transportation plan to list of all the ways that you can get around. Your plan might include:
 - ✓ Rides from friends and family
 - ✓ Taxi cab

- ✓ Bus or train
- ✓ Senior shuttle
- ✓ Volunteer driver organizations

If you need help creating a transportation plan, call the Alamo Service Connection at (210) 477-3275.

Tip #4: Take a Driver Safety Class

Learn how to drive more safely with a driver refresher class! To find a class near you, call one of the programs on page 14 of this guide.

Evaluating Your Driving Ability

Photo: A hand holding a pencil taking a test.

A comprehensive driving evaluation conducted by specialists trained in driver rehabilitation assesses a driver's physical and mental ability to drive safely. In some cases, simple changes in driving habits and use of adaptive devices for your vehicle may be all that you need to continue to drive safely.

The Reeves Rehabilitation Center at University Hospital in San Antonio, TX can conduct a comprehensive driving evaluation upon referral from a physician. Most programs charge a fee (\$250 or more) for this service. For more information, go to www.reevesrehab.com or call (210) 358-4253.

Some areas may also have a Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS). For a complete CDRS directory, go to www.aded.net.

A complete listing of Occupational Therapy Driving Specialists can be obtained at www1.aota.org/driver_search/index.asp.

Begin evaluating your driving skills today with the “Am I A Safe Driver?” and “Close Call” quizzes on the next few pages. Consider completing the quizzes with family or friends as they may have noticed behaviors that you may not be aware of.

“Am I a Safe Driver?” Quiz

- _____ I get lost while driving.
- _____ Friends and family members are worried about my driving.
- _____ Other cars seem to appear out of nowhere.
- _____ I have trouble seeing signs in time to respond to them.
- _____ Other drivers drive too fast.
- _____ Other drivers often honk at me.
- _____ Driving stresses me out.
- _____ After driving, I feel tired.
- _____ I have had more “near misses” lately.
- _____ Busy intersections bother me.
- _____ Left-hand turns make me nervous.
- _____ The glare from oncoming headlights bothers me.
- _____ My medication makes me dizzy or drowsy.
- _____ I have trouble turning the steering wheel.
- _____ I have trouble pushing down on the gas pedal or brake.
- _____ I have trouble looking over my shoulder when I back up.
- _____ I have been stopped by the police for my driving recently.
- _____ People will no longer accept rides from me.
- _____ I don't like to drive at night.
- _____ I have more trouble parking lately.

Checking one or more of the boxes might mean that a driver's safety is at risk.

Discuss any checked boxes with your doctor to determine if you need to modify your driving habits.

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Discuss any checked boxes with your doctor to determine if you need to modify your driving habits.

(Source: Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers, American Medical Association/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/US Department of Transportation, 2003).

The “Close Call” Quiz

Check any areas that apply.

- _____ Do you sometimes say, “Whew, that was close!”
- _____ At times, do cars seem to appear from nowhere?
- _____ At intersections, do cars sometimes proceed when you felt you had the right of the way?
- _____ Are gaps in traffic harder to judge?
- _____ Do others honk at you?
- _____ After driving, do you feel physically exhausted?
- _____ Do you think you are slower than you used to be in reacting to dangerous driving situations?
- _____ Have you had an increased number of near-accidents in the past year?
- _____ Do you find it difficult to decide when to join traffic on a busy interstate highway?
- _____ Do intersections bother you because there is so much to watch for in all directions?

If you checked any of these questions, you may have had a close-call for an accident. It is important to replay and analyze these near misses to try to learn from them. Ask yourself:

1. Could I have prevented the situation?

2. Should I have reacted differently?
3. Did I fail to see something?
4. Why was the other driver honking at me?

(Source: Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers, American Medical Association/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/US Department of Transportation, 2003).

