AGENDA
Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) Monthly Meeting
Thursday, September 26, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.
In person at the Water Street Center, 407 E. Water Street, Charlottesville, VA

Item	Time	Description
1	4:00-4:05	**General Administration** • Introductions and Announcements (welcome new members) • Approval of Agenda* • Approval of draft meeting minutes August 22, 2024*
2	4:10-4:15	**Matters from the Public: limit of 3 minutes per speaker** *Members of the Public are welcome to provide comments on any public-interest, transit-related topic, including the items listed on this agenda – limit three minutes per speaker.*
3	4:15-4:30	**Remote Meeting Policy Update** • Remote Meeting Memo • Remote Meeting Policy
4	4:30-5:00	**Charlottesville Area Alliance Walk Audit** (Jen Fleisher, Charlottesville Area Alliance) • Presentation
5	5:00-5:25	**PATH/Mobility Management Program Update** (Lucinda Shannon) • Market Study • Marketing Implementation Plan • PATH Website
6	5:25-5:50	**Transit Provider Updates** • Albemarle County Schools (Jamie Gellner) • UTS (Scott Silsdorf) • CAT and City of Charlottesville Schools (Garland Williams) • Jaunt (Mike Murphy) • DRPT (Katy Miller)
7	5:50-5:55	**Staff Updates**
8	5:55-6:00	**Other Business (Updates and Reminders)** (Supervisor McKeel, Chair)
9	6:00	**Adjourn**

A vote is expected for this item
Next Meeting December 12, 2024 (At the Water Street Center)

Guests can join in person or by using the link below:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81088437906?pwd=N2tOK3lVTnJEZkFIdCtWYXA2VzRwdz09
Meeting ID: 810 8843 7906   Passcode: 148365   Phone: 301-715-8592

If a committee member needs to participate remotely, please contact Lucinda Shannon at lshannon@tjpdc.org, 413-219-1748 two days before the meeting to receive a personal meeting link.

The Regional Transit Partnership serves as an official advisory board, created by the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County and Jaunt, in Partnership with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to provide recommendations to decision-makers on transit-related matters.

Regional Transit Partnership Members

VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES
Brian Pinkston, Charlottesville
Natalie Oschrin, Charlottesville
Diantha McKeel, Albemarle
Michael Pruitt, Albemarle
Katy Miller, Department of Rail and Public Transit
Randy Parker, Jaunt Rural
Caetano De Campo Lopes, Jaunt Urban
Scott Silsdorf, University Transit Service
Kendall Howell, University Transit Service (alternate)
NON-VOTING MEMBERS
Garland Williams, CAT, and Charlottesville Public School Transportation
Jamie Gellner, Albemarle County Public School Transportation
Mike Murphy, Jaunt
Christine Jacobs, Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
Ann Wall, Albemarle County Executive Office
Ben Chambers, Charlottesville Executive Office
Sara Pennington, Rideshare
Peter Thompson, Charlottesville Area Alliance
Vicky Marsh, University of Virginia Hospital
Peter Krebs, Piedmont Environmental Council

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Regional Transportation Partnership Meeting
Draft Minutes, August 22, 2024
The recording of this meeting can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OtR-phJAyQ

VOTING MEMBERS & ALTERNATES		STAFF	
Brian Pinkston, Charlottesville	x	Christine Jacobs, TJPDC	x
Natalie Oschrin, Charlottesville	x	Lucinda Shannon, TJPDC	x
Diantha McKeel, Albemarle	x	Gretchen Thomas, TJPDC	
Mike Pruitt, Albemarle *	x		
Katy Miller, DRPT			
Randy Parker, Jaunt Rural	x		
Caetano De Campo Lopes, Jaunt Urban	x		
Scott Silsdorf, UTS	x		
Kendall Howell, UTS (alternate)			
NON-VOTING MEMBERS		GUESTS/PUBLIC	
Garland Williams, CAT	x	Peter Peckaday	x
Jamie Gellner, Alb County PS			
Vicky Marsh, UVA Hospital			
Peter Thompson, CAA			
Jen Fleisher, CAA (alternate)	x		
Sara Pennington, Rideshare *	x		
Ann Wall, Albemarle	x		
Peter Krebs, PEC	x		
Mike Murphy, Jaunt	x		
Ben Chambers, Charlottesville			

