



Fulton County Government
Department of Senior Services
Transportation Program

FY2019 Access and Mobility Partnership

Grant: Human Services Coordination Research (HSCR)

Final Report March 2025

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Executive Summary

The FY2019 Access and Mobility Partnership Grant: Human Services Coordination Research (HSCR) funds were awarded to the Fulton County Department of Senior Services Alternative Services Transportation Program to expand transportation access for Fulton County seniors with disabilities. Utilizing these grant funds allowed Fulton County to improve ADA accessibility, reduce limitations on service animals & companion riders, decrease ridership cost, and expand allowable trip purposes for program participants. Fulton County partnered with the Atlanta Regional Commission as a Direct Recipient due to their ability to partner with counties and act on their behalf to apply for and access these funds. Fulton could not directly access FTA Access and Mobility Partnership grant funds because we are not classified as a Direct Recipient with FTA. The Department of Senior Services initially partnered with two organizations that provided referrals of seniors with disabilities that had transportation needs. These organizations were the Parkinson's Foundation and the Center for the Visually Impaired. Once registered, participants were able to access Uber/Lyft transportation at a low cost of \$1.00 per trip.

The main goal of expanding transportation access to seniors with disabilities remained the same through the life of the project; however, the Pandemic brought forth major unexpected challenges. Our target population was proven to be the most vulnerable to Covid which impacted our ridership greatly. The impact of Covid 19 led to referral organization partnership changes and necessary revisions to the performance measures of the project. Despite these challenges, our Access and Mobility grant participants took over 2,900 trips since the program's inception which met our revised and approved trip target. The Department of Senior Services Quality Assurance team surveyed 55 participants and found that 100% of riders were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality of service being received. The surveys also showed that 90% of

seniors that utilized the program stated their health has improved due to increased mobility/access to medical appointments.

Introduction/Background

The Department of Senior Services connects Fulton County Seniors aged 60 and up to the right resources. These resources aid goals for active aging, care, and independence. Our services support aging in place with respect, quality, and dignity. Services are provided through partnerships and contracts with community-based groups. Our Senior Transportation Program remains the top requested service from seniors across Fulton County. This need is reinforced by the Atlanta Regional Commission's projection that by 2050, there will be 8.6 million people residing in the metro Atlanta area. Over 1,166,000 residents are projected to be over the age of 55. Seniors will continue to need a safe and reliable mode of transportation.

Fulton County Department of Senior Services contracts with two vendors to provide transportation using the traditional paratransit bus service, and the alternative transportation network companies like Uber/Lyft. Transdev, Inc. provides paratransit bus service access to our Neighborhood Senior Centers, Adult Day Centers, and demand response trips. The department rideshare program better known as the Alternative Transportation Program is facilitated by Common Courtesy, Inc. This vendor coordinates Uber/Lyft trips for our seniors. Participants are able to travel 15 miles from their home for medical appointments and 10 miles for other trips (shopping, banking, social activities, etc.).

The financial demands of the Alternative Transportation Program are quite elaborate with an average cost of \$375k per month. Because this program was being supported by general fund dollars only, the HSCR grant provided a great opportunity to expand services. Our team conducted consumer surveys and

utilized need assessment mobility statistics that were provided by the Atlanta Regional Commission in determining our target population for the grant. We determined that Fulton County seniors with disabilities would benefit the most. Now it was time for the fun stuff, developing a plan of action!

Project Overview/Description

We narrowed down our target population of disabled seniors to those that are either visually impaired or living with Parkinson's disease. Memorandums of Understanding were established with the Center for Visually Impaired and the Parkinson's Foundation to improve the transportation accessibility of their senior clients. The great thing about this project is that it was an extension of our existing Alternative Transportation program.

Senior participants that were referred from our partner organizations would pay a \$1 cost share per trip. Seniors must have a credit card, debit card, or prepaid debit card on file to pay the cost share. This charge was billed monthly.

Participants were allowed to have no more than 8 rides per month with mileage limits of 15 miles for medical appointments and 10 miles for other trips (shopping, banking, social activities, etc.). Participants were allowed to take only one round trip per day.

A transportation coordinator was hired to manage all aspects of the program. The coordinator worked with the vendor and partnering organizations to manage the referral process, conduct trainings, community outreach, and monitor billing activity.

Key Partnerships

- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Common Courtesy, Inc.
- Parkinson's Foundation
- Center for the Visually Impaired
- Grady Hospital Cancer Center
- Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia
- Jewish Family and Career Services

Impacts of Covid-19

The Pandemic brought forth a new challenging world. During 2020, the Governor of Georgia mandated a shelter in place ordinance which restricted travel to emergency personnel only. Our grant program was at a ridership standstill until this ordinance was lifted. The senior population was leery to return outside upon the lift, as seniors were proven to be the most vulnerable to Covid. They had no desire to travel as they felt unsafe leaving their homes. Our grant partnering organizations experienced their own share of troubles during this time. The Parkinson's Foundation alerted that their client base was very much uncomfortable with traveling. The management team at the Parkinson's Foundation decided not to continue the partnership with Fulton County because they moved entirely to virtual programming. The Center for the Visually Impaired encountered employee layoffs and high turnover due to reduced working hours during this time. The lack of staff during that time led to a decline in client referrals for the grant. These collective issues were a major blow to the Access and Mobility Grant Program. Our course of action was to seek a grant extension, seek new referral partners, and revise the performance measures of the project.

