



WALLINGFORD
COMMUNITY
SENIOR CENTER

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Field Trip #15: Wallingford Senior Center's Van Program

NOVEMBER 9, 2018
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE
King County Mobility Coalition

History

- The Good Shepherd Center, built in 1906, was the very first building protected by Historic Seattle, a historic preservation organization that focuses on safeguarding and maintaining Seattle architecture.
- The Wallingford Senior Center (WCSC) was one of the first organizations to secure offices in the building, when it was converted to its current use, in 1979. Seattle Tilth, The Meridian School, and a few other non-profits are housed in offices at the Good Shepherd Center.
- WCSC's Van Program has been in operation since 2007.

Purpose of Service

- Primarily low-income older adults use the van to get to and from WCSC for the lunch program, and to participate in WCSC's various programming activities. The program helps to reduce older adults' isolation.
- The van program also takes field trips and attends special events. They most recently took a field trip to the Pacific Northwest Ballet.

Operation Details

- The van runs Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, typically from 10am – 3pm, but times can be flexible based upon request.
- Anyone who lives north of I-90 can get a van ride. Many of the ride requesters come from Queen Anne and North Capitol Hill, as well as the entire north end.
- Potential riders sign up for the service by calling. People can even call ahead by leaving a voicemail the night before, and the van will likely have space to pick them up. Some riders have regularly scheduled trips.
- WCSC has one 11-passenger wheelchair-accessible van. Large wheelchairs may take up 2-3 seats worth of space and reduce the overall number of passengers in a trip.
- There is one part-time paid driver, and one volunteer driver who substitutes in for the paid driver when he is unable to come to work. The volunteer driver operates vans for the City of Seattle when they are not volunteering. The paid driver organizes all of the trip coordination and scheduling.
- Typically, there are open spots in each van ride. As such, they are not at capacity for the days they operate.

Eligibility

- Low-income older adults are not charged to ride in the van and can join WCSC for free as well.
- Riders do not need to be a member of WCSC to use the van program.
- Older adults who do not qualify as low-income pay \$30 per person, or \$50 as a couple, to join the center. They are charged the same fare as a King County Metro Access bus ride – \$1.75 – to use the van.
- “The less money you have, they more people want to know about your demographics and situation. We try not to ask too many personal questions unless we need to.” Equity is important to the Wallingford Senior Center.

Ridership & Demographics

- The Van Program follows the Pareto principle, also known as the 80/20 rule:
 - 80% of people use the service 20% of the time, and
 - 20% of people use service 80% of the time.
- One person has had 200 van rides or relays from other services.
- 44% identify themselves as disabled.
- 70% of participants are low- income.
- Wallingford Senior Center plans to run 1,600 rides in 2018 alone.

Funding

- The total program cost is about \$30,000 annually.
- Wallingford Senior Center receives \$12,000 a year from Metro and get reimbursed for all costs (gas, insurance, oil changes, first aid kit, maintenance, etc.), except for the driver. Metro retains ownership of the van and provides a new/replacement van as needed. The Wallingford Senior Center funds the driver. WSC's contract with Metro emphasizes a focus on serving individuals with disabilities and people over 65 years old.
- The program receives about \$500 annually from the fare box. The rest of the costs are covered by grants and donations.

Future Plans

- The Wallingford Senior Center would like it if:
 - More older adults would use the van,
 - They could provide transportation to the Center 5 days a week,
 - If there were more funding to expand the service beyond WCSC, and if
 - WCSC could provide one shopping day a week for older adults.
- WSC see potential in creating expanded partnerships with:
 - Catholic Community Services
 - Chicken Soup Brigade
 - PNA Village in Phinney Ridge
 - Generations Aging with Pride

Contact

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