



HOMEBOUND IN GOOCHLAND COUNTY
Using Public-Private Partnerships to Expand Mobility

by

Transportation Immersion Team 2021

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Introduction

Access to transportation is vital for quality of life. Transportation is what connects us to work, to education, to food, to healthcare, and one another. Lack of access to public transit or a vehicle not only prohibits an individual's ability to support themselves and their families, but it also affects their physical and mental well-being. In turn, this creates an even more significant impact on the community by curbing economic growth and straining our healthcare system.

According to Smart Growth America's survey of 292 counties, those with the highest rate of zero-car households are rural. Lower population density and a lower tax base limit state and local government investment in expanding public transit or funding on-demand services are minimal to non-existent. Therefore, rural residents are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of lack of transit.

Journey

We began by assessing the transportation options available in the Richmond region and broad issues. Topics included:

- High-speed rail
- International air travel
- Richmond Port terminal and its regional impact
- Bus service into the counties and fare-free transit systems
- Access to resources for vulnerable populations
- Technology to centralize services
- Public /private relationships
- Examples from other states and countries

Our team felt most drawn to the human services aspect of transportation and how lack of access to core community amenities was debilitating to vulnerable populations, especially in rural Virginia. We noted that those in vulnerable communities could more easily find transport to medical appointments. Still, there is a significant gap in transit resources to other core services such as shopping, education, and entertainment — a more 360-degree approach for quality of life. Combining the knowledge of our team member Paul Drumwright, an administrator in Goochland County, with the existing infrastructure of the well-established human services nonprofit Goochland Cares, created the model for our project.

Findings

In interviews about door-to-door transit services available in the region, challenges began to emerge. Lack of resources, sufficient staffing, and effective coordination between localities was most prevalent. Our talk with Goochland Cares found that their medical transportation service for vulnerable communities was severely impacted due to the pandemic and a driver vacancy. Goochland Cares leaders agreed that transportation to other services beyond medical appointments was a significant challenge. One not easily addressed in a county that is 40 miles wide with commercial hubs far apart from those who could benefit from them.

Solution

We looked at combining the goodwill of the public and private companies with technology to leverage and expand existing resources. The solution we found was The Giving Wall, which Becky Crump founded in partnership with the City of Richmond's Community Wealth Building Office. It effectively works as a large online community notice board where people can either request help or supply help.

After conversing with Crump, we realized The Giving Wall concept could allow Goochland Cares to tap into services or funds donated by private businesses. Caseworkers could post client needs and look to find matches. It could also provide a secure way for businesses to support these endeavors. We are excited to report that Goochland Cares is currently reviewing the opportunity to join The Giving Wall.

Call to Action

1. Publicity campaign for The Giving Wall to say it now offers transportation options for Goochland. Solicit companies in the region such as CarMax and engineering firms to sponsor the transportation section of the wall and refine the technology.
2. Identify the following community and need areas to benefit from The Giving Wall.
3. Support public/private partnerships as a means to address community problems.

Research: Regional statistics, services offered by organizations and interviews with:

- Ashley Austin - Transportation Planner
- Toni Beechaum - Aging & Disabilities Care Coordinator at Senior Connections
- Lateisha Brown - Director of Community Support Services, Goochland Cares
- The Rev. Ben Campbell, GRTC Chair and CVTA Member
- Brittany Creasey - Food Pantry Associate, Goochland Cares
- Becky Crump - Founder of The Giving Wall
- Carol Dunlap - Family Services Director, Goochland Cares
- Todd Eure – Assistant Director of Public Works
- Ashley Ferguson - The Office of Community Wealth Building
- Emily Fisher - Family Service Specialist Goochland Department of Social Services
- Sally Graham - Executive Director, Goochland Cares
- Paula Grimes - The Shepherd's Center of Richmond
- Leslie Haley - Chair of the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors
- Ken Lantz - Program Manager, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission
- Jayne Lloyd - Ride Assist Services, Powhatan
- Chet Parsons - Director of Transportation, Plan RVA
- Naomi Robinson - Mental Health Case Manager, Goochland Powhatan Community Services
- Angie Shiflett - Facilities Manager, Goochland Cares
- Sharon Smidler - Transportation Development Division Director
- Dominic Williams - Henrico senior resident