

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OLDER CANADIANS ON THE MOVE

The Expert Panel on the Transportation
Needs of an Aging Population



OLDER CANADIANS ON THE MOVE

The Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population

THE COUNCIL OF CANADIAN ACADEMIES

180 Elgin Street, Suite 1401, Ottawa, ON, Canada K2P 2K3

Notice: The project that is the subject of this report was undertaken with the approval of the Board of Directors of the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA). Board members are drawn from the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), the Canadian Academy of Engineering (CAE), and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS), as well as from the general public. The members of the expert panel responsible for the report were selected by the CCA for their special competencies and with regard for appropriate balance.

This report was prepared for the Government of Canada in response to a request from the Minister of Transportation. Any opinions, findings, or conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, the Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population, and do not necessarily represent the views of their organizations of affiliation or employment, or the sponsoring organization, Transport Canada.

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Older Canadians on the Move / Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population.

Issued also in French under title: Favoriser la mobilité des aînés canadiens.

Includes bibliographical references.

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-926522-34-0 (softcover).—ISBN 978-1-926522-35-7 (PDF)

1. Older people—Transportation—Canada. 2. Transportation and state—Canada. I. Council of Canadian Academies issuing body II. Council of Canadian Academies. Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population, author

HQ1063.5.O53 2017

362.63'0971

C2017-907016-9

C2017-907017-7

This report should be cited as:

Council of Canadian Academies, 2017. *Older Canadians on the Move*. Ottawa (ON): The Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population, Council of Canadian Academies.

Disclaimer: The internet data and information referenced in this report were correct, to the best of the CCA's knowledge, at the time of publication. Due to the dynamic nature of the internet, resources that are free and publicly available may subsequently require a fee or restrict access, and the location of items may change as menus and webpages are reorganized.

© 2017 Council of Canadian Academies

Printed in Ottawa, Canada



The Council of Canadian Academies

The Council of Canadian Academies (CCA) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that supports independent, science-based, authoritative expert assessments to inform public policy development in Canada. Led by a Board of Directors and advised by a Scientific Advisory Committee, the CCA's work encompasses a broad definition of science, incorporating the natural, social, and health sciences as well as engineering and the humanities. CCA assessments are conducted by independent, multidisciplinary panels of experts from across Canada and abroad. Assessments strive to identify emerging issues, gaps in knowledge, Canadian strengths, and international trends and practices. Upon completion, assessments provide government decision-makers, researchers, and stakeholders with high-quality information required to develop informed and innovative public policy.

All CCA assessments undergo a formal report review and are published and made available to the public free of charge. Assessments can be referred to the CCA by foundations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, or any level of government.

The CCA is also supported by its three founding Member Academies:

The Royal Society of Canada (RSC)

Founded in 1882, the RSC comprises the Academies of Arts, Humanities and Sciences, as well as Canada's first national system of multidisciplinary recognition for the emerging generation of Canadian intellectual leadership: The College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. Its mission is to recognize scholarly, research, and artistic excellence, to advise governments and organizations, and to promote a culture of knowledge and innovation in Canada and with other national academies around the world.

The Canadian Academy of Engineering (CAE)

The CAE is the national institution through which Canada's most distinguished and experienced engineers provide strategic advice on matters of critical importance to Canada. The Academy is an independent, self-governing, and non-profit organization established in 1987. Fellows are nominated and elected by their peers in recognition of their distinguished achievements and career-long service to the engineering profession. Fellows of the Academy, who number approximately 600, are committed to ensuring that Canada's engineering expertise is applied to the benefit of all Canadians.

The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS)

CAHS recognizes excellence in the health sciences by appointing Fellows based on their outstanding achievements in the academic health sciences in Canada and on their willingness to serve the Canadian public. The Academy provides timely, informed, and unbiased assessments of issues affecting the health of Canadians and recommends strategic, actionable solutions. Founded in 2004, CAHS now has 607 Fellows and appoints new Fellows on an annual basis. The organization is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors and a Board Executive.

www.scienceadvice.ca

@scienceadvice

Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population

Under the guidance of its Scientific Advisory Committee, Board of Directors, and Member Academies, the CCA assembled the Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population to undertake this project. Each expert was selected for his or her expertise, experience, and demonstrated leadership in fields relevant to this project.

