

# REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



**To:** Edina Transportation Commission

**Agenda Item #:** VI. C.

**From:** Mark K. Nolan, AICP, Transportation Planner

**Action**

**Discussion**

**Date:** June 19, 2014

**Information**

**Subject:** ITNTwinCities: Requested Modifications to Edina Taxicab Ordinance

## Action Requested:

Consider requested modifications to Chapter 12, Article VII of Edina City Code for the purpose of creating a new category of licensed vehicle called a "Charitable Non-Profit Transportation Vehicle," and provide input and/or recommendations for Council consideration.

## Information / Background:

On March 3, 2014 Arlene Forrest, board member of ITNTwinCities, submitted a letter to City Council outlining her organization's goals to provide a new senior transportation option to Edina. According to Ms. Forrest, in order for ITNTwinCities to provide this service in Edina a modification to the City Code is necessary.

Given the efforts of the former ETC Working Group and more recent discussions regarding transportation options, City Manager Scott Neal requested that the ETC consider the requested service and ordinance modification. Ms. Forrest and other ITNTwinCities representatives will be present to discuss this matter with ETC members and to answer any questions Commissioners may have.

## Attachments:

Letter to ETC from Arlene Forrest  
Requested Amendment to Edina City Ordinance  
Information about ITNTwinCities

June 11, 2014

To: Edina Transportation Commission

Re: Amending Edina's taxicab ordinance

Access to affordable and reliable transportation for an aging population is a concern for many communities. While they want to remain active, many older adults find themselves homebound for lack of transportation. Only 1.2 percent of seniors use public transportation on a daily basis, while the vast majority rely on friends and family for rides. On average, women live an extra 10 years between the time they stop driving and pass away; for men it's 6 years.

I've been working with people from a number of social services organizations and other professions to bring a new senior transportation option to the area. This grassroots group has been meeting for over two years, evaluating the existing services in order to select a viable model to address currently unmet needs.

As a result, we've established ITN*TwinCities*, a Minnesota nonprofit affiliated with ITN*America*, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to providing dignified transportation for older adults and those with impaired vision. Our mission is to provide a volunteer-based, quality transportation service that is consumer-oriented, community supported and economically sustainable. There are currently 25 affiliates in 20 states. More information about the organization and the community benefits of having a local affiliate can be found at [itnamerica.org](http://itnamerica.org).

The ITN model replicates the freedom, flexibility and independence of driving. We will offer rides in private automobiles, not marked vans, 24 hours a day with door-through-door, arm-through-arm service.

ITN member riders will pay an annual membership fee and will pay for rides out of their prepaid account based upon the trip distance. There is no income restriction and members can schedule rides for any purpose and as often as they wish. ITN primarily uses unpaid volunteer drivers; paid drivers will only supplement as demand requires. All drivers will have background checks and training to safely assist our riders.

Because of the way ITN is structured, the ITN service falls under some municipal taxicab ordinances, including Edina's. We are working to address this matter in those communities in our identified service area in Hennepin County. I'm attaching a proposed change to Edina City Code Chapter 12, Article VII that is modeled after language adopted in other cities as proposed by their local ITN affiliates.

We plan to begin offering rides in late summer of 2014 so we thank you for your timely consideration of this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Arlene Forrest  
Board Member, ITN*TwinCities*  
952-285-2795  
[atforrest@gmail.com](mailto:atforrest@gmail.com)

## Edina City Ordinance Requested Amendment

Modifying the provisions of Chapter 12, Article VII of the Edina City Code for the purpose of creating a new category of licensed vehicle called a "Charitable Non-Profit Transportation Vehicle,"

WHEREAS, the Edina City Council has an interest in ensuring that residents in Edina have affordable and convenient transportation options, including "door through door" assistance where necessary,

WHEREAS, non-profit organizations can offer transportation and related services at an affordable rate because they may use volunteer drivers and receive donations; and

WHEREAS, current public vehicle licensing requirements complicate the ability of non-profit organizations to use volunteer drivers in order to keep the cost of their transportation services low; and

