

Information Regarding the Impact of Transportation

Transportation is not a luxury, but a necessary requisite to enable the fulfillment of the needs seen as important in Lincoln County, as reported by a recent survey of its residents, conducted by the Creative Aging Advisory Committee in 2013. Individuals without the means to travel cannot access medical care, employment, education, shopping, as well as, entertainment opportunities. Many residents do not have transportation to their, at times, lifesaving appointments. Not only is the vital nature of this need apparent, but the moral implications are many and border on deniability as detailed by the "Americans with Disabilities Act."¹

Lack of transportation for these special needs people, the indigent, homeless and elderly denies resources for everyday necessities. Purchasing of food, including attending senior facilities where nourishing low cost food is provided, is essential. Attention to medical appointments alleviates more extensive medical needs at a later date. Ensuring that seniors remain in their homes for as long as possible makes good economic sense. Also, attending social, cultural and volunteer activities prevents social isolation and its ensuing psychological conditions.

Although certainly a costly operation, Lincoln County Transit was never viewed as a "moneymaking operation." Matching Federal Grant money was put into place for this reason to guarantee the success of a well-run operation. The past few years the Transit has realized financial problems, but due to a change in reporting procedures and operations, the last few months have realized a net income that is in the black. Additional changes could make the Transit more efficient including fixed routes and times of operation. The exception would be door to door for the handicapped or those with infirmities.

There are hidden advantages to our community also. Inexpensive and convenient transportation translates into additional income to our stores, restaurants, lodging and entertainment. This in turn stimulates gross receipts.

The ability to take advantage of educational opportunities provided by local educational institutions is paramount, not only for the senior population, but also the continued opportunities afforded the community at large.

In conclusion, the continuation of Lincoln County Transit is imperative for the moral, social, physical and economic well-being of Lincoln County residents and visitors.

**Creative Aging Advisory Committee ENMU-Ruidoso
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¹ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990