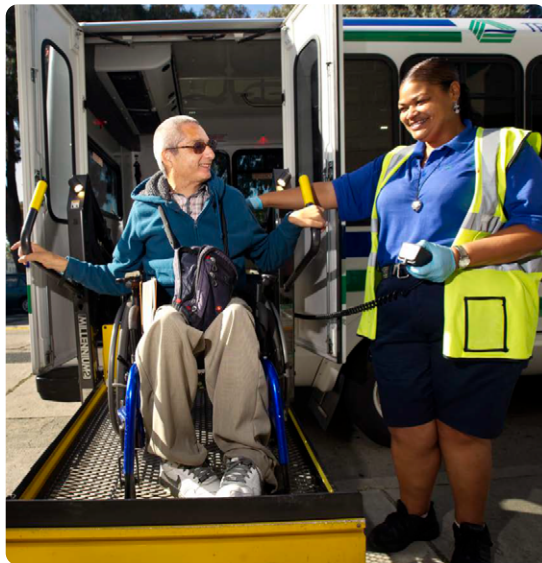




# National Aging and Disability Transportation Center 2023 Innovations Showcase



Cover Photo Credits (from left): Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Senior Resource Association, and MET-Go!

# INTRODUCTION

This publication presents 14 Transportation Innovations selected by the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) through a nationwide competition. The Showcase profiles out-of-the-box thinking and alignment of resources. Innovations may be entirely original or represent a creative adaptation of an approach that has worked in other places or program settings or with different populations.

NADTC has defined innovations as the development and implementation of new services; new or improved approaches to service delivery, accessibility, planning or program oversight; new solutions to longstanding problems; new ways of engaging, serving and improving accessibility for specific underserved, marginalized or hard-to-reach communities; multisector coordination to improve accessibility and services; or new technological applications to enhance participation and accessibility.

NADTC received 27 submissions that met the criteria of being in operation for a minimum of six months; representing a local, state, regional or tribal entity or organization, whether private, nonprofit, or government; and providing information on community partnerships, funding sources, community need, outcomes, lessons learned and replicability.

The 14 organizations whose innovations were selected are organized into six categories. Four program innovations, indicated by an asterisk, fall into more than category.

## **Accessibility**

- Contra Costa Transportation Authority\*
- Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging
- Lane Transit District
- Mountain Empire Older Citizens
- Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation\*
- rabbitcares
- Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management\*
- Senior Resource Association\*

## **Coordination**

- Contra Costa Transportation Authority\*
- Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio
- Harris County Transit
- Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission

## **Cross Jurisdictional Boundaries**

- Senior Resource Association\*

## **Equity**

- Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation\*
- Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management\*

## **Health Care Access**

- EMBARK
- United Way of Southeastern Idaho

## **Technology**

- PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation

The 14 transportation programs whose innovations are profiled here use a variety of approaches, strategies, tools, techniques and ideas. It is NADTC's hope that other transportation programs will consider adapting one or more of the Innovations to meet identified needs in their own communities.

To learn more, please contact NADTC or reach out to any of the Innovators profiled in this publication.

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Photo Credit: EMBARK, Oklahoma City, OK

## Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Office of Accessibility and Equity

Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) established an Office of Accessibility and Equity (OAE) to improve mobility for community members and formed a nonprofit coordinating entity that fosters collaboration and leads efforts to integrate all accessible transportation services in the county. For more than three years, this work has brought together community-based organizations, consumers, elected officials, transit providers and county staff with CCTA to implement programs such as a countywide, one-seat ride program; means-based fare programs; a medical trip shuttle; and a one-call/one-click system.

### What makes this innovative?

Over the past 30 years, three accessible transportation studies in the community were conducted, all recommending significant changes in accessible transportation administration and operations; however, implementation was never achieved. Working with this legacy, CCTA and Contra Costa County conducted a fourth study, the Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan (ATSP). The ATSP included extensive outreach to the community and stakeholders. In addition to program recommendations, the ATSP recommended the creation of a “coordinating entity” (a nonprofit) to ensure prompt implementation, and CCTA created and staffed a new office, the OAE.

These activities have resulted in the establishment of a culture and mechanism for overseeing coordinated accessible transportation, reaffirming CCTA’s commitment to the aging and disability population in the county. The innovation uses a dual approach, 1) quick implementation of short-term initiatives and 2) creation of a permanent governance mechanism to support ongoing advocacy and oversight for accessible transportation. The OAE coordinating entity is a permanent forum where those with concerns, questions and issues about accessible transportation have a place to voice their thoughts.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Create opportunities for community feedback and dialogue. Development of the strategic plan offered opportunities for extensive public outreach which enabled stakeholders to communicate their concerns about funding and governance.
- Obtain commitment from a critical mass of elected officials throughout the county and commitment of staff time and funding. These commitments must occur when implementing a new plan and before securing funding.
- Be sure to account for any lessons learned from previous efforts to establish a coordinating entity and make accommodations in your plans, if necessary.