Driver Refresher Programs

Driver screening tests and refresher safety courses are a great way to polish your driving skills. Refresher courses may even help you to save on your insurance rates – check with your carrier for more information. Below are some refresher programs you may want to consider:

AARP Driving Safety Program is the nation's first refresher course for drivers fifty and older. To locate a program near you, go to www.aarp.org then type “driver safety classes” in the search box.

AARP charges nominal fees for the two four-hour programs. AARP also offers a low fee-based online driver safety course for members and non-members. Type “driver safety online course” in the search box for more information.

American Automobile Association (AAA) Roadwise Review offers driver assessment and requires a computer and a friend to help with completion. May be completed either online for free or with a copy of the CD, which can be obtained for a nominal fee by contacting your local AAA office: (210) 877-2222 or toll-free at 1-877-428-2277.

Mature Driver's Safety Courses Online is a self-paced, online course. Go to www.maturedrivercourseonline.com for details.

Safe Driving for Mature Operators Program offers practical guidance for older drivers on traffic crash prevention. For more information go to www.aaaseniors.com.

Concerned About Your Driving or Someone Else's Driving?

- ✓ Listen with an open mind.

- ✓ Do not dismiss comments out of denial.

- ✓ Be receptive to refresher courses or corrective actions and use self- evaluation tests to identify problems and correct them.

- ✓ Review options for alternative transportation.

If you express concern about another's driving:

- ✓ Express concern sincerely and sympathetically. Coming to terms with adjustments to independence is challenging for anyone. Be understanding.
- ✓ Hear and understand the driver's concerns. Feelings about losing independence should be eased. Assure them of your continued love and support.
- ✓ Studies show older drivers are more receptive to suggestions from law enforcement officers, doctors, and friends than from family members.
- ✓ Talk to the driver's doctor if possible.
- ✓ Report an unsafe driver if all else fails – you can do so anonymously.

Photo: Older gentleman with a concerned look, sitting with his wife.

Chapter Two: Alternatives to Driving Your Own Car

When older drivers stop driving, they often prefer to rely on family and friends to get around. However, this option is not always available and alternate forms of transportation may need to be considered.

The Alamo Area offers a variety of options to older adults who need to limit their driving or have had to give up driving altogether.

Standard Service Providers

Greater San Antonio Transportation Company (Yellow Cab) provides on-demand transportation services to the Alamo area. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available but must be requested at the time of the reservation. Fares vary based on distance and travel time. Call (210) 222-2222 or visit www.yellowcabsa.com.

Star Cab provides on-demand transportation services in the Alamo Area. Please request wheelchair accessible vehicles if needed. Fares are based on distance and travel time. Call (210) 444-1111 to schedule a ride.

VIA Metropolitan Transit currently operates 93 fixed bus routes along 900 miles of roadway within Bexar County seven days a week. You can get your bus pass online or at any of the VIA transit centers. Call VIA at (210) 362-2020, TTY (210) 362-2019, or Toll Free 1-866-362-2020 to learn more about bus passes, schedules, fares and route information or go to www.viainfo.net.

Para-Transit Options For Those Requiring Extra Care

Presa Community Center provides transportation services throughout Bexar County for those who are unable to drive or use public transportation. Registration is required to participate. Elderly and persons with disabilities can use this shared-ride service to make medical appointments, shop for their weekly groceries or attend to other errands. Reservations should be booked at least two weeks in advance, or as soon as the date and time of appointment is known. Please call (210) 532-5554 or visit www.presa.org.

Photo: People getting into an accessible bus.

Greater Randolph Area Services Program (GRASP) offers accessible transportation services for local area seniors and people with disabilities. GRASP serves residents living in Windcrest, Converse, Live Oak, Universal City, Schertz,

Cibolo, Kirby and Selma. Rides can be scheduled for grocery shopping, medical appointments, to the GRASP community center, or other special trips. Trips must be scheduled in advance. Fees range according to distance and other fees may apply if the driver is required to wait at the destination. For additional information or to make a reservation, please call (210) 658-6351 or visit www.grasp211.org.

