The Polis Center is partnering with the Central Indiana Senior Fund, a fund of the Central Indiana Community Foundation, on the **State of Aging in Central Indiana Report** to help achieve their vision to provide reliable, up-to-date information about trends and emerging issues related to the older adult population.

**State of Aging Website**
https://centralindiana.stateofaging.org/
Limitations and opportunities with public transit for an aging population in Central Indiana

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Senior Director of Mobility Solutions, IndyGo

Jen Higginbotham
Principal Planner, IMPO
The need

Public transit for older adults
Growing number of older adults in Central Indiana, but increasing dissatisfaction with the ease of transit access.

Satisfaction is down seven percentage points in 2021 from the 2017 CASOA survey.
Older adults (age 60+) find car travel easy, but less than one in five finds transit easy to use in their community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Ease of Travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transit</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of older adults in Central Indiana who say they have good or excellent ease of travel by...

Source: CASOA, 2021 • Created with Datawrapper
Transit is important for older adult mobility

- Can enhance autonomy of travel to important destinations: family, health trips, shopping, social
- Decreases instances of isolation and depression
- Improves community connectivity
There are fewer adults age 65+ living in the urban center.

But this is where transit density is the greatest.

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2020 ACS 5-YR data, SAVI analysis of IndyGo data
What we found

Public transit for older adults
Access to important destinations via walking + transit varies throughout Marion County

Highly dependent upon when you leave and the time it takes to walk to a bus stop and wait at the bus stop.

Our projections are based on **8am Monday departure time**.

More health clinics are accessible within 30 minutes closer to the urban center.

Polis Center analysis of IndyGo data.
Access to important destinations via walking + transit varies throughout Marion County.

Places of worship are easily accessible within 30 minutes throughout Marion County.

But people are much more selective on places of worship.

Polis Center analysis of IndyGo data.
Access to important destinations via walking + transit varies throughout Marion County.

Grocery store accessibility closely mirrors IndyGo transit lines.

Polis Center analysis of IndyGo data.
Older adults travel a shorter distance to bus stops, on average

Only other age group somewhat similar is the under 16 age group.

Polis Center analysis of IndyGo ridership data 2016.
Older adults travel similar distance from bus stops to their final destination

Only other age group potentially significantly different is the 16-18 age group.

Median values by age group, in feet.
Source: Polis Center analysis of data from IndyGo 2016 Ridership Survey • Created with Datawrapper
76,000 older adults (65+) too far from a bus stop to likely use

Used 75th percentile of distance traveled by older adults to IndyGo stops as a threshold for distance tolerance.

Just under 1200 feet, or about 1/4th a mile.

Estimates based on residential parcel data and census tract populations of adults age 65+.

Polis Center analysis of 2020 ACS 5-yr survey data, IndyGo data, and the City of Indianapolis data.
Older adults are less likely to travel as far for public transit

• But only to the initial bus stop, not their final stop to final destination
• Potential mobility barrier worth considering
• Supports why on-demand transit is so important for older adults in Central Indiana
Demand response transit services are costly in Central Indiana to agencies

On a per rider basis (USD expenditures/ rider), they are more expensive than large fixed route systems and several small fixed route systems. IndyGo Access and NICTD are particularly expensive per rider.

Not as much spent per vehicle mile traveled though for demand services. Longer distances to travel per rider.

Polis Center analysis of INDOT and IndyGo data.
Transit options within Central Indiana

• Each county has at least one demand response service
• There are many robust services available
• But they are complex and inter-related
• Trip planning can be difficult
• Cross-county trips can be difficult
Stacy is trying to get to medical appointment in Indianapolis

Stacy, 67, no car
Johnson County to Indianapolis

The good: Affordable, reliable, scheduled
The bad: Very long
Solutions might include regional rapid transit or subsidized ride-sharing.

Walk to Johnson County Courthouse
10 minutes

Take Franklin West bus to Walmart
Access Johnson County Zip Line
$1.00 - 21 minutes

Take Zip North bus to Greenwood Park Mall
Access Johnson County Zip Line
Free transfer - 45 minutes

Take Route 31 to Transit Center
IndyGo
$1.75 - 59 minutes

Take Route 37 to Eskanazi
IndyGo
Free transfer - 13 minutes

One-way cost: $2.75
One-way time: 3 hr 15 min
Harry is running errands at the nearest Walmart

Harry, 65, shares car with spouse
Whitestown to Lebanon

The good: Affordable, fast
The bad: Requires a reservation 1-2 weeks ahead of time
Solutions might include subsidized ride-sharing.

Call to reserve trip
Boone County Senior Services
1-2 week ahead

Take ride from home to Walmart
Boone Area Transit System
Suggested donation - 20 minutes

One-way cost: Donation only
One-way time: 20 min
Gertrude and Jerry need a way to get to their bible study

Gertrude and Jerry, 83, difficulty driving at night
Rural Morgan County to Martinsville

The good: -
The bad: This trip could not be completed because demand response service in Morgan County ends at 5 pm.
Solutions include extended hours for demand response, a carpool, or subsidized ride-sharing.
Moving Forward

• Coordinated development between transit agencies and communities throughout Central Indiana

• Particularly as more housing is developed throughout Indiana for older adults

• Transit interconnectivity within the entire state

• Quantitative measures of ease of access, particularly for older adults
There is a demand for transit-oriented housing and walkable neighborhoods amongst older adults

According to survey data from the Central Indiana Smartgrowth Survey (2018), among Baby Boomers:

• One quarter are interested in moving in the next few years
• Four in ten say sidewalks and cultural amenities are important in the place they choose to live
• One quarter desire shops and restaurants within walking distance
• One-fifth want to live in a place with available public transit
Wrap-up

**Key data points:**

- Many older adults in Central Indiana live too far from fixed transit to readily use.
- Many older adults rely on demand transit, which is often the costliest for transit agencies and riders.
- Older adults travel the shortest distance on average to bus stops relative to other age groups.
- There is a demand for transit accessible communities for older adults.
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Research Brief from Presentation