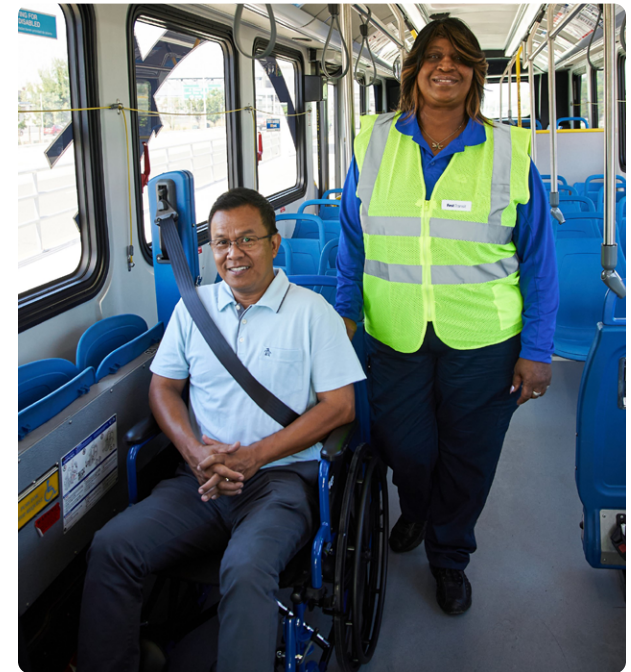


Photo Credit: Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Walnut Creek, CA

### Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA)

Walnut Creek, CA

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## COORDINATION

### Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio home52 Transportation

Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio's home52 Transportation is a same-day transportation model that enhances specialized transportation accessibility and fosters collaboration among regional providers. home52 Transportation has addressed the limitations of public transportation in the area by providing accessible vehicles, personalized support and frequent communication with riders, drivers and medical facilities. Through provider coordination, home52 Transportation creates a more efficient and reliable transportation system by reducing deadhead miles and creating cost savings for providers, funders and riders.

#### What makes this innovative?

As the Area Agency on Aging in the region, the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio has provided access to transportation to older adults for decades. However, the traditional transportation model was failing to meet the needs of clients and creating challenges such as a lack of on-demand access, inconsistency in quality among transportation providers and multiple providers operating in siloes that were inefficient and lacked flexibility. The home52 model was launched in spring 2021 in collaboration with the local hospital association and multiple medical and transportation providers. Together, an enhanced transportation model was designed that differs from traditional non-emergency transportation. The program is funded through a combination of sources including 5310, private grants and service contracts.

home52's coordination center contracts with 40 community transportation providers and uses transportation management software to select and dispatch the closest appropriate vehicle to the pick-up destination. The service is door-through-door, on-demand transportation for same-day appointments. Real-time vehicle tracking and communication with providers ensures efficiency and quality assurance. This approach enhances and supports livability through improved healthcare access and social connectedness for individuals with specialized transportation needs.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Acquire an affordable and efficient Transportation Management System (TMS) to streamline coordination and communication with transportation providers. A well-designed TMS will enhance scheduling, dispatching and real-time tracking, optimizing operations and costs.
- Hire IT staff to support the technology used by drivers for a smooth implementation and to ensure drivers can effectively use it.
- Dedicate resources to marketing efforts aimed at attracting a quality provider network. This involves promoting the benefits of collaboration to potential transportation partners.
- Create awareness with marketing directed at eligible riders.
- Allocate resources to hire and train call center staff and implement reliable call center software. These two steps are indispensable to success in delivering exceptional customer service.



Photo Credit: Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio, Blue Ash, OH

**Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio**  
Blue Ash, OH

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## EMBARK

### EMBARK Well Senior Health & Wellness Transportation

EMBARK Well is a no-cost, on-demand transportation program for older adults and individuals with disabilities in Oklahoma City. EMBARK Well provides access to health, nutrition, and exercise options to support aging in place and address the social determinants of health. At launch, EMBARK Well was route-based and served six area wellness centers. Currently, the program has transitioned to an on-demand model and serves all Oklahoma City Parks & Recreation Department locations, all YMCA Wellness Centers, and a network of Senior Health and Wellness Centers.