Supportive Services for the Elderly Project (SSEP), administered through the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services, provides specialized, door-to-door paratransit services to persons 60 years and older, primarily for trips to essential medical appointments, Social Security, Food Stamp and legal assistance offices, the grocery store, pharmacy, and the bank. Para-transit services are provided on a space available basis. The service is free; however, donations are encouraged. For additional information or to schedule a ride, please call the reservation line at (210) 207-6680 or visit www.sanantonio.gov/communit/Senior_TransportationSupportServices.aspx.

VIATrans is an advanced-reservation, curb-to-curb, shared-ride service available to persons with disabilities who meet ADA eligibility and medical assessment criteria. VIATrans also provides a subscription service for individuals with recurring transportation needs. Subscription trips must be taken from the same place, to the

same location, at the same time, on the same day(s) of the week at least three days a week. The VIAtrans application can be obtained from the VIA Accessible Services Office by calling (210) 362-2140 or by downloading from the VIA website at www.viainfo.net.

Photo: Woman in a wheelchair being lifted into an accessible bus.

Photo: Older woman smiling in a wheelchair

Medical Transportation Options

American Cancer Society Road to Recovery Program provides free transportation to and from treatment centers for people who have cancer and who do not have a ride or are unable to drive themselves. For more information on how to enroll and to schedule service, please call Toll-Free 1-877-227-1618.

The Alamo Area Resource Center (AARC) provides door-to-door transportation for people living with HIV in San Antonio and the surrounding area to medical appointments. Call (210) 358-9995 or toll-free 1-800-308-2437 for more information.

Texas Department of Health & Human Services/Medical Transportation

Program authorizes and arranges transportation for all categorically eligible Medicaid recipients to access covered health care services. Call toll-free 1-877-633-8747 or (210) 646-3042.

Photo: Older gentleman wearing glasses and a hat waving.

Photo: Older woman outdoor in her garden wearing a hat and smiling.

Escorted Transportation

Volunteer drivers provide free, escorted, door-through-door transportation for seniors 60 and older who are able to get in and out of a car on their own and are ambulatory. At this time volunteer-drivers are unable to assist those with wheelchairs. Transportation is primarily to medical appointments, the pharmacy, and grocery store. Volunteers may provide grocery delivery, reassurance calls, and minor home repair to those in need of additional services

Jefferson Outreach for Older People area served is defined by Culebra Road on the South, Loop 1604 on the West, Northwest and North, and by Hwy 281 and San Pedro on the East. Requests for transportation

services need to be made at least seven days in advance. Transportation is free of charge; however, donations are encouraged. For more information or to schedule a ride, please call (210) 734-5016 or www.jeffersonoutreach.org.

Northeast Senior Assistance (NESA) area served is defined by San Pedro up to 1604 - IH 35 – O'Conner - FM 78 IH 35 – San Pedro (includes Windcrest but NOT Live Oak, Converse or Kirby). Potential clients must be formally enrolled with NESA prior to receiving any service. Requests for transportation services need to be made at least seven days in advance. Transportation is provided free of charge; however, donations are encouraged. For more information or to schedule a ride, please call (210) 967-6372 or www.neseniorassistance.org.

Photo: Older woman being helped by a volunteer driver out of a car.

Southeast Outreach for Older People (SCOOP) service area is defined by I-10 on the North, Loop 410 on the South and East and South Presa on the West. Requests for transportation services need to be made at least seven days in advance. Prior to receiving transportation seniors must register with SCOOP. Transportation is provided free of charge, however, donations are encouraged. For more information or to schedule a ride, please call (210) 359-6678.

Southwest Outreach for Older People (SWOOP) area served is defined by Roosevelt/Mission Avenue on the East and West Commerce Street on the North and Loop 410 on the West and South. Medical related transportation only at this time - clients must be enrolled with SWOOP prior to receiving service; requests for transportation need to be made at least seven working days in advance. Transportation is free of charge; however, donations are encouraged. For more information or to

schedule a ride, please call, (210) 558-0007.