* Remote attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Regional Transportation Partnership Chair, Diantha McKeel, presided and called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Motion/Action: Scott Silsdorf made a motion to allow Mike Pruitt to participate remotely. Natalie Oschrin seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Diantha McKeel invited those at the meeting to introduce themselves.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (MINUTE 7:22)

Approval of Agenda

Motion/Action: Brian Pinkston moved to approve the agenda. Caetano De Campo Lopes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

City of Charlottesville   Albemarle County   Fluvanna County   Greene County   Louisa County   Nelson County

401 East Water Street · Post Office Box 1505 · Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-1505
Telephone (434) 979-7310 · Fax (434) 979 1597 · Virginia Relay Users: 711 (TDD) · email: info@tjpdc.org · web: www.tjpdc.org

Approval of Minutes

Diantha McKeel said on the first page, noted that a change needs to be made. He noted that Randy Parker will be taking Hal Morgan's place on the committee representing Jaunt Rural, not Jamie Gellner.

Motion/Action: Brian Pinkston moved to approve the June 20 minutes as amended. Natalie Oschrin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (MINUTE 9:32)

Brian Pinkston made a motion to keep Diantha McKeel as Chair and Natalie Oschrin as Vice Chair.

Motion/Action: Brian Pinkston made a motion to elect Diantha McKeel as Chair with Natalie Oschrin as Vice Chair. Randy Parker seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC (MINUTE 12:15)

None.

5. CARTA WORK GROUP UPDATE (MINUTE 13:25)

Ann Wall presented the Board with the work done to date on the potential for a Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority (CARTA). She thanked Ben Chambers, Christine Jacobs, and Lucinda Shannon for their work on this endeavor thus far. She noted that she will be presenting this information to a joint meeting between the City and Albemarle County on September 17 and is looking to bring a recommendation from this committee to them at that time.

She reviewed the history of regional transit and governance structure and the key efforts in forming an RTA, including the Regional Transit Vision Plan and the Transit Governance Study (both found on the TJPDC website). After those studies were complete, it was recommended that the region create CARTA to serve as an interim entity for regional transit governance and decision making with the ability to expand its role over time. It was noted that the General Assembly determined that Charlottesville and Albemarle must be the entities to enact the RTA. Participation from the four surrounding counties and other organizations are welcome to support it as it moves forward. Ms. Wall said the particulars are detailed in the legislation.

She then reviewed the role (general, planning, funding, federal/state government), benefits, purpose, and intent of regional transit authorities. She shared the work completed to date including engagement with stakeholders, developing bylaws and a draft workplan for the set up and initial focus of the RTA.

Mr. De Campos Lopes asked for an explanation for the difference between the RTP and an RTA.

Ms. Wall continued with an explanation of the CARTA legislation from 2009 that describes the powers of the RTA, identifies initial members and other county members and partners, as well as other duties and responsibilities.

She then went on to review the draft bylaws. She said the bylaws would be adopted by the RTA when and if it is established. Each of the items in the bylaws can be acted upon locally and does not need action from the General Assembly.

Ms. Wall presented a review of the outreach conversations had with stakeholders.

Ms. Wall offered the committee a draft workplan for the proposed RTA. She noted that CARTA would need to approve the bylaws, elect officers, and designate committees. Goals need to be established, and improvements in services and customer service need to be considered. She said CARTA would need to prepare a budget, evaluate staffing and funding requirements, prepare grant applications, and identify possible revenue strategies. She also said that CARTA would need to advocate for transit needs in the area, recommend regional transit priorities, apply for grants and other funds, and begin developing a package of desired legislative updates.

She continued with key takeaways, noting that the region has a variety of transit needs to serve both urban and rural areas. She noted that standing up CARTA as an entity to make decisions about transit needs and service provision is the first step in resolving questions about transit.

Lastly, she said staff recommends the RTP endorse the creation of the Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority.

There was an extended comment and question-and-answer session after the presentation.