WHEREAS, Council wishes to ensure the safety of those who use these services by imposing certain restrictions; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Edina, State of Minnesota:

That Chapter 12, Article VII. Taxicabs and Taxicab Drivers of the Edina City Code is hereby amended as follows:

### Sec. 12-315. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Charitable Non-profit Transportation Vehicle means any vehicle for hire or other public motor vehicle that is used by or on behalf of a non-profit charitable organization as defined by Section 501(c)(3), United States Internal Revenue Code, Non-Profit Organizations. The Charitable Non-Profit Transportation Vehicle may be owned and driven by a volunteer driver or an employee of the non-profit charitable organization who is not directly paid by riders.

*Street* means any street, alley, avenue, court, bridge, lane or public place or highway in the city.

*Taxicab.*

(1)

The term "taxicab" means any motor vehicle, as defined in Minn. Stats. § 169.011, engaged in carrying of persons for hire, whether over a fixed route or

not, and whether the motor vehicle is operated from a street stand, or subject to calls from a garage, or otherwise operated for hire.

(2)

The term "taxicab" does not include motor vehicles subject to control and regulation by the state public service commission, motor vehicles regularly used by undertakers in carrying on their business, or motor vehicles hired on an hourly basis.

*Taxicab driver* means any person who drives a taxicab.

**Sec. 12-316. License required.**

No person shall operate a taxicab within the city without displaying a valid taxicab license decal duly issued by the City of Bloomington, the City of St. Louis Park or the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

**Sec. 12-317. Driver's license required.**

No person shall drive a taxicab within the city without possessing a valid taxicab driver's license duly issued by the City of Bloomington, City of Richfield, City of St. Louis Park or the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

**Sec. 12-318. Designation signs posted and visible on the exterior vehicle.**

Each taxicab required to be licensed by this article shall bear signs identifying the vehicle as a taxicab. Such signs shall be on the exterior of the vehicle and shall be visible from each side of the vehicle.

**Sec. 12-319. Exemption. Exemptions.**

Any taxicab or taxicab driver licensed to operate in another city may carry passengers from the city where licensed to any place or point within the city and may freely travel upon the streets without being licensed in accordance with this article, provided that the taxicab driver shall not be permitted to solicit business or pick up passengers within the city unless the taxicab and the taxicab driver are licensed as required by this article.

A Charitable Non-profit Transportation Vehicle is exempt from the regulations set forth in this ordinance upon presentation to the city [insert department or staff position] documentation establishing the Section 501(c)(3) status of the entity.

## **ITN *TwinCities***

ITN *TwinCities* grew from a group of concerned citizens and professionals who began meeting in Edina to discuss ways to address the lack of transportation options for older adults, especially those who are transitioning from driving to not driving. After exploring a number of different models for providing senior transportation, the group decided to focus on the Independent Transportation Network, a proven model developed by the national non-profit, ITNAmerica (ITNAmerica.org). With the Edina Community Foundation acting as fiscal sponsor, in October of 2012 the group was able to raise the funds to become Friends of ITN *TwinCities*, a pre-affiliate of ITNAmerica.

ITN *TwinCities* was incorporated as a Minnesota non-profit in March of 2013 and has applied for federal 501(c)(3) status. In November of 2013 ITN *TwinCities* completed the research, fundraising and organizational objectives necessary to become a full affiliate of ITNAmerica. We are currently building capacity to begin operating our transportation service in the fall of 2014.

### **Mission**

The mission of ITN *TwinCities* is to provide a volunteer-based, quality transportation service for older adults and those with visual impairments, that is consumer-oriented, community supported and economically viable. We strive to enhance the independence of older and visually impaired adults through innovative mobility services and transportation partnerships in their communities.

### **Need**

The population in the Twin Cities is aging. This trend is particularly evident in communities like Edina where the percentage of residents over age 65 increased by almost 15 percent between 1990 and 2000. National statistics show that, on average, men will outlive their ability to drive by 7 years and women by 10 years. Many older adults continue to drive even when it is unsafe because nothing else offers the same degree of independence and convenience. Lack of adequate transportation alternatives forces those who do not drive to give up many of their daily activities, often leading to social isolation and negative health consequences.

