

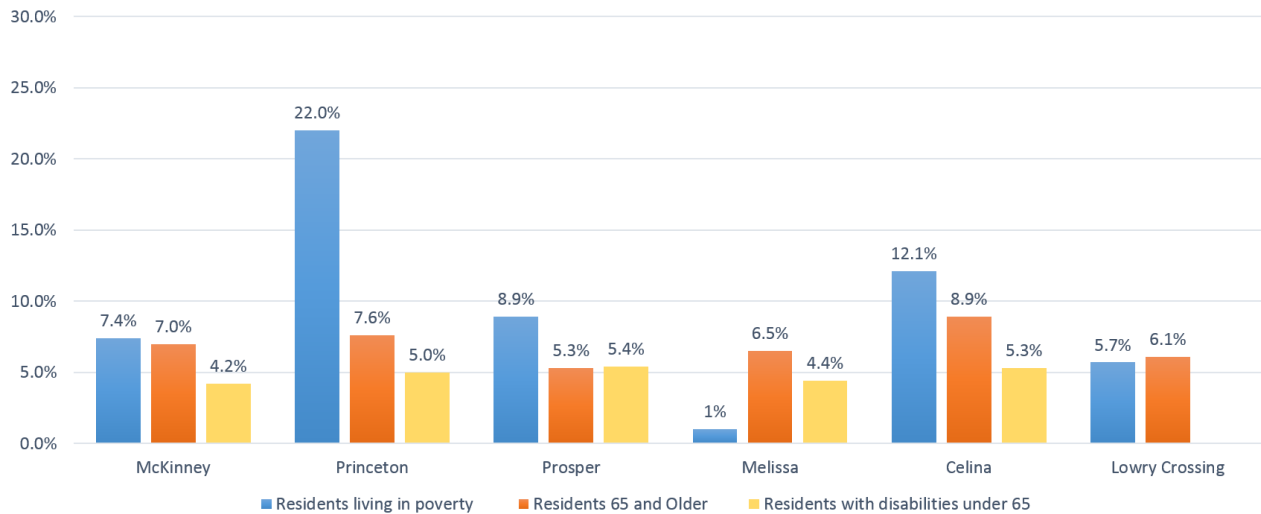


COLLIN COUNTY TRANSIT PROGRAM - ADDRESSING LOW INCOME POPULATIONS

1. Program Overview

- **Eligibility Criteria** – persons age 65 or older; or persons with disabilities; must be approved through an application process; must be resident of participating cities
- **Service Details** – Monday – Friday; 6 a.m. – 6 p.m.; service area restricted to Collin County
- **Fare and Payment Structure** – \$2.25 is the boarding fare plus \$1.80 per mile and a traffic wait-time charge of \$.45 per every 1.5 minutes; participants are issued reloadable debit cards; the city will match 75% of the voucher’s value
- **On-Demand Response** – Available to participants with large mobility devices and/or device and passenger weighing 600 lbs or more.

2. Addressing Other Needs



3. Case Study – What Are Others Doing?

- **King County’s Department of Transportation, Seattle** – offers lower public transit fares of \$1.50/ride (less than half of peak fares) for low income individuals and families. The ORCA LIFT program offsets expenses by increasing fares for other groups by 25%. Administration, verification, and overall management is performed by the department.
- **The City of Arlington, Texas** – awards CDBG funds to faith-based organizations to provide free transportation for very low-income residents to access work, school, and medical or social service appointments. These organizations own their own fleet of vehicles and are responsible for program oversight and management. Currently, the City of Arlington offers the Handitran program for senior citizens and disabled individuals with F5307 (\$1.2M), state (\$200k), and general funds.
- **Benton County, Oregon**– Samaritan Health Services received state funds to provide fuel stipends to low income seniors who serve as companions to fragile home-bound seniors. The low income senior companions provide door-through door transportation services to the home-bound seniors.

- **TriMet, Oregon** – provides grants of up to \$30,000 in TriMet fares to qualified 501(c)3 nonprofit and Community Based Organizations to provide transportation to low income families. TriMet provides these grants with their annual operating funds. The program is managed by a nonprofit and grant-awardees are required to perform administrative duties. For FY17, TriMet awarded 87 grants and reports awardees are managing the grants successfully.
- **Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority** – offers a pilot program with Uber and Lyft to provide on-demand rides. Residents pay the first \$2 of a trip and the MBTA covers the remainder of the fare up to \$15. MBTA handles eligibility verification, while Uber/Lyft is responsible for drivers and dispatch.
- **Fairfax County, Virginia** – offers low income residents discounted taxi coupon books. Eligible residents pay \$10 for a \$33 coupon book and are limited to 16 books a year. The county manages the entire program and is 100% subsidized by general funds.
- **Olathe, Kansas** – uses CDBG and F5310 funds to provide reduced coupon books for eligible residents. Each book costs \$35 and includes 10 coupons. This program has three components: work, medical, and personal. Low income individuals must submit documentation monthly to stay eligible. The City manages the entire program.
- **York, Canada** – approved the Transit Fare Subsidy Pilot Program. One part of the Transit Fare Subsidy Pilot Program provides a 50% subsidy on adult passes to eligible clients. The second part of the Transit Fare Subsidy Pilot Program provides eligible community agencies located in York Region and serving York Region low-income residents with up to \$2,500 (agencies who have spent \$2,500 are eligible to apply for an additional \$2,500) in funding to purchase YRT/Viva tickets. These tickets are provided at no cost to agency clients to assist with accessing basic needs (i.e. food, shelter, clothing and other personal items, health services), employment and education.

4. Key Findings

- Many state and local government agencies are utilizing state and federal funding streams to offset the cost of reducing transit fare (or providing transportation vouchers) to low income individuals.
- If subsidies do not improve the quality of service or fail to help those in need, they lose their impact. Implementing targeted subsidies could be an effective solution for increasing access to public transport among disadvantaged communities.
- Other riders (senior citizens and disabled individuals) should not be required to pay a higher fare to cover the cost of low income riders. This only discourages the other users from using the program.

5. Possible Low Income Eligibility Requirements

- Most recent year's tax return and copies of W2's
- Paystubs for the past 30 days or letter from employer signed and dated with gross income for the last 30 days
- Award letters for SSI, Social Security, or a Benefit Verification letter
- Proof that you are in another benefits program i.e. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

6. Benefits

Affordable public transportation can reduce social and economic inequalities by enhancing mobility for Collin County residents, many of whom lack cars and need assistance with finding jobs outside their primary resident area. Such jobs serve as an important source of income for those that otherwise face limited employment opportunities. Furthermore, public transportation lowers household expenses by freeing up income for other uses. On a larger scale, when a transit system allows an unemployed individual to find and keep a job, state and federal governments saves costs by reducing payments for programs such as unemployment compensation, TANF, and Medicaid.