Neena L. Chappell, C.M., FRSC, FCAHS (Chair), Professor Emeritus, Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health and Department of Sociology, University of Victoria (Victoria, BC)

Maureen Ashe, Associate Professor, Department of Family Practice, University of British Columbia; Centre for Hip Health and Mobility; Canada Research Chair in Community Mobility (Vancouver, BC)

Howard Bergman, FCAHS, Chair, Department of Family Medicine, and Professor, Departments of Family Medicine, Medicine and Oncology, McGill University (Montréal, QC)

David Timothy Duval, Associate Professor, Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Winnipeg; Associate, University of Manitoba Transport Institute (Winnipeg, MB)

Geoff Fernie, FCAHS, Institute Director, Research, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – UHN; Professor, Department of Surgery and Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering, University of Toronto (Toronto, ON)

Katharine M. Hunter-Zaworski, Associate Professor, School of Civil and Construction Engineering, Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR)

Lorne Mackenzie, Director, Regulatory Affairs, WestJet Airlines (Calgary, AB)

Lynn McDonald, Scientific Director, National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE); Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto (Toronto, ON)

David Metz, Honorary Professor, Centre for Transport Studies, University College London (London, United Kingdom)

Alex Mihailidis, Professor, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto; Scientific Director, AGE-WELL NCE Inc. (Toronto, ON)

Parminder Raina, Scientific Director, McMaster Institute for Research on Aging; Professor, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact, McMaster University; Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in GeroScience, Raymond & Margaret Labarge Chair in Research and Knowledge Application for Optimal Aging (Hamilton, ON)

Marian L. Robson, Senior Associate, Global Public Affairs (Vancouver, BC)

S. C. (Chan) Wirasinghe, FCAE, Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Calgary (Calgary, AB)

The CCA also recognizes the important contribution to this assessment of Brian Flemming, C.M., Q.C., Senior Fellow, Van Horne Institute.

Over the course of its deliberations, the Panel sought assistance from many individuals and organizations that provided valuable information for consideration. Special thanks go to the following: Susan Clarke and J. Glendenning, Canadian Transportation Agency; Gina Sylvestre, University of Winnipeg; the Council of Canadians with Disabilities Transportation Committee; and the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging.

Message from the Chair

Transportation is a vital part of the day-to-day lives of people in Canada. The benefits of an inclusive transportation system that allows for the seamless movement of everyone regardless of background, age, or ability would be significant and wide-reaching. Such a system would promote social equity, social inclusion, individual well-being, and facilitate new economic opportunities as greater numbers of people travel.

Older adults are an important part of Canadian society, but their diverse transportation needs are not always met in the current transportation system. They are also the fastest growing demographic in the country, expected to constitute nearly a quarter of the population by 2036. Demand for an inclusive Canadian transportation system that meets the needs of older adults is therefore only going to grow. By meeting the range of needs of older adults, the transportation system as a whole would better serve everyone.

Recognition of the importance of adapting the Canadian transportation system to ensure it meets the needs of an aging population led to the development of this report. Unlike predecessor reports that focus on disability, this report examines the transportation needs that accompany normal changes with age and includes older adults who do not have a disability. The Panel was charged with looking at how technology and innovation can be used to support this goal. The timing was fortuitous. Now is an ideal time to identify how Canada can move forward towards an inclusive transportation system, while the population is aging quickly, while there are changes being made to transportation and accessibility governance in Canada, and while transportation infrastructure investments are being made across the country. Panellists brought expertise from several disciplines and backgrounds, including engineering, gerontology, geriatric medicine, transportation policy, industry, and innovative technologies. Despite its members' diverse viewpoints, the Panel was able to come together to develop a consensus report that summarizes the evidence and identifies actions for moving forward.

I would like to express my personal gratitude to all the members of the Panel for their hard work and commitment to this project. The spirited discussions that took place over the course of the assessment benefited from the diversity of perspectives and led to a high-quality report. On behalf of the Panel, I would like to express thanks to the reviewers whose thoughtful critiques led to an improved report, and to the staff members at the Council of Canadian Academies for their hard work and responsiveness throughout the assessment. Thank you also to those who presented to the Panel.



Neena Chappell, C.M., FRSC, FCAHS, Chair,
Expert Panel on the Transportation Needs of an Aging Population

Message from the President and CEO

Older adults are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, and as this group continues to grow, so too does the demand for an inclusive transportation system. This is an opportune time to look at how Canada can develop such a system, given that the population is aging quickly, with more approaching that point in our lives every day. Looking at ongoing changes to transportation and accessibility governance is a smart start. An inclusive transportation system would allow for the seamless movement of all Canadians, with many potential benefits from enhancing individual well-being to promoting social equity and social inclusion.