Mike Murphy said he feels there are some things that may make endorsing CARTA problematic for him, including who ultimately controls Jaunt if it is in the RTA, and mentioned that there could potentially be competition for grants in the future.

Garland Williams noted that there are numerous RTA models, including ones that allow for the big entity to collect money/go after funding, and then buy the services of the smaller organizations.

Peter Krebs said it will be important to discuss funding sources and timing for next steps.

Motion/Action: Brian Pinkston made a motion that the RTP board endorse the creation of the Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority. Mike Pruit seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. CHARLOTTESVILLE AREA ALLIANCE (CAA) WALK AUDIT (MINUTE 1:19:25)
This agenda item was tabled due to time constraints. It will be presented at a later meeting.

7. TRANSIT PROVIDER UPDATES (MINUTE 1:20:00)

Albemarle County Public Schools – There was no report due to schools starting and Ms. Gellner was not available to attend the meeting because of it.

Charlottesville City Schools – Mr. Williams said the City has 18 routes and all of them are covered and for the first time since he has been on staff, there is no one on their wait list.

CAT – Mr. Williams said the next trip to Champaign, Illinois has been locked in for October. Christine Jacobs noted that because there will be so many people from the RTP going on that trip, there will not be an October meeting. Mr. Williams described the trip's focus and purpose. He said the trip will be quick, but it is an impactful experience. He said they use a lot of innovative technology with hydrogen vehicles. Ms. Wall has been on this trip and noted that their transit system is a good model for a regional system but noted that Illinois has a different terrain than central Virginia.

University Transit Services – Scott Silsdorf reported that UTS was not successful in obtaining the FTA grant, so they are in the process of regrouping. He said they recently invited folks to see a 20' battery-electric bus they are considering for purchase that can hold up to 20 people. It was on Grounds for two weeks because of the functioning EV charger. He said they are considering that type of bus as a supplement to the larger, diesel-fueled buses that run at off-peak times that only carry 5-6 passengers. He said they are close to making an order for some of those buses. It was noted that these buses could take routes that have lower railroad overpasses which the larger buses cannot travel under.

He also reported that he and two members of his team are going to the Zero-Emission Bus Conference. Mr. Williams said he is sending members of his team.

Lastly, he said they are fully staffed for all their services and operations. They are operational with TransLoc and have new passenger counters.

Jaunt – Mike Murphy reported that he presented to the General Assembly on disability and para-transit last week with good results. He noted that there was a conference and noted that there are a couple of opportunities in the software realm that are both interesting and free. He said one of them is through vehicle insurance programs that provide tracking that is totally free. He said they finished the Transit Needs Assessment. He said they are close on finalizing the Micro-Transit Study.

DRPT – Katy Miller was not present, so there was no report.

Brian Pinkston spoke about his key note speech at the Virginia Community Transportation Association conference regarding Regional Transit Vision.

6. STAFF UPDATES (MINUTE 1:39:54)
Piedmont Environmental Council – Peter Krebs reported that the Piedmont Mobility Alliance (the City, County, UVA, public hospitals, and others) is having a joint social with their counterparts from the Shenandoah Valley. There will be a tour of Waynesboro's new park, Sunset Park, on August 29. He noted that the parks planner also does transportation planning and he is going to talk about some of

the connectivity work that Waynesboro is doing to connect Shenandoah National Park and eventually the Three Notch'd Trail.

Caetano de Campo Lopes made a comment about the difference between the RTP and the RTA, noting that the RTA seems much more long-term.

Mobility Management - PATH – Lucinda Shannon tabled the update due to time constraints.

7. OTHER BUSINESS/UPDATES/REMINDERS (MINUTE)

The next meeting will be September 26, 2024 from 4 – 6 p.m. in person at the Water Street Center, 407 E Water Street, Charlottesville, VA.

