

FINAL REPORT - 2015



Task 1 Develop localized transportation plans for seniors

Partners: United Way of Chittenden County, town managers and Select Board members throughout Chittenden County, Neighbor Rides Advisory Committee

Task 1.1 Send outreach letter to town managers

Task 1.2 Map out demographic data and existing ridership

Task 1.3 Inventory transportation services available to seniors

Task 1.4 Meet with town managers to share town specific data and services

Task 1.5 Present to Select Boards

Task 1.6 Identify interested key persons from towns/Select Boards

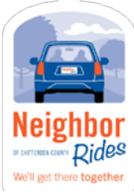
Task 1.7 Meet with key persons to develop outreach and education plan in their community

Task	Time Horizon	Deliverable	Progress
1.1	August	Outreach letter	Done
1.2	August-September	Environmental scan with current and projected demographic and E&D ridership data	Done
1.3	August-September	List of transportation services available	Draft done
1.4	October	Meeting notes	Done
1.5	November	Select Board presentation	Done
1.6	November	List of key persons	Ongoing
1.7	December-June	Status report on development of town plans	Ongoing

Neighbor Rides conducted outreach and education to towns throughout Chittenden County to share and acquire knowledge about existing resources and service gaps. Throughout the past year, Neighbor Rides staff and members of its advisory committee met with community partners, town administrators and Select Boards to discuss transportation issues that effect their elderly population. In addition to a general annual update highlighting the rationale for and role of Neighbor Rides as well as first year successes, Neighbor Rides analyzed and compiled town level data, including demographic data and projections from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development and ridership data for both the Elderly and Disabled (E&D) and Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) programs for each of the 18 towns in the county (Essex and Essex Junction were grouped together).

This outreach served to develop and strengthen community relationships, understand each town's perspective and knowledge of transportation for elders, including availability and usage of current of transportation options, and identify pockets of opportunity to expand transportation options for elders in Chittenden County. A draft transportation inventory documents current options, while a town by town matrix highlights local needs, interests and pockets of opportunities to expand. Neighbor Rides has been consulting with community partners to conduct environment scans and needs assessments in order to explore opportunities to utilize local resources to meet local needs.

In Huntington, Neighbor Rides has been working with a group of interested residents to pilot a weekly excursion to Hinesburg for transportation disadvantaged elders. The group consists of



representatives from the town of Huntington, the Huntington senior meal program, the Community Church of Huntington and a current Neighbor Rides volunteer. Neighbor Rides has been working with Cathedral Square staff to explore options to increase usage of its van that provides social and grocery shopping trips for residents at some of their housing facilities and has been collaborating with the Heineberg Senior Center in Burlington to have volunteers drive residents of Thayer House to its center for lunch and activities. Staff from the Winooski Senior Center and City of Winooski are interested in exploring opportunities for a pilot. In Charlotte, Neighbor Rides met with members of the Board of Trustees of the Charlotte Senior Center and town administrators. Based on these discussions, the Senior Center Board decided not to explore a pilot at this time. Finally, Neighbor Rides staff has been meeting with members of the Community Senior Center Committee that is working to open a senior center in Richmond to serve residents of Richmond, Huntington and Bolton and staff from the Hinesburg Community Resource Center to help them think about the role transportation will play in providing services to their senior population.

Task 2 Develop Independent Partner Model

Partners: Neighbor Rides Advisory Committee, potential new partners such as senior housing facilities, senior centers and faith based organizations in Chittenden County

Task 2.1 Identify services and corresponding fees that Neighbor Rides can offer to new partners

Task 2.2 Determine role of Neighbor Rides partners in new model

Task 2.3 Draft business plan

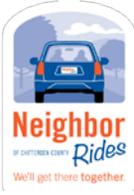
Task 2.4 Identify potential new partners

Task 2.5 Meet with new partners to get feedback on business model

Task	Time Horizon	Deliverable	Progress
2.1	October-January	List of services and fees	Done
2.2	October-January	List of partner roles	Done
2.3	February	Business plan (model)	Done
2.4	March	List of potential partners	Ongoing
2.5	April-June	Status report on implementing fee for service model	Ongoing

Neighbor Rides designed an independent partner model with multiple components: consultation, environmental scan, pilot initiative, technical assistance and full integration.