To better understand the role of innovation and technology in adapting the Canadian transportation system to suit the needs of an aging population, Transport Canada identified an important topic for the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA) to study. We assembled a multidisciplinary panel of 13 experts with a range of expertise, experience, and demonstrated leadership in gerontology, geriatric medicine, innovation technologies, transportation engineering, and transportation operations. The resulting report, *Older Canadians on the Move*, recognizes the importance of adapting the Canadian transportation system to ensure it will meet the needs of an aging population, and explores mechanisms that enable improved inclusivity and integration. A careful read will also provide insight into a recognition of the emerging needs of a growing Canadian population in this geographically vast and increasingly interconnected country.

I would like to thank Dr. Neena L. Chappell, C.M., FRSC, FCAHS, and her fellow expert panellists, for their efforts to bring this project through to completion. The Board of Directors, its Scientific Advisory Committee, and the CCA's three founding Member Academies — the Royal Society of Canada, the Canadian Academy of Engineering, and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences — all provided key guidance and input throughout the entire assessment process.

Finally, I would like to thank the Minister of Science, the Hon. Kirsty Duncan, who, on behalf of the Minister of Transport Canada, the Hon. Marc Garneau, referred this project to the CCA.



Eric M. Meslin, PhD, FCAHS

President and CEO, Council of Canadian Academies

Project Staff of the Council of Canadian Academies

Assessment Team: Emmanuel Mongin, Project Director
Rebecca Chapman, Research Associate
Anita Melnyk, Research Associate
Maria Giammarco, Intern
Madison Downe, Project Coordinator
Weronika Zych, Project Coordinator

With Assistance from: Andrew Taylor, Project Director, CCA
Jennifer Bassett, Research Associate, CCA
Aaron Maxwell, Intern, CCA
Marc Dufresne, Report Design, CCA

and: Jody Cooper, Editorial Consultant
François Abraham, Communications Léon,
Certified Translator, En-Fr
Amy Hwang, Consultant

Report Review

This report was reviewed in draft form by the individuals listed below — a group of reviewers selected by the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA) for their diverse perspectives, areas of expertise, and broad representation of academic, industrial, policy, and non-governmental organizations.

The reviewers assessed the objectivity and quality of the report. Their submissions — which will remain confidential — were considered in full by the Panel, and many of their suggestions were incorporated into the report. They were not asked to endorse the conclusions, nor did they see the final draft of the report before its release. Responsibility for the final content of this report rests entirely with the authoring Panel and the CCA.

The CCA wishes to thank the following individuals for their review of this report:

Paul Côté, General Manager, Montreal Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority (Montréal, QC)

Phillip Davies, Principal, Davies Transportation Consulting Inc. (Vancouver, BC)

Jacques Drouin, Director, Platform Management – Strategy, Bombardier Transportation (Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville, QC)

Ann Frye, Director, Ann Frye Ltd (Somerset, United Kingdom)

David B. Hogan, Professor and Academic Lead, Brenda Strafford Centre on Aging, University of Calgary (Calgary, AB)

Teresa Liu-Ambrose, Professor, Canada Research Chair, University of British Columbia (Vancouver, BC)

Anne Martin-Matthews, FCAHS, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia (Vancouver, BC)

Mark Rosenberg, Professor, Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Development Studies, Queen's University (Kingston, ON)

Jutta Treviranus, Director, Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University (Toronto, ON)

The report review procedure was monitored on behalf of the CCA's Board of Directors and Scientific Advisory Committee by **Eliot A. Phillipson, O.C., FCAHS**, Sir John and Lady Eaton Professor of Medicine Emeritus, University of Toronto; Former President and CEO, Canada Foundation for Innovation. The role of the peer review monitor is to ensure that the Panel gives full and fair consideration to the submissions of the report reviewers. The Board of the CCA authorizes public release of an expert panel report only after the peer review monitor confirms that the CCA's report review requirements have been satisfied. The CCA thanks Dr. Phillipson for his diligent contribution as peer review monitor.

Executive Summary

Older adults form a large and important Canadian demographic. Currently, one in six people in Canada is 65 or older, and the rate of growth of this demographic is higher than any other population subgroup. Older adults are a diverse group with unique transportation needs and preferences that are not currently being met by the Canadian transportation system. Adapting this system for an aging population has benefits for all travellers and for the travel industry itself.

