



# UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION CENTER RESEARCH BRIEF

**PROJECT TITLE:** Characterization of Underserved Population Perceptions and Mobility Needs in Connected-Vehicle and Smarter City Environments

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Ahmed Abdel-Rahim (UI), Rula Awwad-Rafferty (UI), David Hurwitz (OSU), Jeff Ban (UW), Ali Hajbabaie (WSU), Billy Connor (UAF)

**INSTITUTION:** MULTI-INSTITUTION OUTREACH PROJECT

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE:** AUGUST 2019

**SPONSORS:** THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM, OSU, WSU, UI, UW, UAF



## **Background**

Residents of smaller and low-density communities, as well as elderly and disabled individuals, have few alternatives to private car travel. Those without cars have limited access to goods, services, and opportunities. While new on-demand mobility services, connected vehicle technologies, and smarter city initiatives are reshaping travel in cities, they risk leaving behind those in smaller towns and rural areas; those that lack smart phones and communication network access, and those lower-income travelers lacking a variety of additional resources. How to provide accessible mobility options for all transportation users in connected-vehicle and smarter city Environments is a looming major challenge. The primary goal of this outreach effort is to better understand and characterize perceptions about mobility needs in urban and rural environments of the Pacific Northwest by underserved populations and to inform these communities about the opportunities for mobility improvement that a smart city could provide.

## **Research Project**

Connected-vehicle and smarter city environments have the potential of transforming our transportation system. The increased number of on-demand mobility options and the information available to travelers has created a new dynamic in unlimited opportunities. Cities across the nation are developing new smart city initiatives to integrate open data with new transportation systems so that people can move more freely in their communities. These technologies will operate our surface transportation systems at maximum safety and efficiency. However, as technological innovation continues to progress at light speed, the country's underserved communities are increasingly left behind.

The objective of this PacTrans outreach effort is to better understand and characterize underserved populations perceptions about mobility needs in connected and smarter city environments. The PacTrans outreach project team, in partnership with stakeholders from a variety of underserved populations, will conduct extensive outreach activities in the form of focus group meetings, interviews, and presentations to educate targeted underserved communities about the different mobility options in connected vehicle and smart-city environments and gather information about their mobility needs and perceptions about new mobility opportunities.