The need for safe, affordable, convenient transportation for seniors and the visually impaired is great and growing. Many of our board members got involved with this initiative because of personal experience with the transportation struggles of friends or family members. As part of our planning for this project, ITN *TwinCities* conducted a number of focus groups and community conversations with potential users. The results of these conversations demonstrated a significant need and desire for transportation that was more flexible, supportive and dignified than the options currently available. While some transportation options exist for those who are unable to drive, most are limited by eligibility requirements, destination restrictions and hours of operation. Other options fail to provide the assistance that older or visually impaired riders may require.

ITN *TwinCities* seeks to address barriers and fill the gaps in available transportation options for older or visually impaired adults, by providing a flexible, 24/7, door-through-door ride service, with trained drivers to assist riders as needed. Convenient, safe and dignified transportation is

essential to support older adults hoping to age in place in their homes and communities. No single solution will adequately meet the transportation needs of the growing number of older people in our communities. Recognizing this, throughout the planning process we have met with senior service and transportation providers to learn about their programs and explore ways that we can work together. Representatives of VEAP, PRISM, DARTS, JFCS, Ebenezer Society, Catholic ElderCare and the Alzheimer's Society, among others, have generously shared their time and knowledge with us. ITN *TwinCities* continues to work on building partnerships that will support a range of transportation options in our communities.

## **Service**

As an affiliate of ITN*America*, ITN *TwinCities* will replicate a proven model for sustainable, senior transportation. ITN has 25 affiliates around the country and almost 20 years of experience in meeting the needs of seniors and visually impaired riders.

ITN *TwinCities* will serve adults 60 years and older, and those with visual impairments. We will provide 24/7, door-through-door transportation directly to a specified destination with no restrictions on trip length or purpose. Rides typically are scheduled at least a day in advance, but may be provided on the same day (at a slightly higher rate). Rides will be provided primarily by screened and trained volunteers, using their own automobiles. Riders will join the organization as members and establish personal transportation accounts. The cost of rides is debited from the transportation account – no money exchanges hands in the vehicle. ITN *TwinCities* service is dignified, convenient and secure and keeps the rider in control.

Volunteer drivers for ITN *TwinCities* have the opportunity to earn transportation credits. These credits can be banked for their own future transportation needs, or donated to a scholarship fund or to a rider in any ITN in the country. Riders may also earn transportation credits for their accounts by donating a vehicle to ITN *TwinCities*.

## **Relationship with other organizations**

ITN *TwinCities* is an affiliate of a national nonprofit, ITN*America*. The Edina Community Foundation serves as our fiscal sponsor. We have received financial or other support from CommonBond Communities, the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging and AAA Minneapolis.

## **Board, staff and volunteers**

ITN *TwinCities* currently has six board members with expertise in transportation, senior services, nonprofit management, law and finance.

Volunteers will be the backbone of ITN *TwinCities*. We will begin operations with at least 12-15 volunteer drivers and hope to double that number by the end of our first year of operations. We will also have volunteer opportunities in operations, communications and fundraising events.

# **iTN** *TwinCities*<sup>™</sup>

Dignified transportation for seniors

Every day seniors and visually impaired adults face the reality that the Twin Cities is a great place to live - if you drive. When you cannot drive, how do you buy groceries, have lunch with a friend, or get to a doctor? Older adults want to remain independent, living in their home and active in the community they love. How do they maintain their freedom, stay safe, and give their loved ones peace of mind?

Moving from the driver's seat to the passenger seat is much easier when you are driven by a volunteer who cares and provides so much more than a ride. ITN*TwinCities* (Independent Transportation Network) is here to help by providing a safe dignified transportation solution.



## *Who we are...*

ITN*TwinCities* is an affiliate of ITN*America*, the first and only national non-profit transportation system for older and visually impaired adults. ITN's network of volunteer drivers offers rides in private cars with door-through-door, arm-through-arm service to enhance safety, freedom and peace of mind for all of us.