An inclusive transportation system allows seamless movement between locations and transportation modes (e.g., from home to car to train to plane to hotel) so that all people, regardless of background, age, or ability, can easily reach their desired destination from the moment they start planning their journey. An inclusive system supports social equity by providing universal access to transportation and enhances individual well-being. It also creates economic opportunities because more people are able to travel. Demand for an inclusive transportation system will only grow as the proportion of older adults in Canada continues to increase. Now is an ideal time to create such a system thanks to current infrastructure investments that offer opportunities for improvement, and to changes being made to transportation and accessibility governance.

Recognizing this opportune time, the Minister of Transport, on behalf of Transport Canada (the Sponsor), asked the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA) to provide an evidence-informed, authoritative assessment of how technology and innovation can improve the accessibility of the federal transportation system for older adults. Specifically, this assessment examines the following question (the charge):

How can technology and innovation help the Canadian transportation system (under the legislative authority of Parliament) adapt to the needs of an aging population?

The federal government has a central role to play in governing — and improving the accessibility of — the transportation system in Canada. The governance of air, rail, intercity bus, and some ferries falls under its jurisdiction, although their operations and funding occur in partnership with other orders of government, not-for-profit entities, and industry. Given Transport Canada's key role in providing direction for and governance over transportation, it is significant that the Sponsor chose to pose this question now, while it has the opportunity to drive the creation of an inclusive, age-friendly transportation system throughout Canada.

To address the charge, the CCA assembled a multidisciplinary panel of 13 experts (the Panel) from Canada and abroad. Panel members brought knowledge from several disciplines to the table, including transportation engineering, gerontology, geriatric medicine, transportation policy, and innovative technologies. Over the course of a year, the Panel met in person five times to refine its assessment of the important issues at hand. This report is a consensus document that draws on the Panel's expertise and available evidence from a range of sources.

The Panel's Approach

From the outset, the Panel established three key perspectives to guide deliberations. First, the Panel emphasized that aging is a normal process that includes a variety of physical, psychological, cognitive, and social changes, which can affect the transportation needs and preferences of older adults. Therefore, the Panel extended the assessment beyond issues related to physical accessibility, although these remained important. Other areas, including health and well-being, social interaction and participation, independence, safety and security, and respect, are also key considerations when it comes to transportation and older adults.

Second, although the Panel focused its deliberations primarily on transportation systems under federal jurisdiction, it adopted a "door-through-door" view of transportation (which necessarily included provincial and municipal components), an approach supported by the Sponsor. This term highlights the importance of considering all stages of a journey: planning trips from one's home, moving to (and through) transport venues such as stations and terminals, riding in vehicles, and getting through the door of a chosen destination. A complete door-through-door journey may be "multimodal" if it uses different transportation vehicles — cars, buses, trains, planes, or ferries. The door-through-door perspective requires that the transportation system be examined in a holistic way, which considers the whole Canadian transportation system. Importantly, there are a range of actors involved in a complete journey, including different orders of government (federal, provincial and territorial, and municipal), and the transportation industry.

Lastly, the Panel chose to look at existing solutions as well as innovations that could help minimize the obstacles facing older adults using the transportation system. It examined innovations and practices beyond technology, such as updating service models, training and educating staff, adapting security and safety procedures, and examining the human-technology interface. Non-technological innovations and practices are especially important for factors beyond physical accessibility, such as ensuring older travellers feel comfortable, valued, and

respected. The Panel carried out its deliberations fully aware that the best opportunity may not be a new or flashy one, but a simple, existing solution that — if implemented — would have a significant impact on accessibility.

The Transportation Needs of Older Adults in Canada

Older adults come from many backgrounds, and individuals age in different ways. In this report, the term *older adult* denotes a large age range (65+); people's physical, sensory, and cognitive abilities, along with their social contexts, often change significantly as they age from 65 to 75 to 85 and beyond, each of which can have an impact on travel. Traits among these various cohorts of older adults are not static, and transportation needs and preferences today may be different 25 years from now (e.g., cultural values and preferences could shift). Adults aged 65 or older therefore cannot be defined by any one set of traits, as they have diverse abilities, interests, and living situations; transportation needs vary accordingly. While people in Canada over the age of 65 tend to be healthier, more active, and wealthier today, many still live on small incomes and face challenges associated with having limited resources. The Panel also noted that Canada's geography and low population density contribute to unique transportation obstacles for older adults living in rural and remote regions.