#### What makes this innovative?

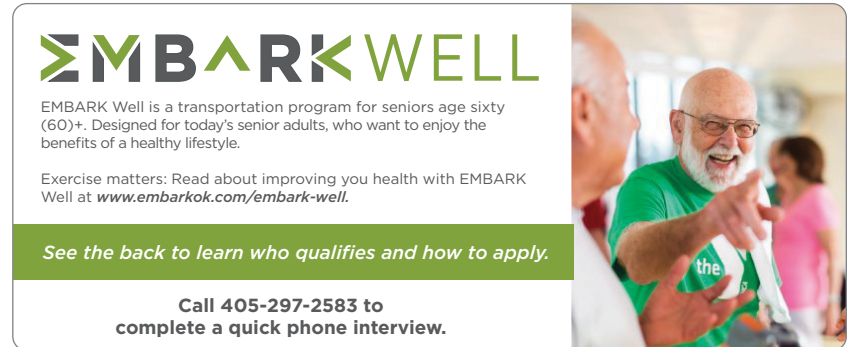
Oklahoma City is large with more than 600 square miles, and the public transportation system operates across approximately 212 square miles of that area. EMBARK Well is locally funded and fills the gap for older adults who lack close access to the fixed route system. EMBARK Well provides access to social activities and exercise and fitness classes, and it supports a variety of programs such as cooking and food preparation that are operated by partner organizations.

EMBARK Well uses the services of a regional Transportation Network Company that meets all requirements for training, screening and drug/alcohol compliance. Under the initial, route-based model of the program, per trip costs were approximately \$10-\$12; however, as locations were added, the program moved to an on-demand, shared-ride model and trip costs are currently between \$18-\$25, depending on distance.

Following the initial launch of EMBARK Well, a small study was conducted to gauge the impact of improved transportation access and regular exercise on an individual's overall health and wellness. The study found participants lowered their A1C score, improved their ability to control blood sugar levels and improved overall feelings of health and wellness.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Start with a small pilot to gauge interest and control costs, then scale up the program as awareness and demand increase.
- Find ways to contain program costs. For example, EMBARK Well participants are required to attend the wellness location closest to their residence.
- Promote the service. EMBARK Well created rack card displays at all locations in the community where older adults might congregate.



**EMBARK WELL**

EMBARK Well is a transportation program for seniors age sixty (60)+. Designed for today's senior adults, who want to enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Exercise matters: Read about improving you health with EMBARK Well at [www.embarkok.com/embark-well](http://www.embarkok.com/embark-well).

See the back to learn who qualifies and how to apply.

Call 405-297-2583 to complete a quick phone interview.

Photo Credit: EMBARK, Oklahoma City, OK

#### EMBARK

Oklahoma City, OK

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## COORDINATION

### Harris County Transit Harris County RIDES

Harris County RIDES is a unique, coordinated demand-response transportation program formed in 2003 that provides specialized transportation for older adults, people with disabilities and vulnerable low-income populations who live outside of the Houston METRO service area or are unable to access METRO services. It is a “fill in the gaps” service designed to help targeted individuals remain independent within communities. This is a countywide service, serving 1,778 square miles and available 24/7, 365 days of the year. The program also provides mobility management services.

#### What makes this innovative?

RIDES operates as an electronic voucher program. Rides for eligible riders are subsidized at 50 percent for each trip. The ride subsidy is either paid by one of the 35 partner agencies or the riders themselves. The remaining 50 percent is paid by RIDES using FTA Section 5310 funding. In addition, mobility management is provided to clients to promote independence in the community whether using RIDES or other transportation resources. Once funds are loaded on the card, the rider can travel anywhere within Harris County or into neighboring counties within certain parameters.

Harris County RIDES coordinates with local nonprofits, human services organizations, local transportation providers and public transportation to avoid duplication of services. Before the implementation of RIDES, many nonprofit organizations and community centers offered transportation using vans, which created significant overhead costs for drivers, vehicles, insurance and schedulers. With RIDES, these organizations simply fund fares on an electronic card for each of their clients and RIDES picks them up. Partner agency transportation budgets go farther because of the 50-percent match by RIDES. Trip data, participant lists, or other management reports that agencies may need are available to them by password access into the RIDES database management system.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Secure a champion to obtain community leader and governmental support. Engagement with a coalition of supportive community stakeholders is also important.
- Document the need in your community. In this example, an outside consultant was contracted to conduct a study, funded by the MPO organization, to reveal and document what was already known: There were gaps in services for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Expect bumps and obstacles along the way, but don't be discouraged. Be forward thinking!



