

Connecting People to Places... Cities to Cities



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December 10, 2009  
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## **As Americans Age, CityLink Public Transportation in the Peoria area Provides Reliable Travel Alternatives**

America's aging population is growing at a faster rate than any other U.S. population group. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that by 2030, there will be 9.6 million people age 85 and older — an increase of 73 percent from today. As American's age, they face challenges with mobility and the continued ability to drive safely.

In support of aging Americans and increased mobility options and opportunities, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and Greater Peoria Mass Transit District (CityLink) are endorsing and participating in *Older Driver Safety Awareness Week* which is being sponsored by the American Occupational Therapy Association.

The goal of Older Driver Safety Awareness Week — December 6-12, 2009 — is to increase safety by informing the public that the aging driver has travel options, and to promote understanding of the importance of mobility and transportation to ensure older adults remain active in the community.

On Friday, December 11, the focus is on older Americans who no longer drive. As Americans age, isolation becomes a growing problem, and access and mobility become increasingly critical needs. Lack of transportation severely affects their ability to take care of basic needs and function as contributing members of society.

In the CityLink service area (Peoria, West Peoria, Peoria Heights, East Peoria, Sunnyland, Creve Coeur, Pekin and Bartonville) and across the U.S., public transportation is able to meet the most basic needs of America's older individuals requiring enhanced mobility option when driving is no longer possible. Public transportation provides aging individuals with the ability to live independently, access to medical and social services, contact with the outside world, and the feeling of belonging to the community.

In fact, 83 percent of older Americans say that public transit provides easy access to the things they need in everyday life. Public transit is also a vital link for the more than 51 million Americans with disabilities.

Public transportation for older Americans in the CityLink service area includes: **Free** transportation during all service hours on CityLink buses fixed routes (also park & rides to certain special events) for senior citizens age 65 and older; and economically priced (\$2.00 each way) paratransit door-to-door pick up for qualified individuals. Those in need are asked to call 679-8139 to see if they can qualify for paratransit service.

For many older Americans, it is a difficult transition from having the independence of driving to relying on other means of transportation to get around their community. When older Americans need to limit or stop driving, public transportation is a reliable option. It will allow older individuals to remain connected to their community and the activities important to them. And it is important for these individuals to know that Greater Peoria Mass Transit District is ready and available to meet their transportation needs.

To find out more about your public transportation options — even before you need them — go to [www.publictransportation.org](http://www.publictransportation.org). Under "Transit Systems," you can locate public transportation systems in your area and find out which airports have mass transit connections. You can also go to [www.ridecitylink.org](http://www.ridecitylink.org)

Additional endorsing organizations include: AAA, AARP, American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators, Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists, Easter Seals Project ACTION, INTAmerica, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, National Center on Senior Transportation, and the Hartford Financial Services Group.

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