



Elder-Friendly Transportation Systems

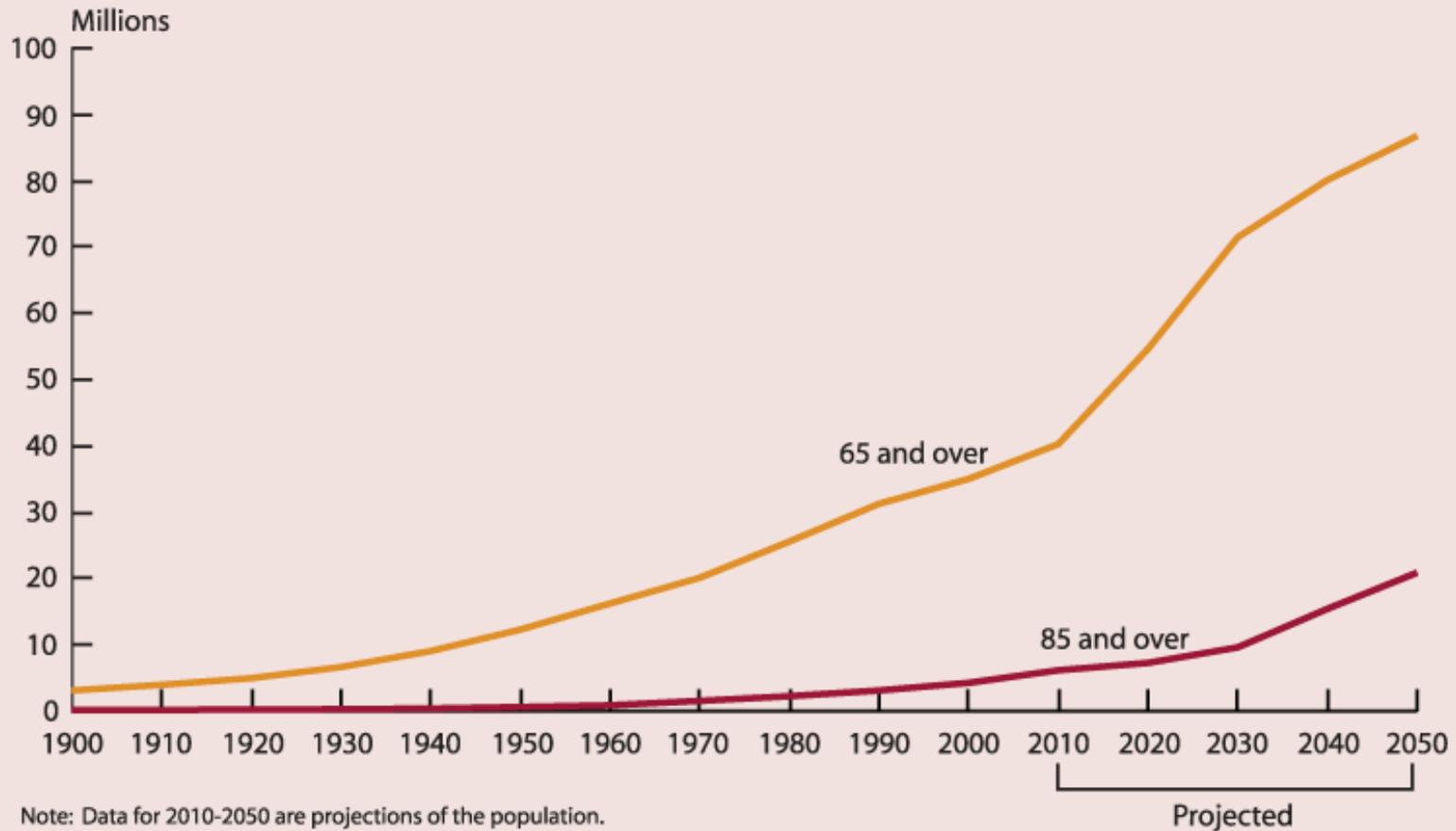
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Overview

- Why be concerned?
- What is so special about older adults?
- Coming and Going
- An Accident Waiting to Happen?
- Solutions that Warrant Attention
- Next Steps

National Projections

Number of people age 65 and over, by age group, selected years 1900-2000 and projected 2010-2050