Photo Credit: Harris County Transit, Houston, TX

#### Harris County Transit Houston, TX

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## Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging Transition to Transit Travel Training Program

Health Generations Area Agency on Aging's Transition to Transit Travel Training Program has been in operation for 10 years and has served mainly the aging population but also refugees, migrants, college students and others who are new to the area or living in underserved communities. Healthy Generations' Transition to Transit is a consumer-focused travel training that introduces high school students with disabilities to the region's public transit system. Students learn how to navigate the public transit system safely and efficiently, while acquiring life skills and learning personal safety strategies. The goal of Transition to Transit is to facilitate transportation equity and independent travel for students with disabilities by providing the skills needed to navigate the transit system safely and comfortably. This ultimately creates a new generation of transit users who will have access to employment, medical support, goods and services and other community resources.

### What makes this innovative?

Healthy Generations' Certified Travel Training Instructor (CTTI) partners with local high school job coaches to educate transitional high school students with disabilities about transit apps and wayfinding technology; the transit system, routes and stops; and pedestrian and personal safety. Student participants receive origin-to-destination training by riding transit with job coaches and the CTTI. A local hotel and restaurant act as the destination for students where they are hosted for lunch, learn about restaurant etiquette and learn to calculate gratuities. Participants are empowered to be independent, confident users of the transit system and encouraged to become transit advocates and ambassadors. The program is funded by FTA Section 5310 and meets a need identified in the state's Coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan to partner with educational facilities for a transportation and mobility program for students with disabilities.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Devote staff time to outreach, development and training.
- Be flexible and person-centered based on the individual training needs of program participants. The support and coordination provided by high school job coaches working with the students has been essential to program success.
- Invest in staff training to ensure staff will have the skills needed to implement a Transition to Transit program.
- Scale costs associated with staff time, marketing and promotional items relative to the size of the service area and school system.



Photo Credit: Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging, Fredericksburg, VA

**Healthy Generations Area Agency  
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# ACCESSIBILITY

## Lane Transit District Service Animal Paw Print Program

Lane Transit District's Service Animal Paw Print Program creates a better boarding experience for public transit passengers with service animals. This voluntary program allows riders with service animals to receive a paw print symbol on their rider card, which indicates to drivers that the rider has already been asked what task their service animal has been trained to perform and doesn't need to be asked again.

### What makes this innovative?

Prior to this program, passengers would expect to be asked when boarding the bus about the status of their animal and what task it is trained to perform. This can be an inconvenience for frequent riders. Through this program, regular riders need to show only their card with the paw print symbol when boarding. This contributes significantly to expediting the overall boarding process.

While anyone with a service animal who does not have a card may still board after answering questions, the Service Animal Paw Print Program benefits both transit riders and bus drivers by minimizing unnecessary barriers. This program is a collaborative partnership between a transit agency and the disability community, and riders with service animals have the choice of voluntarily participating or not. Lane Transit's experience is that the Service Animal Paw Print Program has been enthusiastically embraced by both transit operators and passengers who have service animals. The program has resulted in a noticeable decrease in complaints and conflicts on buses.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Incorporate the program with an existing in-service training for ease of implementation and distribute cards when evaluating people with disabilities for reduced fares. Program resources required are minimal: cost of developing and disseminating cards and staff time to educate, train and implement.
- Scale the program based on the size of the transportation agency. A blueprint is available for other transit providers to replicate the Lane Transit District's program at: [www.ltd.org/file\\_viewer.php?id=3694](http://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3694).



Photo Credit: Lane Transit District, Eugene, OR

### Lane Transit District

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## Mountain Empire Older Citizens

### MET-Go!

Mountain Empire Older Citizens' MET-Go! program is a microtransit service in the rural community of Big Stone Gap, VA, serving the City of Norton and the Town of Wise in Wise County. Microtransit offers an on-demand service that can be accessed by mobile phone or online portal to book a trip for same-day service in the service zone, and response time to the ride request takes just a few minutes.

#### What makes this innovative?

MET-Go! uses a microtransit technology from Via to address the transportation needs in a rural community. MET-Go! makes it simple and easy for riders, including older adults and people with disabilities, to schedule safe, reliable, on-demand transportation at their convenience. Through Met-Go! community members gain better access to the community with a service that augments the demand-response service that requires 24-hour notice. Funded by FTA Section 5311 (rural) funds and an Integrated Mobility Innovation (IMI) grant from the Federal Transit Administration, the program improves access to transportation and, therefore, better access to health care, food, public services, socialization, shopping, education and employment. In its first year MET-Go! completed 44,000 trips; more than 26,000 of those trips were provided to older adults or people with disabilities. Nearly one-third of trips were for medical reasons.