8. ADJOURN

Ms. McKeel adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
POB 1505, 401 E. Water St, Charlottesville, VA 22902 www.tjpdc.org
(434) 979-7310 phone • info@tjpdc.org email

Memorandum

To: Regional Transit Partnership
From: Christine Jacobs, Executive Director, TJPDC/CA-MPO
Date: September 26, 2024
Reference: Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy Update

Purpose:

The Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) previously adopted a Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy (June 2021). Legislation adopted by the 2024 General Assembly (HB 894/SB 734) and signed into law necessitates several changes to that policy.

There are three changes needed:
1. increase from 25% to 50% the maximum number of all virtual meetings that CA-MPO and its committees can hold per year;
2. expand provisions concerning member use of audio and visual technology during all-virtual meetings; and
3. require an annual adoption of the policy.

The TJPDC Commission adopted a revised policy at its July 25th meeting. This policy is applicable to all TJPDC committees, including the RTP, upon adoption by the TJPDC Commission.

Recommendations:

Regional Transit Partnership: Informational item only. No action needed.

If there are any questions or comments, please contact Christine Jacobs at cjacobs@tjpdc.org.

REMOTE ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION and ALL-VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY

This policy has two purposes. The first is to provide for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) to permit a member to participate in a Commission meeting through electronic communication means from a remote location, and the second is to allow the Commission to conduct of all-virtual meetings, in the manner allowed by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and as set out in this policy.

POLICY:
It is the policy of Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) that individual members of the TJPDC may participate in TJPDC meetings by electronic communication as permitted by subsection B of § 2.2-3708.3 of the *Code of Virginia.* This policy shall apply to the entire membership without regard to the identity of the member requesting remote participation or the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting.

In order for an individual member to participate from a remote location as authorized by § 2.2-3708.3 B, a quorum of the Commission must be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location. When such individual participation is due to a personal matter, set out in section A.4, below, such participation is limited to two meetings per calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year, rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.

Further, it is the policy of the TJPDC that the Commission may hold all-virtual public meetings pursuant to subsection C of § 2.2-3708.3 of the *Code of Virginia*. Such all-virtual public meetings are limited to two meetings per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year, rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater. An all-virtual public meeting may not be held consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting.

This policy shall apply to the Commission and to all committees created by or under the authority of the Commission.

REMOTE ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION BY COMMISSION MEMBERS:
"Remote participation" means participation by an individual member of a public body by electronic communication means in a public meeting where a quorum of the public body is otherwise physically assembled.

"Electronic communication" means the use of technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities to transmit or receive information.

A. Notification of Inability to Attend Because of Disability, Medical Condition, Location or Personal Matter

In advance of the meeting at which remote participation is requested, the member shall notify the Chair or Executive Director that he or she is unable to attend the meeting

1) due to a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member's physical attendance;

2) because a family member's medical condition requires the member to provide care for such family member;

3) because such member's principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location identified in the required notice for such meeting; or

4) due to a personal matter. The member must identify with specificity the nature of the personal matter and may not use remote participation due to personal matters more than two meetings per calendar year, or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.

B. Quorum Physically Assembled; Approval of Remote Electronic Participation

A quorum of the Commission must be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location. The Commissioners present must approve of the remote electronic participation in order for the member to participate remotely; however, the decision shall be based solely on the criteria in Section A, without regard to the identity of the member or items that will be considered or voted on during the meeting.

C. Record of Action

The Commission shall record in its minutes the remote location from which a member participated. The minutes also shall reflect the specific nature of the personal matter; the disability or medical condition; the fact that a family member's medical condition that required the member to provide care for such family member, thereby preventing their physical attendance; or that that such member's principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location identified in the required notice for such meeting. If the absent member's remote participation is disapproved because participation would violate this policy, the disapproval shall be recorded in the Commission's minutes with specificity.

ALL-VIRTUAL MEETINGS:

"All-virtual public meeting" means a public meeting (i) conducted by the TJPDC or its committees (hereinafter public body) using electronic communication means, (ii) during which all members of the public body who

participate do so remotely rather than being assembled in one physical location, and (iii) to which public access is provided through electronic communication means.