Call A Ride for Seniors (CARS) Coalition Formed: Jefferson Outreach, Northeast Senior Assistance (NESA), Southeast Community Outreach for Older People, and Southwest Community Outreach for Older People (SWOOP) have formed Call A Ride for Seniors (CARS) to work together on special events promoting the need for escorted transportation, volunteers, and funding. Please visit www.callarideforseniors.org for more information.

Volunteers Fuel Rides! If you are interested being a volunteer driver, please call the Alamo Service Connection at (210) 477-3275 for more information.

Photo: Volunteer driver putting a woman's bags in the trunk of a car.

Options with Providers for the Surrounding Counties

Alamo Regional Transit (ART) provides low-cost transportation services to the general public in the eleven rural counties in the Alamo region: Atascosa, Bandera, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina, Wilson. ART is a demand-response service that provides curb-to-curb or door-to-door service for those that need assistance to various types of services and appointments including medical, educational, work, and shopping. Reservations are required at least one day in advance. Fares vary depending on the pickup and destination requested. For more information and to schedule a ride, call toll-free 1-866-889-7433 or visit www.aacog.com/art.

Photo: Colorful map showing the 12 county Alamo Region.

Hill Country Community Needs Council – Fredericksburg Medical

Transportation (Gillespie County) volunteer drivers provide transportation to medical appointments for individuals who are unable to drive or have no other resource for transportation. Gillespie County residents can get rides to Fredericksburg, Kerrville,

San Antonio or Austin. A 48-hour advance notice is needed for local transportation and 1-week in advance for out-of-town appointments. For more information or to schedule a ride, call (830) 997-9756 or visit www.needsCouncil.org.

Rainbow Senior Center (RSC) in Kendall County provides transportation services for registered members in the local area who are physically handicapped, visually impaired or are otherwise unable to drive. Individuals must be members of the RSC to utilize service and live within a three-mile radius of the center. RSC vans bring members to and from the center each day. Members can schedule trips to local area doctors, grocery, pharmacy or other sites. All transportation services are a shared-ride program. RSC requests a small donation for rides. For details and to make required reservations 24-hours in advance, please call (830) 249-2114.

Supplemental Programs

Bus Discounts for Seniors 62+ Obtain your Reduced Fare ID at all VIA's Information Centers, except Randolph and Ingram locations. Call (210) 362-2020 or TTY: (210) 362-2019 for a location near you!

Certified Auto Ride in an Emergency Program (CARE) The CARE program is also known as the *guaranteed ride home*. For a low annual fee, you can receive up to four free cab rides each year (up to 30 miles within the Alamo region), when an emergency arises. To qualify for the CARE program, you must carpool, vanpool, or take the bus at least three times a week. Call (210) 362-5213 for more information.

VIA Van Pool VIA provides 7, 12 and 15 passenger model vans which can be rented month-to-month (the more passengers, the cheaper the cost). At least 6 people share the ride to work, while splitting the cost of van rental and fuel. One member of the group drives and maintains the van in return for riding free. For more information about the vanpool service and with help recruiting passengers, contact the VIA Vanpool Service at (210) 362-2555.

VIA's Travel Training program is available to assist customers using the fixed route bus service. With this program, VIAtrans customers have the opportunity to work with a trainer to learn how to use public transportation on an individualized level. Generally, the travel trainer will accompany and/or assist the customer on trips until the customer has met their goal.

For more information, please contact VIA's Accessible Services Office at

(210) 362-2147.

Note to Workers: If you are currently employed, ask if your employer offers free bus passes to employees!

Chapter Three: How to Plan Your Trip – Points to Consider

When assessing one's transportation options, there are several points to consider. In some cases, no one transportation provider will be able to accommodate every ride needed. Understanding available options will allow you to make choices and determine the best combination of resources available. The key is to remain open and aware of the options available and have a plan in place.