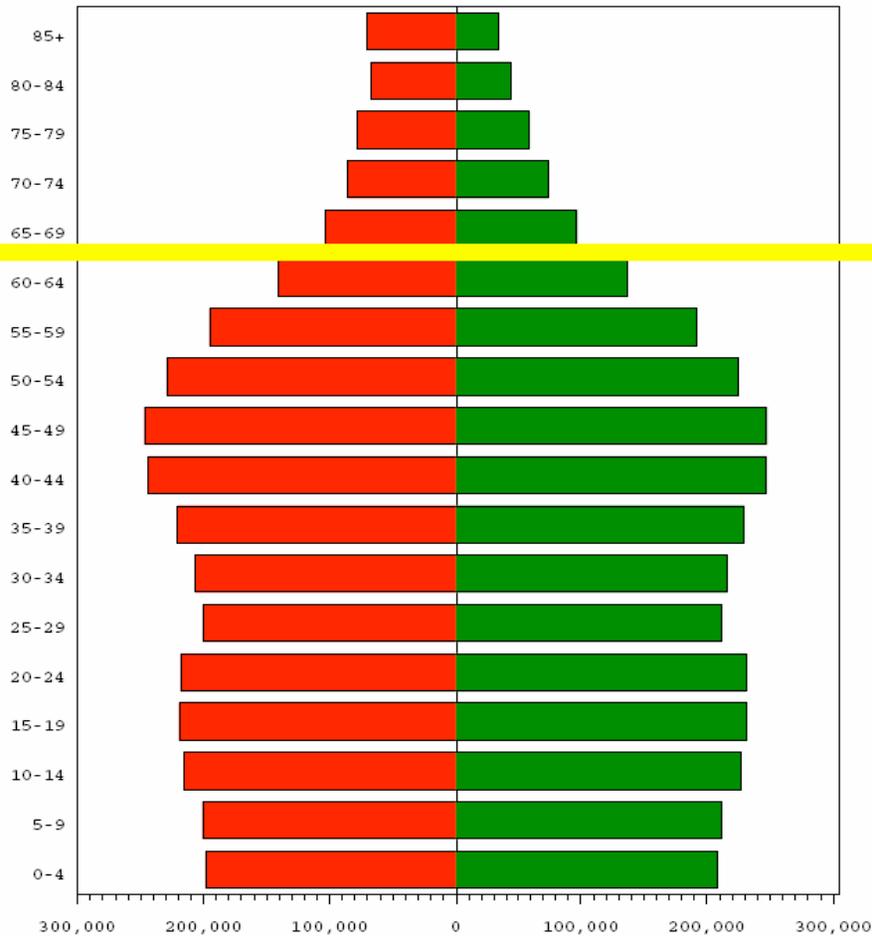


Note: Data for 2010-2050 are projections of the population.
Reference population: These data refer to the resident population.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and Projections.