When holding an all-virtual public meeting, the TJPDC or committee shall follow the requirements of this policy, other meeting requirements under FOIA, and the following statutory requirements:

1) An indication of whether the meeting will be an in-person or all-virtual public meeting is included in the required meeting notice along with a statement notifying the public that the method by which a public body chooses to meet shall not be changed unless the public body provides a new meeting notice in accordance with the provisions of § 2.2-3707;

2) Public access to the all-virtual public meeting is provided via electronic communication means;

3) The electronic communication means used allows the public to hear all members of the public body participating in the all-virtual public meeting and, when audio-visual technology is available, to see the members of the public body as well. When any member of the TJPDC or any of its committees has audio-visual technology available, and electronic communication is being used to establish a quorum, that member shall be considered absent from any portion of a meeting during which visual communication with the member is voluntarily disconnected or otherwise fails or during which audio communication involuntarily fails;

4) A phone number or other live contact information is provided to alert the public body if the audio or video transmission of the meeting provided by the public body fails, the public body monitors such designated means of communication during the meeting, and the public body takes a recess until public access is restored if the transmission fails for the public;

5) A copy of the proposed agenda and all agenda packets and, unless exempt, all materials furnished to members of a public body for a meeting is made available to the public in electronic format at the same time that such materials are provided to members of the public body;

6) The public is afforded the opportunity to comment through electronic means, including by way of written comments, at those public meetings when public comment is customarily received;

7) No more than two members of the public body are together in any one remote location unless that remote location is open to the public to physically access it;

8) If a closed session is held during an all-virtual public meeting, transmission of the meeting to the public resumes before the public body votes to certify the closed meeting as required by subsection D of § 2.2-3712;

9) The public body does not convene an all-virtual public meeting (i) more than two times per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater, or (ii) consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting; and

10) Minutes of all-virtual public meetings held by electronic communication means are taken as required by § 2.2-3707 and include the fact that the meeting was held by electronic communication means and the type of electronic communication means by which the meeting was held. If a member's participation from a remote location pursuant to this subsection is disapproved because such participation would violate the policy adopted pursuant to subsection D, such disapproval shall be recorded in the minutes with specificity.

The policy replaces the Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy adopted on September 1, 2022. Updates to and readoption of this policy shall occur at least once annually.

CAA + AARP / AmericaWalks

Walk Audit Workshop: Report + Findings

Thursday, August 22, 2024

July 7, 2024 ● **8:30 am – 5:00 pm**
Homewood Suites on 29N, Charlottesville

- CAA Transportation + AARP Technical Assistance Grant for Livable Communities
- Bring community and non-governmental entities into the planning fold
- What's truly accessible? What's important?

**34 Attendees** from nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and the community

- Educate, assess and evaluate the nearby walkability and accessibility – including connections to transit
- Train-the-Trainer – make it a sustainable effort
- Design solutions that work for everyone

VISION

Investment in infrastructure will, with thoughtful and inclusive planning, enhance opportunities in underinvested Charlottesville + Albemarle neighborhoods by providing better-connected walkability and transit, leading to improvements in community health and access for all.