Service evaluation of both the microtransit program and the demand-response transportation service encompasses quality of service, average estimated time of arrival for microtransit/on-demand trips only, ride availability, average wait time and rider survey comments. In each instance, MET-Go! has outperformed demand-response service in cost per ride, cost per hour, and miles per trip. Rider surveys and comments characterize MET-Go! as life-changing.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Secure the right partnerships, including a strong technology partner like Via. Mountain Empire partners with the University of Virginia at Wise, the City of Norton and the Town of Wise.
- Hire or identify a driver who will champion the program.
- Emphasize face-to-face and word-of-mouth awareness to achieve best promotional results. Drivers and staff attended community events and forums to distribute promotional materials.
- Secure at least two vehicles and drivers, and staff who can be flexible in developing the service if starting a brand new microtransit program.

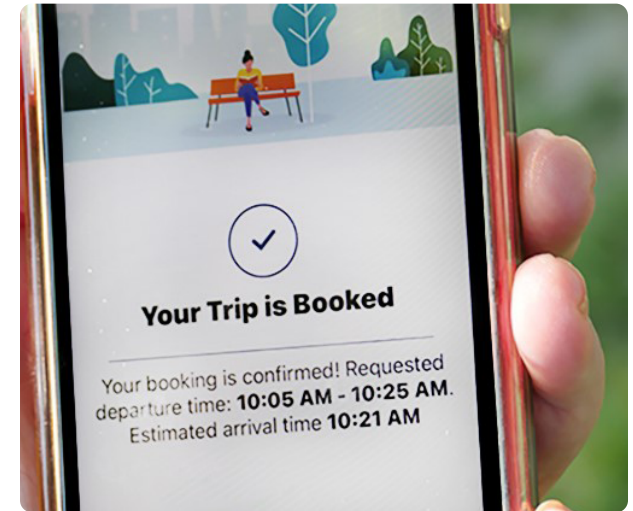


Photo Credit: MET-Go!, Big Stone Gap, VA

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# TECHNOLOGY

## PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation Find My Ride

PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation's Find My Ride (FMR) is an online application that enables prospective users or someone acting on their behalf (e.g., a family member or transportation staff member) to make a single application for the most prevalent transportation assistance programs in Pennsylvania. Users answer a series of basic questions about their transportation needs, and the application automatically adds the requirements of those programs for which an applicant is eligible. The completed application is then routed to the local providers of those programs.

### What makes this innovative?

Someone applying for transportation assistance traditionally would need to know which services they qualified for and fill out a paper form or fillable PDF file for each provider of those services. With a single electronic application, FMR streamlines the process by automatically sending applications to all the appropriate programs and providers based on the answers an applicant provides. Applications also tend to contain fewer errors. Transit providers may also use this system when taking service calls by phone, which can result in an applicant booking a ride the same day they apply.

FMR will be available in all Pennsylvania counties by early 2024. To date, more than 20,000 individuals have been approved for one or more transportation programs through the system. Development of the technology to create FMR was funded with FTA Sections 5310 and 5339 funding plus state funds.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Acquire both funding and staff resources to cover technology costs, project management, development and analysis. FMR was designed specifically for Pennsylvania's large and complex network of coordinated human service transportation. An application for a smaller network of fewer overlapping providers might be deployed with similar benefits for less effort and less funding (FMR cost close to \$3 million).
- Work closely with transportation providers to obtain detailed requirements and obtain their support.
- Review details with users (riders and providers) before starting development and coding of the online application form.
- Factor in time for accessibility testing, stakeholder feedback and implementing fixes.

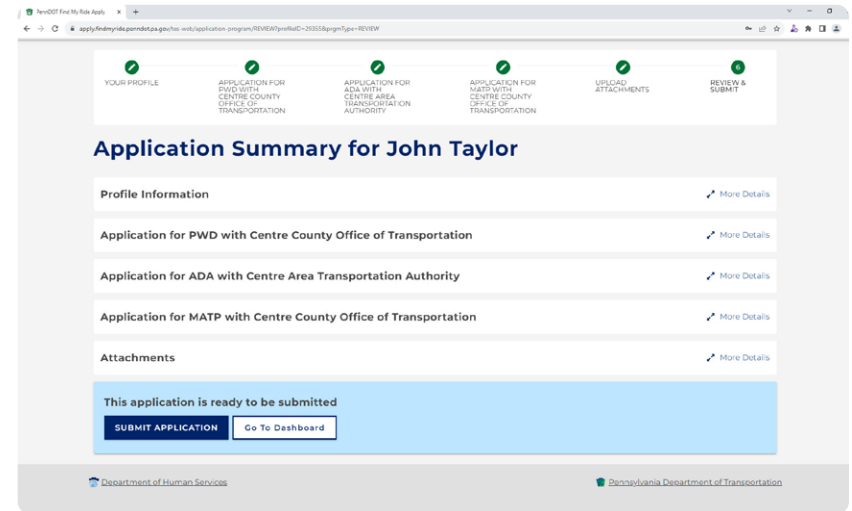


Photo Credit: PDOT Bureau of Public Transportation, Harrisburg, PA

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## Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation

### Quaboag Connector

Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation's Quaboag Connector is a rural transportation service developed through community collaboration and input to connect underserved rural residents of 10 Quaboag Valley communities with services and resources outside their area, such as health care and employment. While the Connector serves the general public, it prioritizes rides for older adults, people with disabilities and people with low incomes.