Changing Demography

Figure 1

Washington State Population: 2005

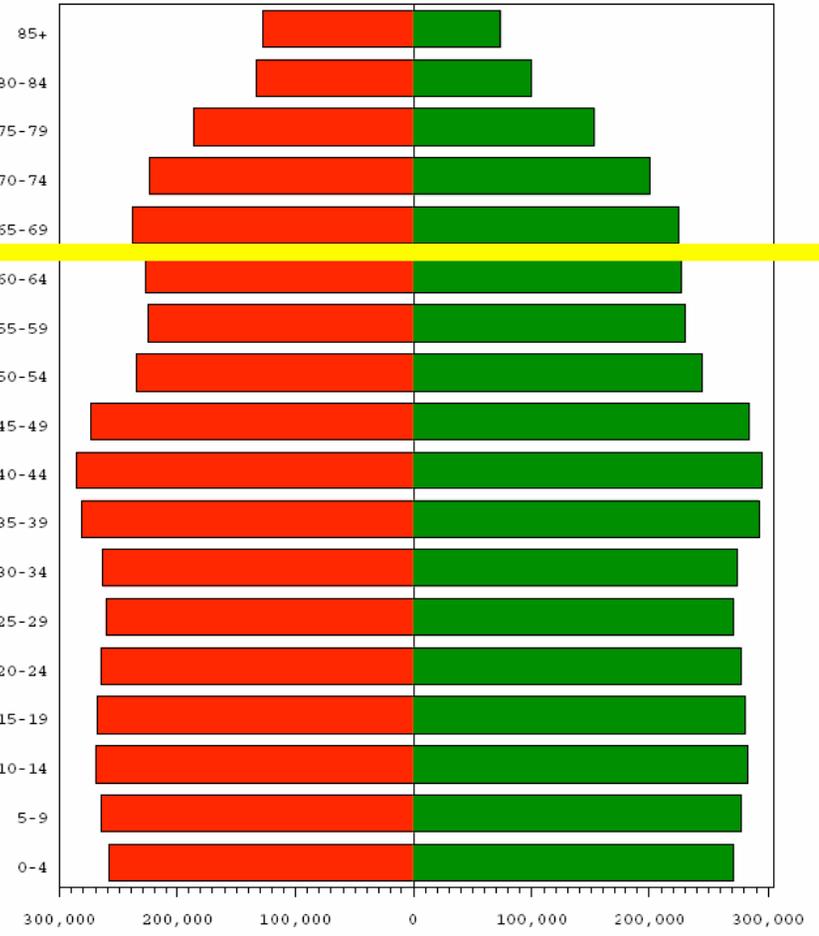


Washington State Population: 2005

sex F M

Figure 2

Washington State Population: 2030



Washington State Population: 2030

sex F M

One in Five Will be Old!

- In 2000, 12.4% of the population was 65+
- In 2030, 20% of the population will be 65+
 - Some Washington counties will have 40%!
- The population of older people will **DOUBLE** in the next twenty years



In 2030, the number of people 85+ will exceed the number of 65+ in the 1970's.

Where Do Old People Go?

- Same place everyone else goes!
 - To work...
 - Shopping...
 - Health Care...
 - Worship...
 - Entertainment...
 - Recreational spots...

**Not just to the Senior Center and
the Hospital...**

Elder-Friendly Transportation...

- Is Comprehensive in scope.
- Involves inter-disciplinary planning.
 - Roads
 - Transit
 - Community Planners—DOT, RTPO, MPO
 - Parks, trails, recreation
 - Developers
 - Healthcare and disability advocates
- Is great for the entire community!

Driving



- Most older people depend upon being able to drive:
 - Those who don't report
 - Shopping (59% fewer trips)
 - Socialization (65% fewer trips)
 - Physician visits (15% fewer trips)
- 21% of people 65+ do not drive
- 50% stay home because they have no transportation
 - The most livable communities have low rates of staying home

Some Numbers....



- 1995—17% of drivers were 65+
 - 13% of drivers in fatal collisions
 - 8% of drivers in all crashes
- 2030—25% of drivers will be 65+
 - 25% of drivers in fatal collisions
 - 16% of drivers in all crashes

Older Drivers

- Driving can become more difficult due to vision, cognition, medication side effects, slower response time, muscle loss, and chronic illness
- Self-limit exposure to heavy traffic, night time, and inclement weather when they drive



Older Driving



- Drive fewer miles and have lower rates of police-reported accidents
 - Crashes per mile increases some after age 70 and dramatically after age 80
 - Because older adults avoid freeways, it is likely that the rates are inflated because crashes are more frequent on cross streets.

Are Older Drivers a Hazard?



- For some reason when an older adult has an accident, it makes the national news!
- Really, older adults don't have more crashes...just different ones!
- Drivers age 75+ kill fewer pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and occupants of other vehicles than do drivers age 30-59!

Injury Prevention, 2004; 10:27-32

What About Crashes?