Performance Measures

The tables below depict both the initial and revised performance measures that had to be adopted due to Covid-19 and outcome measures.

	INITIAL Performance Measures	Target
	Short Term	
1	Provide 4 Trainings on use on the available transportation alternatives for low-income seniors at four (4) multipurpose Centers.	4
	Mid-Range	
1	Number of Trips provided through ASTS Program	Provide 9,900 Trips
2	Maintain 95% average on time performance	
4	Number of TNC Drivers that are trained	10 TNC drivers are trained to assist those with limited abilities;
5	Number TNC Drivers trained to allow service animals to ride with seniors with disability	5 TNC drivers allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities.
	Long-Term	
4	ASTS is adopted by other municipalities and states around the county.	4 municipalities/state agencies
	REVISED Performance Measures	Target
	Short Term	
1	Provide 4 Trainings on use on the available transportation alternatives for low-income seniors at four (4) multipurpose Centers.	4
	Mid-Range	
1	Number of Trips provided through ASTS Program	Provide 2,900 Trips
2	Maintain 95% average on time performance	
4	Number of TNC Drivers that are trained	10 TNC drivers are trained to assist those with limited abilities;
5	Number TNC Drivers trained to allow service animals to ride with seniors with disability	5 TNC drivers allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities.
	Long-Term	
4	ASTS is adopted by other municipalities and states around the county.	4 municipalities/state agencies

Outcome Measure(s): identify the outcome goal for your project.

Fulton County seniors feel less isolated due to the transportation services provided	
Fulton County seniors reported improved health due to the transportation services provided.	
Fulton County seniors feel more empowered, independent, and mobile within their community due to the transportation service provided	

Outcome

Access and Mobility grant participants took over 2,900 trips since the program's inception which met our revised provided trip target mark. The Department of Senior Services Quality Assurance team surveyed participants and found that 100% of riders were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality of service being received. The surveys also showed that 90% of seniors that utilized the program stated their health has improved due to increased mobility/access to medical appointments.

The tables below depict the final performance measures and scope of work results.

	Performance Measure	Target	Actual During Reporting Period	Actual to Date	Percent of Target to Date
	Short Term				
1	Provide 4 Trainings on use on the available transportation alternatives for low-income seniors at four (4) multipurpose Centers.	4		4	100%
	Mid-Range				
1	Number of Trips provided through ASTS Program	Provide 2,900 Trips		2935	100%
2	Maintain 95% average on time performance				98%
4	Number of TNC Drivers that are trained	10 TNC drivers are trained to assist those with limited abilities;		10	100%
5	Number TNC Drivers trained to allow service animals to ride with senior with disability	5 TNC drivers allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities.		5	100%
	Long-Term				
4	ASTS is adopted by other municipalities and states around the county.	4 municipalities/state agencies		3	75%

Outcome Measure(s): identify the outcome goal for your project.

Fulton County seniors feel less isolated due to the transportation services provided	90% of seniors utilizing the ASTS program service state they do not feel isolated
Fulton County seniors reported improved health due to the transportation services provided.	90% of seniors utilizing the ASTS program services state that their health has improved due to increased mobility/access to medical appointments
Fulton County seniors feel more empowered, independent, and mobile within their community due to the transportation service provided	95% of ASTS riders feel more empowered; more than 92% of ASTS riders feel more independent; 90% of ASTS riders feel more mobile.

Fulton County Scope of Work Duties	Completion Percentage
Hire Transportation Research Coordinator	100%
Implement new/revised procedures for ASTS program services	100%
Ensure all appropriate community outreach presentations include information about ASTS	100%
Integrate training program for TNC drivers to assist senior rides with disabilities	100%
Develop policies and procedures to assist seniors with seeing eye dogs utilize ASTS program services	100%
Contractor meeting to implement new process to deliver services to seniors and go over expectations	100%
Offer first training to seniors on how to access TNC services through ASTS programs	100%
Offer trainings to TNC drivers in how to assist customers with limited physical abilities	100%
Incorporate transportation program into the staff community outreach presentations	100%
Analyze performance measure data on ASTS program and present finding to key stakeholders	100%
Offer second training to seniors on how to access TNC services through the ASTS program	100%
Coordinate with transportation partners to expand their programs to include TNC services	100%
Offer third training to seniors on how to access TNC services through the ASTS program	100%
Provide consultation/technical assistance to other states/municipalities on program implementation	75%
Analyze performance measure data on ASTS program and present findings to key stakeholders	100%

Moving Forward/Sustainability

The grant program faced its fair share of challenges mostly due to the Pandemic however, we made it to the finish line. Every participant that entered our Alternative Services Transportation program through this grant will be able to maintain services at the same cost of \$1 per trip. The Department of Senior Services Transportation Program will continue to seek additional funding from grants such as the HSCR to supplement our existing funding.

Lessons Learned

- Prior to starting the grant program, the department did not secure enough available vendors that could offer referrals in case of emergency.
- We should have held more thorough introductory meetings with the FTA and the ARC to better understand the TRAMS system and how activity should be entered.