

Reaching new riders...

Older Adults

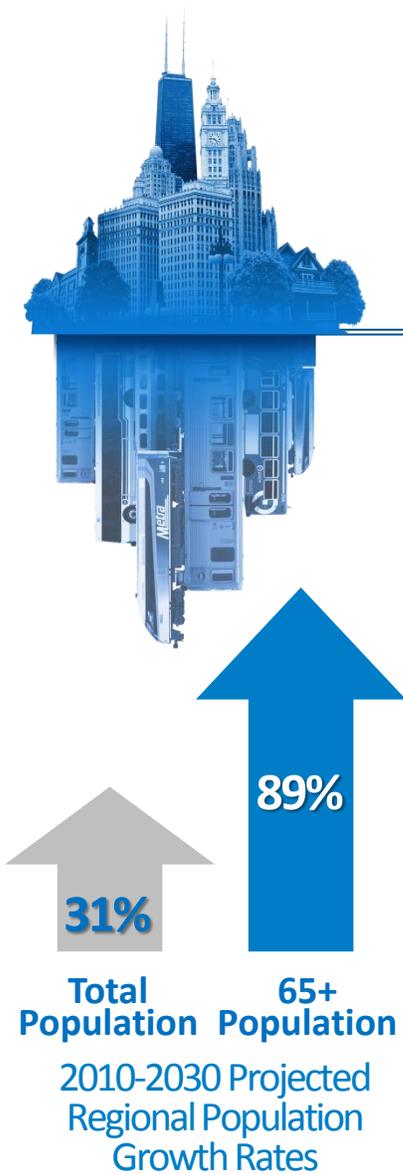
RTA Market Development Initiatives

Older Adults are individuals age 65 and older, the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population.

The 2012 US Census estimates there are almost 1 million residents age 65 and older living in the region. The number of older adults is projected to increase by **89%** between 2010 and 2030, compared to a 31% increase for the total population.

Over **1.5 million** daily trips are made by older adults in the region, 3% on transit. Literature and surveys show that older adults exhibit a wide range of mobility needs. While 35% of older adults have disabilities, the majority do not. Many are retired, while others are still working or continue to be engaged in their communities in ways that require frequent travel. Some older adults have smart phones and use them for trip planning.

The RTA is working to attract more older adults to transit by improving the accessibility and utility of the mainline transit system, while managing growing demand for ADA paratransit service.



35% of Older Adults

in the region have some type of disability

ADA Paratransit ridership is projected to grow 7% to 8% annually over the next five years

Every 1% increase in transit ridership from this market could yield an additional 150,000 transit trips annually.

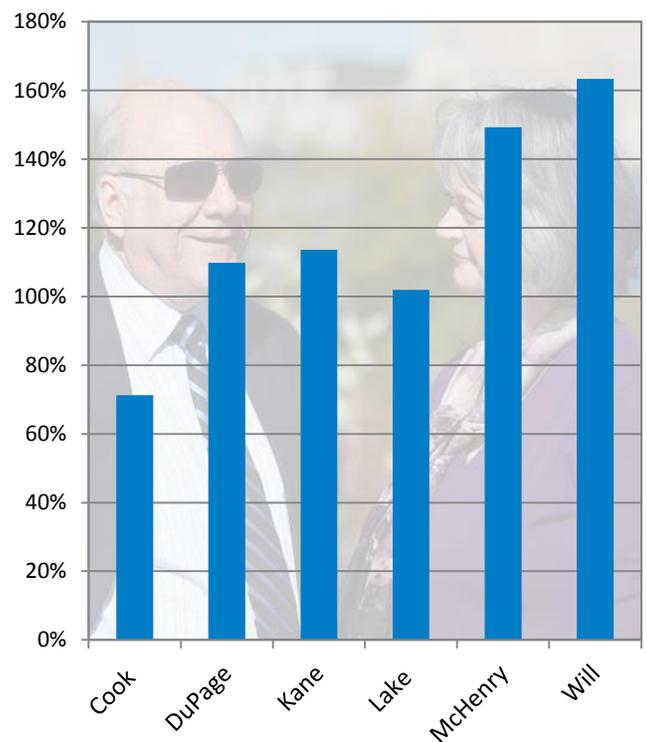
Opportunities

Growing Market. This demographic group is growing fast and is expected to become increasingly reliant upon public transportation over time.

Low Car Ownership. On average, older adults in the region own fewer vehicles, have a smaller household size and make fewer stops when taking trips.

Off Peak Travel. More than half (56%) of older adults make their trips during the mid-day, when there is available capacity on existing fixed route services.

Forecasted Older Adult Population Increase 2010-2030



Source: State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity



Challenges

Aging in Place. Older adults are living longer and staying in their homes, particularly in suburban areas where fixed route services are limited.

Mobility. Many older adults have mobility limitations that can make utilizing fixed route services a challenge.

Non-Work Trips. The majority of trips made by older adults in the region are non-work trips (62%) that do not follow typical commute patterns and may not be easily served by transit.

Off Peak Travel. While also an opportunity, older adults make the majority of their trips during the mid-day when transit services are not as frequent as during peak times.

Demand for Demand-Responsive Services. Improving the availability of accessible fixed route service and supporting infrastructure may help to offset growing demand for more costly demand response services.

Current Activities

Fixed Route First. Building on efforts begun in 2013, RTA staff is developing a long-term “Fixed Route First” initiative to promote the use of fixed route transit by older adults, as well as other occasional riders and people with disabilities. The initiative includes several steps including:

- Differentiating the Older Adult Market
- Documenting Ridership Trends
- Sponsoring Community Forums
- Promoting Use of Fixed Route Transit

Supporting Mobility Management Initiatives. RTA is developing a Mobility Management Program, which includes peer-based training for older adults to become familiar with transit services.

Supporting Regional Accessibility Capital Projects. Working with the CTA, Metra, and Pace, the RTA will identify and support low cost projects designed to improve accessibility of transit stations and stops. These projects could include partnering opportunities, providing technical assistance, and securing funding.

Success Story



Travel Training. The RTA travel training program is a free service for teaching older adults and individuals with disabilities how to use CTA, Metra and Pace services. RTA travel trainers provide one-on-one and group training sessions throughout the region. Over 3,000 people have been served through this program in 2013.