1. Consultation: Through its outreach efforts, Neighbor Rides meets with potential partners to discuss current efforts and unmet needs for elder transportation in their communities.
2. Environmental Scan: Neighbor Rides created a needs assessment tool to help independent partners establish priorities and plan their initiative.
3. Pilot Initiative: Based on the content of the aforementioned needs assessment, partners design an evaluation plan and implement their pilot initiative for 8-12 weeks to determine the level of need in their community. During the pilot, partners can either rent a lift-equipped



van from SSTA or recruit and utilize volunteer drivers. Neighbor Rides developed work plans and a toolkit of resources that can be customized for each partner, and the UVM Medical Center Community Benefit Fund will provide funding to help subsidize these pilots.

4. Technical assistance or full integration: Based on an evaluation of the pilot initiative, Neighbor Rides will help partners determine if they should continue their effort. Neighbor Rides can provide on-going support in two ways: technical assistance or full integration.
 - a. Technical assistance: Neighbor Rides will share resources, develop templates and provide trainings on volunteer driver recruitment, training and management strategies that allow partners to create a mini-replica of Neighbor Rides in their community. Partners will manage their efforts independent from Neighbor Rides.
 - b. Full integration: Partners will continue to implement volunteer recruitment strategies, but Neighbor Rides will provide volunteer training and management, matching and dispatching of volunteers and passengers (via SSTA) and monitoring and evaluation of the effort. The fee structure for full integration is still being determined.

Task 3 Develop Long-Term Funding Strategy

Partners: Neighbor Rides Advisory Committee, potential funders such as UVM Medical Center, E&D partners, Vermont Agency of Transportation and others.

Task 3.1 Identify potential permanent funding streams

Task 3.2 Create presentation to share with potential funders

Task 3.3 Meet with potential funders

Task	Time Horizon	Deliverable	Progress
3.1	September-December	List of potential funders	Ongoing
3.2	December	Presentation for funders	Ongoing
3.3	January-June	Status report on long-term funding sources	Ongoing

Changing conditions have made it challenging to secure long-term funding streams; however, Neighbor Rides continues to engage current and potential long term funders. Neighbor Rides anticipates that improving the health and well-being of Chittenden County’s growing elderly population by removing the transportation barrier to care will continue to be an investment priority for community partners.

Task 4 Develop Evaluation Plan

Partners: Neighbor Rides Advisory Committee, Consumer Informed Senior Nutrition & Well Being Steering Committee

Task 4.1 Identify indicators to measure impact of Neighbor Rides

Task 4.2 Develop data collection plan

Task 4.3 Collaborate with Consumer Informed Senior Nutrition & Well-Being Steering Committee to ensure transportation is an issue addressed in their data collection and program design



Task	Time Horizon	Deliverable	Progress
4.1	August-October	List of indicators	Done
4.2	October-December	Data collection plan	Done
4.3	August-June	Updated data that incorporates findings from this group	Ongoing

The Neighbor Rides advisory committee has been working on indicators to measure its impact on the E&D and NEMT programs. In partnership with SSTA and CCTA, Neighbor Rides developed a data collection plan that tracks and measures the impact of volunteers on the E&D program on an annual basis. After discussions with SSTA and DVHA (who manages NEMT), it was decided to continue to track the usage of volunteers for NEMT but not their impact on the program. Due to the enormity and complex cost allocation plan of NEMT, the greatest impact for volunteers to have on the program is for long-distance trips to destinations outside of Chittenden County. SSTA has been and continues to do this successfully and there is little room for Neighbor Rides to improve upon their efforts.

Over the past year, volunteer rides have increased more than 40%. Volunteers are projected to provide around 4,500 trips in FY15, while there were 3,157 volunteer trips in FY14. At the same time, a growing number of these volunteer trips are being allocated to NEMT. This shift is a result of the recent Medicaid expansion, closing of Benway's taxi services and difficulty of manually scheduling volunteers that fits both the volunteer's availability and E&D parameters. Neighbor Rides hopes that the highly anticipated launch of new scheduling software procured by VTrans for para-transit providers throughout Vermont will maximize efficiencies so that volunteers will have the biggest impact on the E&D program, thereby increasing access to transportation for elders and persons with disabilities.

Neighbor Rides continues to collaborate with the Senior Nutrition and Well-Being Steering Committee who is conducting a county-wide Healthy Aging survey that addresses services for seniors and barriers to participation, including transportation. The Steering Committee is entering its second phase of data collection, focused on small group discussions, as well as collaborating with other community efforts such as AARP's Livable City survey.