#### What makes this innovative?

The Connector is an accessible, affordable, demand-response, curb-to-curb service in a rural area largely unserved by regional transit. There are few sidewalks, traffic lights, streetlights or bike lanes in the region. Funded with FTA Section 5310 and 5311 funds plus private funding, rides are low or no cost, regardless of the rider's location or distance traveled to a destination in the service area. The Connector provides on average 1,000 rides per month, primarily for employment and medical appointments. Sixty-seven percent of rides have been for older adults and people with disabilities, and services have been expanded to meet the needs of specific populations:

- In 2022 the Connector took over Ware Senior Van Service, increasing access and extending hours of travel for older adults in Ware.
- Baystate Health Convenient Care Van provides no cost, non-emergency medical transportation (Medicaid NEMT) to any Baystate Health facility in a 10-town service area through a partnership with Baystate Wing Hospital.
- The Palmer Rides to Work program provides half-priced rides for low-income residents traveling to work, work-related training and job interviews.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Find out what makes riders feel safe and comfortable and what they need from a local transportation service when designing and developing a new transportation program. Paying attention to community feedback will help ensure success.
- Dedicate at least one vehicle for a new program such as the Connector, preferably wheelchair accessible, and a place to keep it. Funding for fuel, maintenance and repairs is also necessary.
- Plan for additional staff resources for implementing program operations, applying for funding, reporting, and ensuring compliance.
- Develop printed materials to advertise the service in the community.



Photo Credit: Quaboag Valley Community Development Corp

#### Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation

Ware, MA

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# ACCESSIBILITY

## rabbitcares Grocery Cart Program

rabbitcares provides grocery carts to eligible rabbittransit riders (older adults, people with disabilities and veterans) who need help transporting bags while using public transportation. Riders are responsible for ensuring carts are secure at all times. On fixed routes, carts can be placed in any open wheelchair securement site or close to the rider. On paratransit, drivers help secure carts, as needed. Access to grocery carts gives personal access to healthy food and independence in shopping, while decreasing the risk of falling and fostering safety in public transit travel.

### What makes this innovative?

Two and a half million Pennsylvanians (21 percent of the population) have limited access to food. Whether living in a food desert, having insufficient funds to purchase food, or experiencing mobility challenges, older adults and people with disabilities may encounter access issues that prevent them from obtaining food to keep them healthy and independent. Providing a grocery cart to public transportation riders won't address all these issues, but it will help those who avoid shopping because they cannot carry grocery bags. Something as simple as a grocery cart can promote shopping independence and keep riders active, engaged in their community and healthy. Nearly 96 percent of those surveyed who have received carts said the program has positively impacted their quality of life and makes shopping safer by decreasing the risk of accidents and falls. More than 80 percent reported having a cart makes the difference between access to groceries and not having food when they need it.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Seek funding partners and referrals from other agencies when creating the program.
- Ship the cart directly from the vendor, once a rider is deemed eligible. This is the easiest, most efficient way to handle delivery.
- Implement a tracking system for funds requested and received as well as for carts requested, shipped and received.



Photo Credit: rabbitcares, York, PA

### rabbitcares

York, PA

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## Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission Regional Transportation Collaborative

The Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission has created the Regional Transportation Collaborative (RTC), a mobility management program, through the use of Virginia’s first one-call, one-click call center. Its flexible design allows partner programs to participate at the level they are able at any given time and increases the ability for nontraditional stakeholders to participate. Its collaborative structure enables RTC to leverage partnerships and resources to support fund raising, strategic planning, staffing, data collection and more.

### What makes this innovative?

RTC’s Mobility Center provides mobility services through a central phone number, and it coordinates and supports information and referral. With a strong emphasis on collaboration among partners and sharing resources, RTC supports eight local transportation nonprofit programs, partners with more than 30 community agencies and continually implements new mobility solutions to address the region’s mobility challenges.

Over a four-year period, from fiscal year 2019 through 2023, RTC generated nearly 600-percent growth in mobility funding and services for older adults and people with disabilities. RTC’s collaborative relationships with diverse partners means that rather than competing for funds, they can jointly apply, and they typically meet eligibility for any state or federal transportation grant, including match requirements. The collaboration has enabled RTC to increase funding from AARP and three local foundations as well.