Older adults, as with other age groups, take part in many kinds of transportation activities, including day-to-day trips (e.g., groceries, medical appointments, banking, social visits) and longer trips (e.g., vacations, family visits). Both types of trips are important. Notably, discretionary (i.e., non-essential) travel, such as visiting friends and family, reduces feelings of isolation and improves the health, social inclusion, and quality of life of older adults.

The Benefits of an Inclusive Transportation System

The growing demographic of older travellers represents a large economic opportunity for the travel and tourism industry. Ensuring that the transportation system is inclusive for all travellers and accessible to all could enable more older adults to travel. In many ways, older adults are prime customers for the travel and tourism industry. Research suggests that they travel more often and spend more money on trips than other age groups. Retired travellers may have the opportunity to travel frequently, for long stretches, and outside peak times. They may also travel as part of a larger familial group (e.g., with children and grandchildren). Beyond the economic and individual benefits, an inclusive transportation system has many social benefits. These include the promotion of social equity and inclusion for everyone in Canada, regardless of age.

Obstacles Faced by Older Adults in the Transportation System and Opportunities to Overcome Them

Older adults may face obstacles at any stage of a journey: planning the trip, travelling from home to the terminal/station, getting from the terminal/station to the transport vehicle, boarding and moving on board the transport vehicle, travelling between vehicles, and post-trip travelling to their chosen destination. Obstacles may be unique to a single stage of the journey, or may be encountered throughout, such as challenges related to wayfinding. They can stem from a range of sources: physical abilities and preferences related to technology, reduced hearing and vision, fatigue and stress, or a lack of connectivity (including web connectivity) among different modes of transport. Many of these obstacles apply to all types of travellers but may impact older travellers to a greater extent. One source of transportation obstacles particular to older adults is ageism, since stereotypes related to aging are often unchallenged and difficult to change. Ageism can lead to older adults being perceived as less competent or treated negatively. While the obstacles present in the transportation system are significant, the Panel also identified a number of practices which, when implemented, can support their minimization. These include changes related to customer service approaches, communication, infrastructure, and technology, among others.

Moving Forward

While opportunities exist to help minimize some of the obstacles facing older travellers, integration of these practices in the transportation system is not a given. The Panel therefore looked beyond individual opportunities and identified broader mechanisms to make the Canadian transportation system more inclusive. Based on a review of knowledge and practices in transportation and other sectors, the Panel identified three pathways to help achieve this goal:

- advancing human and social resources;
- advancing technology and infrastructure; and
- advancing policy.

These pathways in turn support the implementation of solutions to address travel obstacles facing older adults in the Canadian transportation system; the development of new (and the improvement of existing) solutions; and the development of a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation to meet the needs of all travellers.

Intersectoral and interdisciplinary research and development and innovation (R&D and innovation) are an important component of each of the identified pathways, which are detailed below. R&D and innovation include not just the development of new technologies and other innovations, but also support

the testing and implementation of research-driven solutions in real-world settings and the evaluation of solutions in practice. Policy-specific R&D and innovation can also provide evidence to support effective policy development and uptake in the Canadian context. R&D and innovation that consider the human experience (e.g., user-centred approaches) in particular encourage the design of technologies, infrastructure, and training and education services that minimize travel obstacles faced by older adults. Along with continued R&D and innovation, an ongoing impact assessment that engages relevant stakeholders — including older adults — will ensure the transportation system can adapt and evolve to meet the needs and preferences of future generations.

Advancing Human and Social Resources

Human interactions are a key part of the transportation experience for all travellers and may be of particular importance to older adults. Good customer service that meets the needs of travellers supports autonomy and independence. Targeted, standardized, and mandatory sector-wide inclusivity training, combined with ongoing monitoring of the efficacy and impact of training for users, may support inclusive service and assistance for older travellers. Additionally, initiatives that educate users about available services may improve travel experiences by ensuring people are aware of and able to use them (e.g., those related to health and accessibility). These may be particularly helpful in the trip planning stage because they provide travellers with the confidence to undertake a journey.

Advancing Technology and Infrastructure

Many of the travel obstacles identified by the Panel relate to the design of transportation infrastructure. Consistently adopting the principles of inclusive design, which considers the range of human diversity in terms of age and ability, can help ensure that the built environment is better suited for everyone, including older adults. Importantly, inclusive design supports a big-picture approach by focusing on the accessibility of infrastructure as a whole as opposed to its individual components. Taking this approach from the start prevents the need to make modifications later or to create separate systems for people with different needs. Having said this, inclusive design can also involve modifications to existing infrastructure.