*"ITN is a lifesaver for me. It gets me where I want to go, and I don't have to burden friends and family. It's wonderful to have this service. I'd be stuck in the house otherwise."*

Katherine Freund founded ITN*America* after an 84-year-old driver caused an accident that injured her young son. She realized that crashes caused by older people resulted from a transportation system that wasn't meeting the needs of older adults. She was determined to change that. In 1995, she founded the Independent Transportation Network<sup>®</sup>. There are now 27 affiliated communities in 21 states, providing flexible, affordable transportation to thousands of riders.

## *Learn more at*

[www.itntwincities.org](http://www.itntwincities.org)

Contact us: Debra Burton, Executive Director

[debra.burton@itntwincities.org](mailto:debra.burton@itntwincities.org)

Tel: (612) 260-5949

Email: [info@ITNTwinCities.org](mailto:info@ITNTwinCities.org)

## Supplemental Information: Senior Transportation Services

### **How To Calculate Senior Friendliness**

The 5 A's of Senior Friendliness (below) reflect the views of seniors who have driven an automobile for 50 years or more and often are the criteria by which older adults judge the effectiveness of a community-based transportation option. The 5 A's may be one reason senior passengers often view public and paratransit services, and even volunteer driver programs somewhat harshly. To calculate the Senior Friendliness, check each factor that is consistent with its operations. Each check equals 1 point. Your total score will tell you where a transportation service is on the "road to senior friendliness".

#### **Availability: The Transportation Service....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ provides transportation to seniors
- \_\_\_\_\_ is able to recruit and retain sufficient number of drivers
- \_\_\_\_\_ can provide transportation anytime (days, evenings, weekends)
- \_\_\_\_\_ provides unlimited numbers of rides to seniors
- \_\_\_\_\_ maintains organizational relationships with human & transit services

#### **Acceptability: The Transportation Service....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ uses automobiles to provide majority of transportation
- \_\_\_\_\_ does not require advance scheduling
- \_\_\_\_\_ involves riders to determine appropriate wait time
- \_\_\_\_\_ conveys guidelines to ensure vehicles are clean and well maintained
- \_\_\_\_\_ provides driver "sensitivity to seniors" training

#### **Accessibility: The Transportation Service....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ can accommodate needs of majority of elders in the community
- \_\_\_\_\_ can take riders to destinations beyond city & county boundaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ provides "door-to-door" transportation
- \_\_\_\_\_ provides training to riders on how to access services
- \_\_\_\_\_ can provide services to essential and non essential activities

#### **Adaptability: The Transportation Service....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ can accommodate riders who need or want to make multiple stops
- \_\_\_\_\_ makes an effort to link riders with other services when appropriate
- \_\_\_\_\_ can access vehicles to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers
- \_\_\_\_\_ provides "door-thru-door" transportation when needed
- \_\_\_\_\_ will provide transportation escorts when needed

#### **Affordability: The Transportation Service....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ provides insurance coverage for volunteer drivers
- \_\_\_\_\_ charges reduced fees to seniors for transportation services
- \_\_\_\_\_ accepts passenger donations for transportation services
- \_\_\_\_\_ covers the driver's deductible in the event of a crash
- \_\_\_\_\_ is willing to reimburse drivers for mileage or costs

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

The following description of "door-through-door" service is excerpted from *How to Establish and Maintain Door-through-door Transportation Services for Seniors*, by Jon E. Burkhardt and Helen Kerschner, published by WESTAT in conjunction with The Beverly Foundation, September 29, 2005.

Basic knowledge needed to understand door-through-door transportation services includes the following information:

- Most seniors have sufficient health and other resources to independently fulfill all their transportation needs.
- Some seniors (often the eldest) are so frail or infirm that they need personal, hands-on assistance in making a trip.**
- Persons with such needs **often could not make that trip without personal, intensive support** because their physical or mental limitations make them unable to access or use other public or specialized transportation services.
- Seniors may receive help entering or exiting their homes, the destinations of their trips, or the vehicles used for their trips. Some seniors with serious frailties or disabilities may also require personal assistance while traveling on vehicles. Such travel assistance is often called "door-through-door transportation;" it is also sometimes known as "assisted transportation," "supported (or supportive) transportation," or "escorted transportation." This type of assistance is not commonly available on public transit systems and is often not offered by taxi operators.