Consider developing a transportation plan before the need to limit or stop driving occurs. Some questions to address:

Mobility Level

Understand your ability to get from place to place, and what your limitations are. Items to consider may include, but are not limited to:

- How your mobility device such as a wheelchair, scooter, walker, or cane affects your mobility.
- Ability to walk or climb stairs.

- Ability to read and understand printed maps or schedules.
- Ability to communicate with transportation providers (e.g., hearing, or understanding what people say).
- Ability to understand or speak English.
- Ability to get around independently and safely.

Transportation Needs

Adequate trip planning requires understanding of each portion of the trip:

What is the origin and destination of the trip?

How many trips will be taken in a day?

Will a trip be interrupted by intermediate stops, such as grocery shopping or a pharmacy stop?

Who will be transported?

Will there be someone to assist?

In addition to the specific trip details, there are other items to consider when evaluating the transportation options available to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Convenience

The ease with which individuals are able to successfully plan a trip, understand schedules and fares, maneuver through route information for a fixed service, and navigate the environment to destination will help to better determine a person's ability to use alternative transportation services on a regular basis. It is important to get familiar with alternative transportation before you really need it, build confidence, and have a plan when driving may need to be reduced or eliminated altogether.

Reliability

Every traveler experiences late arrivals to their destination, regardless of their mode of travel. Transportation services can have unique challenges such as off-peak timetables, vehicles malfunctioning, or delays when waiting for passengers when sharing a ride. Addressing these potential issues and formulating a plan ahead of time can assist the rider in being more comfortable with alternative transportation and help to ensure that they get to their appointments on time.

Cost

The cost of the service can be a factor if the individual or family is responsible for all or part of the fare. It is important to look at an individual's monthly fare costs compared to their monthly income. Identify possible transportation benefits or services available through Medicare, Medicaid, or other insurance programs.

Safety

Travelers may be concerned about their safety when traveling by transportation services they may be unfamiliar with. Some concerns include skill level, the

environment, or the time of day. Individuals need to be able to assess their own ability to remain safe and discuss possible issues with family, friends or the transportation provider.

Comfort and Confidence

If an individual lacks experience in using the selected form of transportation, they may become anxious, lack confidence, get confused, or may appear to be easily sidetracked. Discussing with others what supports can be put into place as well as obtaining information on travel training, and transit system familiarization can help to support independent travel for the individual.

(Adapted from *United We Ride: Building an Individual Transportation Plan, 2004*)

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. What general times and dates do you need a ride?

2. Will you be traveling with members of your family or friends?

3. Where will you be going?
4. How close or far are these places from the public transportation route?
5. Do you need to make stops during the trip – e.g. grocery, bank, pharmacy, etc?
6. Are you eligible for any programs that reimburse for transportation expenses (e.g., gas, mileage, vouchers, bus pass, etc)?
7. What is the process for scheduling a trip with one of the transportation providers?
8. Is advanced notice required?

Planning Your Trip Using Alternative Transportation

(Photo: Woman with fancy hat smiling)

Routine Errands: List recurring activities. Think of as many as possible.

Activity:

How You Get There Now:

New Ways to Get There:

Regular Educational, Social or Religious Events/Activities: List events that happen at least once a month.

Activity:

How You Get There Now:

New Ways to Get There:

Other Community, Social and/or Special Events: List special events that may happen on the spur of the moment.

Activity:

How You Get There Now:

New Ways to Get There:

Transportation Options Worksheet A.

Private Vehicle Options

1. Do you have a car? Yes No

Is the car you drive mechanically dependable? Yes No

Is the car insured for your use? Yes No

2. Do you have a valid driver's license? Yes No

3. Are registration & inspection stickers up to date? Yes No

Shared Ride Options

1. Can you drive with a neighbor, friend, or relative? Yes No

2. How much do you need to pay the driver to share a ride?

\$ Per: (select one) Trip Weekly Monthly

Transportation Options Worksheet B.