Technology is also opening the door to new opportunities in transportation infrastructure, while new innovations are providing better traveller experiences, both within terminals/stations and on board transport vehicles. The needs and preferences of older travellers should be considered during the development and implementation of digital technology. While some technological advances require no input from transportation system users (e.g., better scheduling of departure times resulting in fewer flight delays), others may require that

the traveller own a smartphone or tablet and have unlimited connectivity. It is important that future technological innovations not be a prerequisite for accessing the transportation system, in order to take into account those who do not use certain technologies (e.g., online booking).

Advancing Policy

Policy can help support the development of an inclusive Canadian transportation system that meets the needs of older adults. Now is an ideal time to look closely at policy, while the federal government is developing a long-term agenda for transportation and examining the current approach to transportation governance. As part of this process, it has the opportunity to reflect on which changes might help the Canadian transportation system adapt to better meet the needs of older adults. The Panel considered one important component of the federal government's review of transportation governance processes: the *Canada Transportation Act Review* (the Review). Several recommendations came out of the Review related to improving the accessibility of the transportation system. While the regulation recommendations of the Review remain open for comment, based on its members' collective expertise, the Panel notes that:

- Moving from federal *codes of practice* for accessibility to *regulations* may support a more inclusive transportation system.
- Requiring the Canadian Transportation Agency to report on the status of accessibility every three years could help ensure transparency with regard to accessibility elements, including best practices, compliance rates, and the number of complaints received.
- The remaining accessibility recommendations should be closely examined and their potential impacts on older travellers considered.

Other relevant activities currently underway include the modernization of the Canadian Transportation Agency's operations and the development of accessibility legislation. There is an opportunity to highlight the value of meeting the needs of older adults within this new legislation.

While the federal government and Transport Canada in particular have a central role in creating an inclusive transportation system through governance changes, the inclusion of non-federal government stakeholders in governance processes can support more effective transportation policy. Industry and relevant Crown corporations, for example, have an important role to play in improving the accessibility of the federal transportation system because private companies are the owners and operators of many of this system's key components, such as airlines. Companies often develop and/or implement changes intended to meet, and sometimes exceed, rulings, regulations, and codes of practice. Other stakeholders include not-for-profit and non-governmental organizations

that represent relevant groups, and provincial, territorial, and municipal governments. The inclusion of older adults themselves as transportation stakeholders is particularly important to ensure their needs and preferences are considered. A meaningful, intersectoral, and collaborative approach to developing regulations integrates the views and expertise of many stakeholders in the drafting process. Effective engagement processes focus on developing trust and respect among stakeholders so that, even if consensus is not reached, discussions can still inform the development of formal regulations.

One important and powerful lever held by the federal government is the provision of funding for transportation infrastructure and other initiatives. The federal government is therefore in a position to encourage the development of an age-friendly transportation system by tying infrastructure and other investments to projects that support inclusive, multimodal transportation. Funding requirements need not be limited to narrow accessibility provisions, but could support inclusive transportation on a more general scale. For example, the federal government has the opportunity to improve or develop transportation hubs that support intermodal travel. It can also use procurement to support the development of new technological or other innovations that promote inclusivity within the transportation system.

Conclusion

Adapting the federal transportation system to meet the needs of older travellers will support seamless, multimodal, door-through-door travel that has benefits for everyone in Canada. These benefits include improved social equity and economic opportunities, since more people will be able to travel and visit from abroad. An inclusive transportation system should be based on collaboration among a number of stakeholders, including all orders of government, industry, and older travellers themselves. Understanding the needs and preferences of the growing population of older adults in Canada is important for achieving this goal, as is the creation of a transportation system able to adapt as these needs and preferences evolve. It is an ideal time for Canada to move forward and work towards a fully inclusive transportation system, while the federal government is engaged in initiatives to improve Canada's transportation infrastructure and is reviewing how transportation and accessibility are governed. The need for a transportation system that minimizes obstacles for older travellers is only going to grow. To reap maximum benefits, the time to act is now.



Council of Canadian Academies
Conseil des académies canadiennes

Council of Canadian Academies
180 Elgin Street, Suite 1401
Ottawa, ON K2P 2K3
Tel: 613-567-5000
www.scienceadvice.ca