Traditionally, owning a car has been a given of retirement, particularly for younger retirees. After all, the U.S. is a pretty spread-out place, and most Baby Boomers entering this new phase of life are already settled in the suburbs or exurbs with one or more vehicles.

But as car-less Millennials have now demonstrated to their parents, there are plenty of cities where owning your own automobile is unnecessary—places where walking, biking and public transit get you most of the places you need to go on a daily basis, and new services such as Uber, Lyft, ZipCar and Car2Go are available when four wheels are needed.

Maybe you wouldn’t dream of giving up your car now. Maybe some big road trips are on your retirement bucket list, or you need a car to visit your far flung kids. But consider this: as you age, you may not be confident driving, and dependence on an auto could cramp your lifestyle. Indeed, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, which runs a national Eldercare Locator, reports the number one reason people call that line is they need help finding transportation. “Many callers express frustration because they can’t do simple things like visit the doctor, buy food or socialize with peers because the options for getting from Point A to Point B are limited,” the study notes.
With all that in mind, Forbes offers its first-ever list of the 25 Best Places To Retire Without A Car. To review the list and a profile of each city, including housing costs and suggestions for walkable neighborhoods, click on the photo above. For expanded information on some of the neighborhoods highlighted, click here. To see the new 2017 Forbes Retirement Guide, click here.

To pick the top 25, Forbes first collected data on hundreds of cities. We screened for city-wide ratings on public transit availability; walkability (that is, the ability to walk to shops and other needs of daily living) and ease of biking. (We’re assuming you’re looking to move while you’re a younger retiree eager to stay active, but you also want the buses and trains to run for longer distances and as you age.) Our data came from Walkscore.com, Bicycling Magazine and other sources.

We also took into account newer services for getting around. These include the availability of cheaper ride-share services like Uber and Lyft (no, not all cities have them), and by-the-hour car rental services like ZipCar and Car2Go.

Using FBI crime statistics, we then eliminated cities with sky-high serious crime rates. After all, who wants to be constantly looking over one’s shoulder as you walk or wait for the train or bus? This had the effect of excluding from our list a number of rather walkable cities with good mass transit, including Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, Miami, Milwaukee, Oakland, Philadelphia, St. Louis and Washington, DC.

To flesh out the picture, each profile on the list includes additional data such as median housing cost, cost of living, state tax burden on retirees, air quality and availability of medical care. None of these items played a role in determining whether a place made our list, but it definitely could be a big factor in your own choice.

We know that being near family and friends is often a big consideration. So our picks are spread across 16 states in five U.S. time zones. The cities are roughly divided between colder and warmer climates.

To be honest, some of our choices, such as Berkeley, Calif., New York City, San Francisco and Santa Barbara, are pretty expensive places to live. But at least you would save the considerable cost of car ownership. And some of these high-cost meccas offer a lot more than walkability – nine of them also appear on our latest list of Great Places To Follow Your Passions In Retirement.
If money is an issue, take heart. A number of our carless living picks are rather affordable. These include: Burlington, VT; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Madison, WI; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; Providence, RI; Tempe, AZ and Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, both in Michigan.

Note that our list is alphabetical and presented as such. That means that Ann Arbor is ranked no higher than Tempe. This list is geared for retirees, so the quality of local public K-12 education is not taken into account. But our picks should also be of interest to those childless Millennials who prefer not to own cars.