**Door-through-door transportation services respond to special personal needs.** These services support the mission of the Administration on Aging (AoA) to promote the dignity and independence of older people by providing the mobility needed to help frail and infirm seniors continue to live independently in their own homes. Independent living is by far the most cost-effective solution for seniors, their families, the aging network, and the country as a whole: comments from providers across the country indicate that many older persons served by door-through-door transportation would require assisted living or nursing home services if they did not have personal assistance with their transportation. The vast majority of seniors also prefer to stay in their own homes. These services provide more freedom and independence for seniors who use them and lessen the burden for their caregivers as well.

**The mobility provided through door-through-door transportation is thus a key component of independent living:** consumers who are living in the community but have serious mobility limitations need door-through-door services to fulfill their basic mobility needs.

Members of the aging and human service networks who provide door-through-door transportation — including organizations such as interfaith groups, senior centers, Area Agencies on Aging, human service agencies, hospitals, and volunteers programs — are offering services not commonly available through other agencies. Doorthrough-door transportation services will become even more important in the future as the number of “old-old” persons (85 and older) — many of whom have serious mobility limitations — increases dramatically.

**The growth of the senior population in the United States is one of the most significant trends affecting our country.** Comparing U. S. populations in 2000 and 2030, Census Bureau projections indicate that, by 2030, there may be twice as many persons 65 years and older as there were in 2000 and almost 2.5 times as many 85 and older. Americans are generally living longer and are healthier than in past generations. But research shows that, **for most Americans, life expectancy now exceeds driving expectancy by 7 to 10 years,** meaning that many former drivers will need to find new means of travel. Also, population projections indicate that, compared to today there may be greater numbers of older persons in the future who have health, mobility, or income limitations. These persons will face special challenges to independent living. **Such trends will make services like door-through-door transportation even more important to seniors in the future.**

#### **ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF DOOR-THROUGH-DOOR SERVICES**

Case study data show that door-through-door transportation may require considerable personal hands-on assistance through several doors. For example, round trip transportation may require help

- Out of the door at a senior’s home,
- Into a vehicle and out again, and
- Through the door at the destination.

For the trip back to a person’s home, this sequence of doors is reversed.

Certainly, not all seniors need personal assistance through one or all the doors. However, seniors who do need such help depend strongly on transportation programs that can provide door-through-door service, often as a last resort in meeting their travel needs.

While “opening doors” is certainly a key feature of door-through-door transportation, **it is the personal, hands-on support for riders that distinguishes this service from other transportation programs.**

The “door-through-door realm” includes several possible steps or

levels of assistance. On a continuum of increasing levels of assistance, each of which usually includes the previous steps, they can be called:

- Gentle support:** Opening doors and providing verbal guidance.
- Physical support:** Providing physical support for the rider to assist with balance, assist in climbing steps, or performing similar functions. This support may include delivering the rider to an attendant at the destination who then takes over the task of personal support and assistance. This “handoff” function is sometimes called “hand-to-hand” or “chair-to-chair” service.
- Activity support:** The driver or escort stays with the rider and helps with the activity at the destination. For example, the driver or escort may assist the rider inside a grocery store, help the rider understand a doctor’s instructions or diagnosis, or serve as an advocate for the rider’s travel needs.
- Personal support:** The driver or escort may help the rider put on coats, shoes, or boots and help by putting away groceries in the rider’s home. Some drivers or escorts are or become friends of the rider and offer emotional or other personal support.

Many door-through-door transportation programs provide some, but not all, of these levels of assistance, but any one program may provide a variety of services: some seniors may need different levels of assistance on different days or for different destinations. For those who require even greater levels of care and assistance, more intensive services are generally provided by homemakers, home health aides, or chore services, rather than door-through-door transportation services. More intensive care could include dressing or lifting the senior or providing assistance in other activities of daily living.)