1. Write down your weekly schedule, including times you need to be at your appointments and addresses (if known):

➤ Medical trips:

➤ Shopping trips:

➤ Social/religious trips:

2. Do you usually drive to where you need to go? If yes, are there times of day, locations, or weather conditions where you restrict your driving?

3. Identify a friend, neighbor, or relative who would be willing to drive you to the nearest bus stop or transit station.

4. Write down any other types of transportation services you see passing through your neighborhood or near your common destinations.

5. Locate all bus stops within a few blocks of your home.

A. Write down the address of the bus stop or the two nearest crossing street or a nearby landmark.

B. Write down the bus number(s) from the bus stop signs.

6. Locate all bus stops within a few blocks of your common destinations (e.g. job, grocery store, bank, medical providers, religious building).

A. Write down the address of the bus stop or the two nearest crossing streets or a nearby landmark.

B. Write down the bus number(s) from the bus stop signs.

Chapter Four: Additional Resources

AAA DriveSharp Program The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has partnered with Posit Science to bring older adults this unique approach to driver safety.

DriveSharp is not a driving simulation or education program. Instead, it's a brain fitness software program that sharpens the most important safety equipment of all: the mind of the driver. More information and pricing can be obtained at:

<http://drivesharp.positscience.com>.

ADED: The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists primarily supports professional in the field of driver education and transportation equipment modifications for persons with disabilities. Visit www.aded.net (click "Fact Sheets") for help in locating a driver rehabilitation specialist.

American Medical Association (AMA) has created several documents to assist physicians, seniors and caregivers in facilitating the discussion concerning the continuation of a seniors' driving ability. To find the resources, go to www.ama-assn.org and click on "Patients," then select "Resources for Older Drivers."

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is a professional organization that has information and reports pertaining to driving that are relevant to older drivers. Go to www.aota.org (search for “driving” or “transportation”).

Association of Driver Rehabilitation Specialist Publications has published numerous fact sheets about disabilities and illnesses that can affect driving. These fact sheets can be downloaded at www.aded.net under “Disabilities and Driving Facts Sheets.”

Drivers 65 Plus is a self-assessment form with questions, facts, and driving suggestions developed by the American Automobile Association Foundation. It provides specific safety suggestions based on the driver’s answers to 15 questions. The assessment can be completed online at www.aaaseniors.com.

Driving Decisions Workbook was created by The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute to help increase driver self-awareness and general knowledge about declines in driving-related abilities. It provides guidance and remedial strategies for extending safe driving. A copy can be downloaded at: www.umtri.umich.edu/. Type “driving decision workbook” to download.

DriveWell Toolkit was established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) which along with the American Society on Aging (ASA), developed a toolkit that promotes older driver safety and mobility. The toolkit can assist in understanding the issues related to older drivers and later-life independence and mobility. Call 1-888-327-4236 or go to www.nhtsa.dot.gov and type “Drive Well” in the search box to download a free copy of the guide.

National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST) is administered by Easter Seals Inc., in partnership with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. It’s mission is to increase transportation options for older adults and enhance their ability to live more independently within their communities throughout the U.S. Visit: <http://seniortransportation.easterseals.com>.

National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) has developed a series of pamphlets that addresses the more common medical conditions that affect an older person’s ability to drive safely. To request copies call 1-888-327-4236 or go to www.nhtsa.dot.gov; type in “Traffic Safety Older Drivers” and then choose the topic of interest, including Alzheimer’s disease, cataracts, macular degeneration, diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, and many more.

National Institute on Aging (NIA): focuses on understanding the nature of aging. Its web site discusses changes that older drivers face and ways they can adapt www.nia.nih.gov/health/agepages/drivers.htm.

National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA): is a non-profit trade association specializing in increasing independence for people with disabilities www.nmeda.org.