Partnerships also allow RTC to align priorities, data and services with local foundations. For example, RTC now partners with three programs supporting vulnerable individuals who need behavioral health counseling and drug and alcohol treatment services, which has opened new funding opportunities.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Secure local buy-in for the collaborative to enable the ability to leverage funding, staffing and partnerships.
- Address partner differences in organizational policies and procedures when forming a collaboration. Partners should be willing to consider nontraditional approaches when exploring leveraging of funds, policies, service provision and more.
- Secure commitments from all partners to dedicate ongoing staff time to the collaboration.



*Photo Credit: Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission, Culpeper, VA*

**Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission**  
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## ACCESSIBILITY and EQUITY

### Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management Hop Scott Volunteer Program

Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management's Hop Scott program started as volunteer transportation offering food deliveries. It added citizen transport for non-emergency medical needs, transports for mental health, vets helping vets transportation, and now coordination with MiCASA to assist the Latino population in Scott County. With three, county-owned accessible vans driven by volunteers, this service is managed by two full-time mobility managers who also coordinate with public transit, oversee non-emergency medical transportation, problem solve for transportation options with County Human Services and recommend fixed route public transit solutions.

#### What makes this innovative?

The Hop Scott volunteer program is meeting multiple community needs and has started two new options with its wheelchair accessible vans, including coordination with MiCASA, a group focused on the needs of the Latino population throughout Scott County. First, the vans pick up food at local markets for distribution to the community, and second they help Latinos get to medical appointments and pre-school screenings.

With a Live Well at Home grant funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Hop Scott has 10 active volunteers who use either the accessible vans or their own vehicles with mileage reimbursement. The program is focused on older adults and people with disabilities to help them stay in their homes. Food delivery has been promoted with marketing flyers in both English and Spanish. Other Hop Scott marketing comprises of social and print media including Facebook, NextDoor, radio ads, and newspapers, which is also considered for language translation, as needed.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Balance marketing with volunteer recruitment to meet ride demand.
- Consider nontraditional volunteers. Hop Scott has one volunteer who is under 30 and works full time but is willing to help in the evening or on weekends.
- Secure county support with grants and matching funds along with support from local communities. Hop Scott has county funding through 2027 using local transportation tax dollars.
- Partner with local service organizations to recruit volunteer drivers.
- Acquire strong commitments from managers of the food programs who appreciate the impact of food delivery on local communities.



Photo Credit: Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management, Shakopee, MN

#### Scott/Carver Counties Mobility Management

Shakopee, MN

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## Senior Resource Association

### Developmental Mobility Advantage Ride Program

Senior Resource Association's Advantage Ride program provides specialized training for transportation operators and staff working with developmentally disabled individuals on the Treasure Coast, and it leverages funds to offer zero-fare trips across a four-county area. It improves the lives of those with developmental disabilities by offering mobility options.

The Advantage Ride program involves collaboration between two community transportation coordinators and four transportation operators, and everyone involved—drivers, call takers and administrators—receives specialized training to work with individuals with developmental disabilities. Funding has been acquired from four sources including the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged, the Florida Department of Transportation and St. Lucie County.

#### What makes this innovative?

The program offers riders access to transportation during times when fixed route and demand-response services are not available, and it alleviates rider concerns about having affordable and reliable transportation to employment, educational programs and medical services. The program provides safe, reliable transportation to allow individuals with disabilities to be more independent.

One key aspect of the program is that each staff member, ranging from the driver to dispatcher, undergoes specialized training to work with individuals with developmental disabilities. The result is a safer and more friendly experience for riders. To make the eligibility process more inclusive and less confusing for riders, the program is fare free and involves contacting only one office. This streamlines the services, makes sure all residents on the Treasure Coast have equity and does not add an additional layer of complexity to a process that can be overwhelming to individuals with developmental disabilities. Without the zero-fare and no co-pay transportation service, individuals with developmental disabilities on the Treasure Coast would have to pay up to \$50 per trip. The average number of daily trips is 237.

#### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Provide basic IDD training to all transportation providers and staff. For example,
  - The Introduction to Developmental Disabilities Guide by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities
  - The Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation video by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Five Tips for Working with People with Disabilities by Paraquad
  - Rutgers' Developmental Disabilities Training Series: Understanding Behavior and Managing Behavior
- Watch your budget allocations carefully. Senior Resource Association spends 82 percent of budgeted funds on transportation provider payments; 13 percent on staff wages, benefits and taxes; and five percent on marketing and postage.