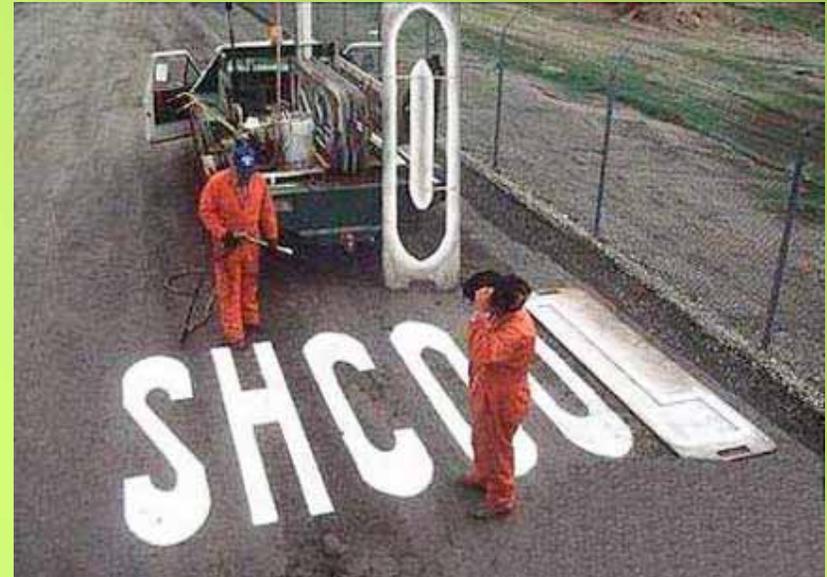
- INTERSECTIONS!!!
 - Yield the right of way--↑ in older drivers but for different reasons
 - 70+—do not judge distance as well
 - 80+—did not see vehicle coming
 - Ran off road--↓ than other drivers
 - Rear-end-- ↓ than other drivers
- Older drivers pose substantial risk, but that risk is to themselves!
- More likely to be a fatal crash for the senior driver and passengers; related to frailty, not the severity of the crash



Elder Friendly Suggestions

Safer, easier to use
automobiles

- Car seats like orthotics to protect fragile bones
- Exterior designs that protect pedestrians
- Redesigned seat belts for older adults
- Headlamp standards/enforcement
- Minimize vehicle distractions
 - GPS, Video Players
- Brighter, larger displays
- Evaluate interactions with vehicle systems after crashes



Make Roadways Safer



- Walking and biking paths with benches for resting
- Traffic signal timing;
- All Stop Crossing;
 - Cars stop all directions for all pedestrian crossing
- Roundabouts-- ↓ injuries 76%
- Improved quality of road signs—color, larger signs/lettering
- Dedicated left turn lane--↓ crashes 13%
- Enhanced pavement marking—rumble strips, turtles
- Reduced speeds in Elder-zones
- Signs that make sense!

Improve and Standardize Assessment of Older Drivers



- Identify characteristics of high risk
- Develop procedures to allow individuals with functional limitations to drive safely or provide alternative ways to get around
- Standardize testing for safe older drivers
- Teach families, physicians, other gatekeepers how to intervene

Easier to Use Public Transportation



Currently not widely utilized by older adults (3% of trips)

- Look at locations older adults will frequent and live
- Connectivity/community buses/reserved seats
- Pedestrian safety
- Lighting/transit stops
- Simplified schedules
- Schedule font size for older people
- Bus design for egress
- Remove legislative barriers to cross-jurisdictional services

Coordinated Mobility Management



- One stop shop
 - “Phone Only” systems are unlikely to work...need some human interaction for older people
- Place or train managers where seniors seek assistance
 - On bus travel trainers
- Flex Routes—particularly in rural locations;
- Assisted boarding; door-to-door service
 - Use volunteers as assistants and travel trainers
 - Travel assistance available at medical centers, hospitals, clinics

Coordinated Land Use/Mobility Planning Efforts

- Promote transit-friendly, walkable neighborhoods
- Zoning which supports “villages” rather than strip malls, isolated neighborhoods
- Assure that building codes support transit access
- Assure that public transit buildings/stops use universal design principles



Better Public Information

- Focus transit marketing on older adults and caregivers
- Community education and research about
 - Policy related to poor drivers of all ages
 - Mobility needs of older Americans



Next Steps



- Start thinking about the needs of older people
- **Interdisciplinary planning**
 - Social services
 - Health Care
 - Community Planners
- Research for Best Practices
- Retirement! (for many of us...)

For More Information

- http://www.transact.org/library/reports_html/seniors/aging.pdf
- <http://www.transportation.org/sites/planning/docs/nchrp31.pdf>
- http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2003/07transportation_rose_nbloom.aspx
- <http://www.crag.uab.edu/safemobility/SafeMobility.pdf>
- http://www.iihs.org/research/topics/older_people.html