Smart Features for Mature Drivers outlines important options to consider regarding both the car itself and the driver's physical comfort within the vehicle. Mature drivers should choose a vehicle with options that add to their comfort and control and offset any loss of strength or visibility. Go to www.aaaseniors.com and look under *Resources: Vehicle Purchase and Maintenance* for a complete listing of information on considerations when purchasing a vehicle. Information can be obtained at by visiting www.aaaexchange.com and searching under "senior drivers."

If you are not able to access these resources, please call the Alamo Service Connection at (210) 477-3275.

General Driver Aides and Adaptive Equipment

(Photo: Adaptive car equipment in use)

There are a number of resources available that may assist in making driving easier for those with disabilities, enabling them to continue driving or return to driving.

Keep Moving Longer: Features for Safe Driving is a DVD program developed by the University of Massachusetts to help identify devices that can keep people driving safely and comfortably. For example, special convex side and rear-view mirrors address reduced peripheral vision due to decreased ability to turn one's head and can help a driver maintain and increase safety on the road. Similarly, a portable support handle, useful for drivers and passengers, helps to ease the difficulty of getting into and out of a car. Call (617) 287-7300 for more information on ordering DVD.

Adapting Motor Vehicles for People with Disabilities is a booklet that assists those who may need adaptive technology for their vehicle. It includes how to find a qualified evaluator and dealer as well as programs or agencies that may assist with costs. For a copy of the brochure, call the Department of Transportation's Vehicle Safety Hotline 1-888-327-4236 or print a copy at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

Additional information on various assistive devices, adaptive equipment and aides can be found at the end of this guide or by calling the Alamo Service Connection (ASC) at www.askasc.org or (210) 477-3275.

Local Accessibility Resources

Photo: Wheelchair

AccessAbility Home Modifications

7340 Blanco Rd. PMB-3

San Antonio, TX 78216

(210) 414-5600 or

www.AccessAbility1.com

Adaptive Modifications

1450 IH 35 S

New Braunfels, TX 78130

(830) 214-6991 or

contact@adaptivemod.com

Bexar Care – Home Medical Equipment and Supplies

7410 John Smith Dr. # 108

San Antonio, TX 78229

(210) 614-3804 or www.bexarcare.com

Bexar Care – Home Medical Equipment and Supplies

1701 Ave. K

Hondo, TX 78861

(830) 741-8171 or www.bexarcare.com

CHAMPS – Medical Equipment and Pharmacy

7718 Louis Pasteur

San Antonio, TX 78229

(210) 614-1212 or www.champsmedical.info

Mobility Advantage, Inc.

