

Reliable, Accessible, and Affordable Transportation:

The key to remaining independent, engaged and connected.

Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter
- Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
- Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)
- Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)
- Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
- Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
- Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)
- Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)
- Wisconsin Tribal Aging Unit Association

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

WAAN State Issue Brief
April 2019

WAAN's Position: WAAN supports additional funding for transit and specialized transportation, policies incentivizing coordination of services and removal of barriers for volunteer driving programs.

Transportation programs are a critical investment that has not kept pace with the growing number of older adults.

1. WAAN supports the 20% increase in specialized transportation funding to counties and 10% increase in tribal transportation and transit programs as proposed in the 2019-2021 Executive Budget.

2. WAAN supports incentivizing coordination among local- and state-level transportation systems.

3. WAAN requests legislation to clarify the insurance requirements of volunteer drivers and ensure protections under the Good Samaritan Law.

Current transportation systems are not always well-suited or available to meet our mobility needs as we age.

Grocery and clothing stores are not available in every county. Medical centers and social services offer services regionally. Earlier release of hospital patients, high need for dialysis and efforts to keep individuals out of nursing homes also contribute to transportation demand.

On average, we outlive our driving ability by 7-10 years¹. This is a long time to rely on transportation services that may not exist where we live. Seventy percent of individuals over 50 years old live where transit does not exist or serves the area very poorly². We need to come together, coordinate available resources and find creative solutions to ensure we all can thrive as we age.



“This service has been a lifesaver for me. I cannot drive anymore for health reasons. This service has helped keep me independent and living in my home longer and has given me a safe way to get to my doctor and keep my doctor appointments. I have to be checked every month and now I can! Drivers are all very helpful, kind and wonderful.”

...passenger RSVP Volunteer Program –
Dane County



Contact WAAN

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1. Transportation options are important to all of us.

Increasing investment in transportation programs:

Supports family caregivers: Transportation services can enable caregivers to remain employed.

Drives economic growth: Investing in transportation infrastructure for all roadway users and incorporating livability principles strengthens communities, retains existing residents, draws new residents, young talent and other investors.

Keeps us healthy: Transportation provides access to preventive and routine medical care, reducing the number of missed appointments for physician’s offices, clinics and hospitals and reducing the need for more expensive emergency care.

Reduces costs: Providing transportation to necessary appointments reduces costs to Medicaid/Medicare and healthcare providers.

2. A state-level *Shared-Use Mobility and Coordination Council* should be created and include representatives from all state agencies who operate, support, or need transporta-

tion services for program success. Each county/region must have a transportation coordination plan. Coordination of resources expands options and makes resources go farther and should be incentivized in the grant process. We’ve seen the ingenuity in the creation of new rural transit systems, multi-county volunteer driver programs, voucher program, mobility management, and other creative solutions that increase options, but more needs to be done. Effective coordination of existing transportation can help overcome barriers and lead to cost savings for programs, individuals, and the state.

3. Volunteer driver programs are an effective use of private resources for public good. Volunteer drivers continue to encounter barriers with obtaining vehicle insurance and are not covered under the Good Samaritan law when operating a vehicle. The legislature can ensure volunteer programs continue by addressing these issues.

In order to remain active and engaged in community, we must create a long-term plan to ensure that the inability to drive isn’t negatively impacting quality of life. This plan must include additional funding for transit, specialized transportation programs, and volunteer driving programs and incentivize coordination of public and private resources to expand options.

Reliable, Accessible, and Affordable Transportation:

References

1. Foley, D.J., Heimovitz, H. K., Guralnik, J. M. & Brock, D. B., (2002). Driving Life Expectancy of Persons Aged 70 Years and Older in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92(8), 1284-1289, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.92.8.1284>
2. "Preserving the Mobility and Safety of Older Americans," TRIP, http://www.tripnet.org/docs/Older_Americans_Mobility_TRIP_Report_2018.pdf, March, 2018



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