



**National Aging and Disability Transportation Center:
2021 Equity and Accessibility Transportation Planning Grants
Awarded: April 27, 2022**

In 2021, the NADTC awarded nine grants to support the planning of program innovations and new models that address the transportation needs and preferences of older adults and people with disabilities. These projects launched in April 2021 and ended on September 30, 2022. Over the course of five and a half months, each project engaged in comprehensive planning activities that involved a wide range of community members and local aging, disability, and transportation organizations, and developed a written plan of action to improve transportation options in the community. Grants of up to \$20,000 were awarded.

Together, the nine NADTC grantees identified community transportation needs by engaging older adults and people with disabilities through focus groups, surveys, community meetings and advisory committees. Innovative methods of engagement included:

- Hosting a table to collect surveys and feedback at a “food truck night;”
- Including program information in “Heritage Food Boxes,” culturally specific food boxes distributed by a local food bank;
- Distributing surveys at a county fair;
- Developing an “outreach touchpoint tracker” to identify and develop relationships with community-based organizations.
- Conducting focus groups at locations such as hospitals, senior centers, community centers and organizations;
- Distributing surveys through Emergency Medical Technicians, the American Legion, Meals on Wheels deliveries, churches, and a blanket mailer using a voter registration list to reach those unable to leave their homes.

2021 NADTC Transportation Planning Grants

Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut

Location: North Haven, CT

Project Service Area: New Haven County

Population Served: Older adults 60+ and adults with disabilities who need assistance to travel

Contact: Beverly Kidder, Vice President, bkidder@aoascc.org

This project:

- Developed a plan to assess the expansion of TrustedRide-Certified (TRC), a transportation chaperone program, to older adults and individuals with disabilities facing mobility challenges.
- Convened an Advisory Group to guide the project and develop the plan.
- Collected 117 survey responses and conducted 6 listening sessions.
- Held 3 community meetings to discuss results and share proposed plan.
- Resulted in more than 90% of stakeholders supporting the implementation plan to expand TRC in communities underserved by transportation.

Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc.

Location: Albany, NY

Project Service Area: Village of Menands, and City of Watervliet

Population Served: Older adults with low-income

Contact: Andy Koenig, Finance Director, akoenig@colonieseniors.org.

This project:

- Developed a plan to identify the vital transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities related to isolation during the pandemic.
- Convened a 13-member Advisory Committee to guide the project.
- Held 14 community meetings/events where the project was explained, and paper surveys were disseminated to the target audience.
- Collected 235 survey responses.
- Resulted in a plan to expand transportation services to two communities underserved by transportation.

Family Health Services

Location: Sandusky, OH

Project Service Area: Erie County

Population Served: Older adults 60 and older, and adults with disabilities

Contact: Taylr James, Clinical Administrative Assistant, tjames@Familyhs.org

This project:

- Worked to increase the understanding of, and support for transportation for older adults, and people with disabilities.
- Convened a 6-person subcommittee for transportation stakeholders in the community to create a needs assessment and guide the project.
- Conducted a needs assessment to identify inequities and barriers in transportation for the target population:
 - Convened 5 focus groups
 - Collected 434 survey responses.
- Resulted in a plan to increase marketing for free transportation services, purchase a secondary wheelchair accessible van, and share results of the needs assessment with other healthcare agencies.

HIRTA Public Transit

Location: Urbandale, IA

Project Service Area: rural Central Iowa

Population Served: Older adults and people with disabilities

Contact: Brooke Ramsey, Business Manager, Bramsey@RideHIRTA.com

This project:

- Built on current planning efforts to engage more fully with older adults and people with disabilities.
- Convened a HIRTA Connections Coalition to guide the project.
- Reached about 100 people through surveys, a community meeting and focus groups at the OneIowa conference.
- Resulted in a plan to make the agency's scheduling software available in multiple languages and to expand transportation options.

North Central New Mexico Economic Development District

Location: Santa Fe, NM

Project Service Area: Santa Fe, Taos, and Rio Arriba counties.

Population Served: Older adults aged 60+ and adults with disabilities.

Contact: Paul Sittig, Transportation Planner, pauls@ncnmedd.com

This project:

- Identified longstanding mobility needs of Hispanic, Native American, and White older residents with disabilities in rural areas, including lingering social isolation impacts of the pandemic.
- Convened a steering committee of stakeholders to guide the project.
- Collected surveys from 380 people and held 3 focus groups with 21 older adults and people with disabilities.
- Resulted in a plan to develop a volunteer driver program, a website and accompanying brochure outlining transportation resources, and technology training to access the website and transportation providers.

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

Location: Colorado Springs, CO

Project Service Area: El Paso County

Population Served: Older adults and people with disabilities

Contact: Laura Crews, Mobility Coordinator, lcrews@ppacg.org

This project:

- Identified gaps impacting African American, AAPI, Hispanic, Native American, and White individuals who depend on specialized transit services and developed a list of possible solutions to incorporate into the region's Specialized Transportation Plan.
- Mapped geographical gaps in services using paratransit and specialized transit geo-coded ridership data.
- Held focus groups and interviewed 66 older adults and people with disabilities on their transportation challenges and possible solutions.
- Resulted in a plan to increase outreach on available options and pilot an on-demand transportation service with a specialized transportation provider.

Rhode Island College Foundation-Age Friendly RI

Location: Providence, RI

Project Service Area: Statewide

Population Served: Older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low-income

Contact: James Connell, Program Director, jconnell@ric.edu

This project:

- In partnership with the public transit provider, explored using underutilized community and nonprofit vehicles to provide trips for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with low-income who want to stay connected to their communities, and developing a shared-use service pilot project.
- Convened 4 focus groups with over 100 participants from the target population and stakeholders.
- Researched best practices and models of vehicle sharing.
- Resulted in a plan to pilot a program using underutilized vans to meet local transportation gaps.

Ride Connection, Inc.

Location: Portland, OR

Project Service Area: Napa County

Population Served: Older adults and people with disabilities

Contact: John Whitman, Planning Supervisor, jwhitman@rideconnection.org

This project:

- Sought to develop a technology innovations strategy to identify the impact of exclusion from innovation upon older adults and people with disabilities.
- Engaged with 130 members of the target audience through focus groups and surveys.
- Identified how a lack of technology and language barriers impact transportation access for the target population.
- Resulted in a plan to create a new Coordinator position to cultivate partnerships with organizations to enhance mobility options for the target population and convene a steering committee of older adults and people with disabilities.

The Ohio State University, College of Social Work, Age-Friendly Innovation Center

Location: Columbus, OH

Project Service Area: Central Ohio

Population Served: Older adults and people with disabilities

Contact: Marisa Sheldon, Director, Age-Friendly Innovation Center, Sheldon.127@osu.edu

This project:

- Engaged older adults, individuals with disabilities to determine challenges and ideas for improving the local transit system infrastructure.
- Convened Age-Friendly Innovation Center collaborators and network to guide the project.
- Conducted 5 focus groups, walk audits and transit stop audits to inform transportation infrastructure updates.
- Resulted in a toolkit for local transit authorities on how to integrate the voices of older adults and individuals with disabilities into infrastructure updates and transit planning and state funding to implement specific recommended infrastructure improvements.

Any questions on NADTC's Innovations in Accessible Mobility Grant can be directed to Melissa Gray, mgray@usaging.org, Heather Edmonds, hedmonds@usaging.org and Jane Mahoney, jmahoney@easterseals.com.

For more information on the NADTC Grants, visit <http://www.nadtc.org/grants-funding/>.