6634 Topper Run #1

San Antonio, TX 78233

(210) 599-1339

www.mobilityadvantage.net/

Project Mend

5727 IH 10 West

San Antonio, TX

(210) 223-6363 or www.projectmend.org

San Antonio Lighthouse

Low Vision Store

2305 Roosevelt

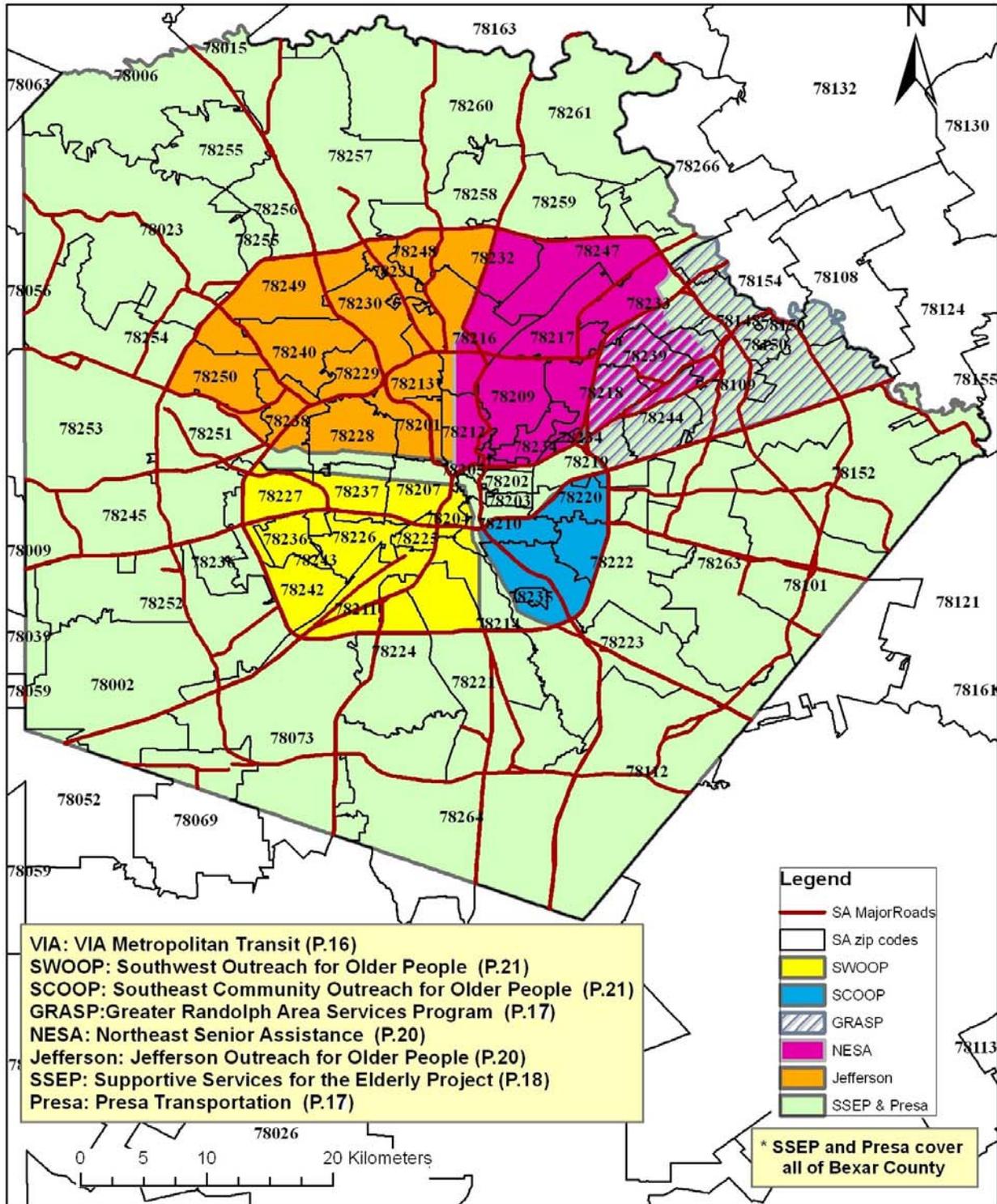
San Antonio, TX 78210

(210) 531-1503 or www.salighthouse.org

Local Transportation Resources at a Glance (please see separate Excel attachment).

Service Area of Senior Transportation Providers in Bexar County, TX

Bexar Area Agency on Aging (2012)



Please call the Alamo Service Connection at (210) 477-3275 for service area.

How Bexar Area Agency on Aging (BAAA) Can Help

The BAAA Mobility Specialist:

- ✓ Advocates for transportation and mobility needs of older adults and adults with disabilities.
- ✓ Supports, promotes, and helps to expand and improve mobility and transportation services.
- ✓ Offers referrals to transportation services, driver refresher courses, mobility aides and fall prevention resources.
- ✓ Provides individualized Transportation and Mobility Assessment Plans.

For Information Call: (210) 477-3275

Photo: Alamo Service Connection logo with tagline “Just Ask/Llamenos”

Page for Notes

Back Cover

Photo: Colorful map of 12-county Alamo Area Region

Questions About Transportation?

Call: (210) 477-3275

Email: info@askasc.org

Visit Online: www.askasc.org

Photo: Alamo Service Connection logo with tagline “Just Ask/Llamenos”