Photo Credit: Senior Resource Association, Vero Beach, FL

#### Senior Resource Association

Vero Beach, FL

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CEO

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# HEALTH CARE ACCESS

## United Way of Southeastern Idaho Ride United

United Way of Southeastern Idaho's Ride United, funded with state and private funds through United Way, offers no-cost transportation above and beyond Medicaid NEMT for health-related activities for patients of the local free clinic, crisis and recovery centers, and mental health facilities. By providing no-cost transportation, nonprofits can help their clients to better address the social determinants of health related to health care and help them to achieve long-term, sustainable health improvements. Ride United also helps community members access other essential services such as dental appointments, housing support, meetings at local schools and more.

### What makes this innovative?

Medicaid NEMT has strict policies on who can and cannot access rides and under what circumstances, and it does not cover all types of rides that Medicaid recipients need. Ride United's holistic approach, designed by a team of community-based professionals in response to an assessment of local social determinants of health, found that asset-limited, income-constrained and employed (ALICE) community residents experience barriers to good health. One-third of those surveyed experience housing and food insecurity, and one-quarter experience unmet needs associated with utilities and transportation. The program has quickly grown to several hundred rides per month provided to this target population, including rides to medical care for a caregiver who was suffering congestive heart failure and rides provided to another community member with disabilities who was able to access permanent, supportive housing and avoid homelessness.

### Lessons Learned and Replication Advice:

- Consider a United Way partnership to access technical support for innovative transportation solutions.
- Develop a supplementary program for your state's Medicaid NEMT, ensuring that all participating agencies understand and receive guidance on Medicaid NEMT rules.
- Seek partners who are willing to troubleshoot issues and who have strong communication skills to work with transportation providers and riders when schedules change.
- Allow for staff time to onboard new agencies, manage monthly billing, support troubleshooting, develop and maintain relevant policies and provide ongoing connections to partnering organizations.

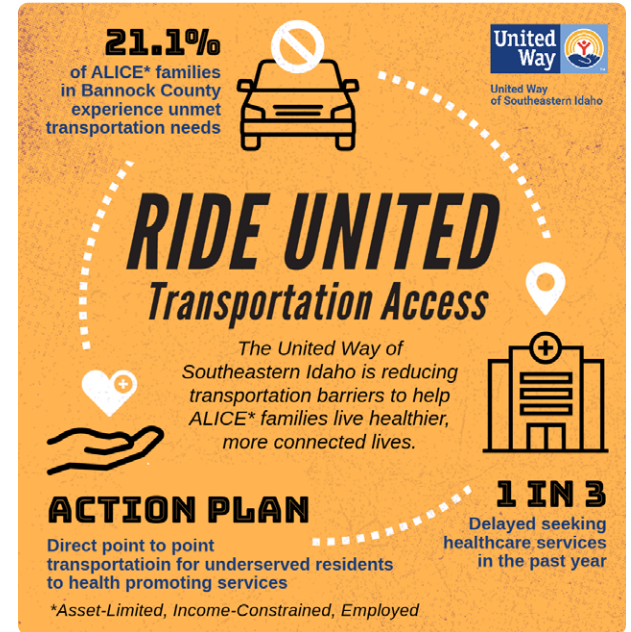


Photo Credit: United Way of Southeastern Idaho, Pocatello, ID

**United Way of Southeastern Idaho**  
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## Who We Are

Established in 2015, the NADTC is a federally funded technical assistance center administered by Easterseals and USAgings based in Washington, DC.

The **National Aging and Disability Transportation Center** is funded through a cooperative agreement of Easterseals, USAgings, and the U.S Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

**USAgings** is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities. USAgings and our members work to improve the quality of life and health of older adults and people with disabilities, including supporting people with chronic illness, people living with dementia, family caregivers and others who want to age well at home and in the community. Together, we are ensuring that all people can age well. Our members are the local leaders that develop, coordinate and deliver a wide range of home and community-based services, including information and referral/assistance, case management, home-delivered and congregate meals, in-home services, caregiver supports, transportation, evidence-based health and wellness programs, long-term care ombudsman programs and more.

**[www.usaging.org](http://www.usaging.org)**

**Easterseals** is leading the way to full equity, inclusion, and access through life-changing disability and community services. For more than 100 years, we have worked tirelessly with our partners to enhance quality of life and expand local access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. And we won't rest until every one of us is valued, respected, and accepted. Easterseals provides essential services and on-the-ground supports to more than 1.5 million people each year — from early childhood programs for the critical first five years, to autism services, to medical rehabilitation and employment programs, to veterans' services, and more. Our public education, policy, and advocacy initiatives positively shape perceptions and address the urgent and evolving needs of the one in four Americans living with disabilities today. Together, we're empowering people with disabilities, families and communities to be full and equal participants in society. **[www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com)**

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