- Center equity
- Strengthen partnerships
- Generate ideas
- Establish foundations for the future
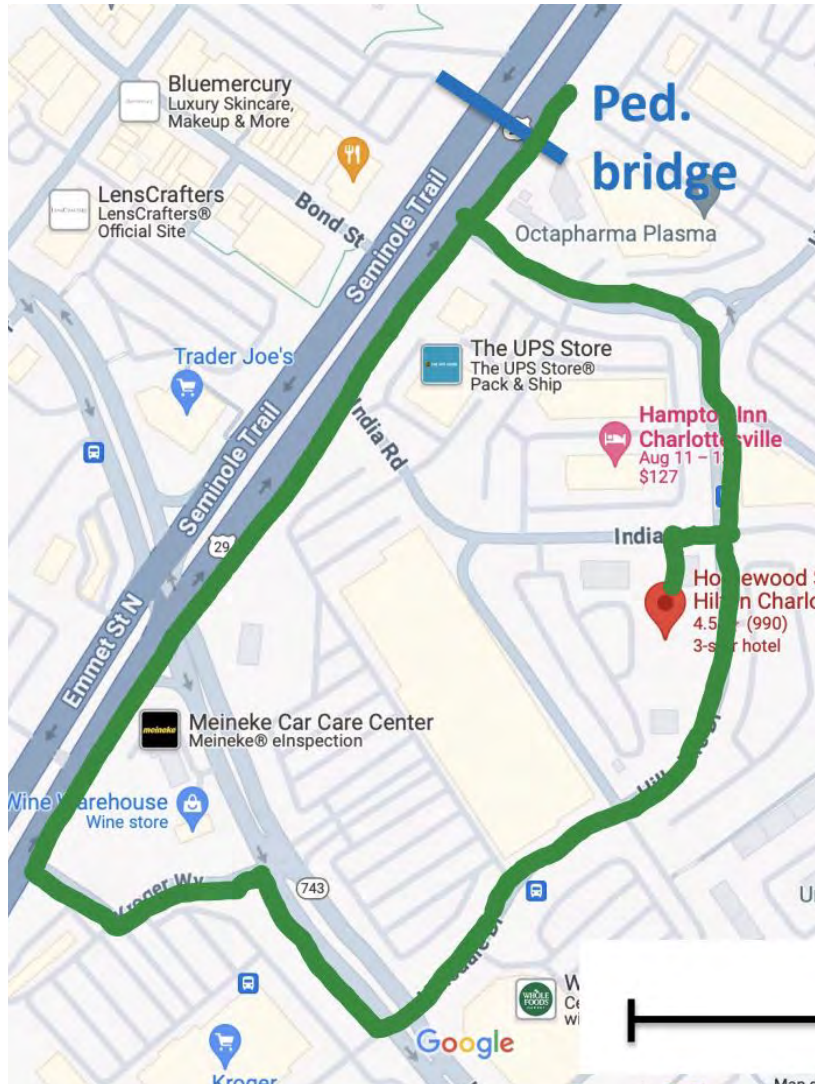
Which part of the walk audit route was most walkable and why?
Hillsdale - even, wide, smooth, space

Describe one or two locations which were not walkable and explain why
Along 29 N - sidewalk not rollable (cracked, slanted) curb slopes too steep, minimal buffer, pedestrian head timing too short, high speed traffic

What can be done to improve walkability in the general area?

"Design infrastructure with people (not cars) in mind"

- Wider walkways
- Vigilant maintenance
- Adding shade
- Mixed use path
- Bigger buffers
- Slow down traffic
- Make sure sidewalks are for *all* users: mobility device, walkers, cyclists

- Moving as a pedestrian is hard, in a mobility device it's even harder
- It is striking how much more difficult and time consuming it is to take transit with a wheelchair
- Just because it is a sidewalk, doesn't mean it is rollable
- Have to consider future heat impacts and design for heat extremes (more shade)
- Bus system is clear if you are a frequent rider, but there's a big barrier for newbies who have to figure everything out

- Consult neighborhood leaders and neighborhood associations to conduct their own walk audits
- Support City and County improvement initiatives and walk audit efforts
- Keep community members connected to walkability work
- PATH Program: Transit Field Trip / Bus Buddies pilot

CAA + AARP / AmericaWalks

Thank you!

Thursday, August 22, 2024

Enhancing Transportation Accessibility

for Seniors & Individuals With Disabilities in Rural Virginia

Overview

AMSA Creative Marketing has partnered with the Partnership for Accessible Transportation Help (PATH) to conduct research aimed at deeply understanding the transportation needs, challenges, and expectations of seniors and individuals with disabilities across the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Nelson, Greene, Louisa, and Fluvanna, Virginia. The methodology was designed to capture a wide range of experiences and insights, employing a mix of focus group testing and surveys conducted in diverse settings. This mixed-methods approach allowed for a more robust analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a well-rounded perspective on the mobility needs within these communities based on first-person data from PATH's primary stakeholders. **The following analysis serves to present the insights and recommendations based on these efforts.**

▶ **Greene County Focus Group**
At the JABA Senior Center in Greene County, Virginia, a focus group session was conducted with approximately 20 participants. This session was pivotal in collecting qualitative data. The focus group discussions revealed an array of pain points and travel challenges for navigating this rural area, while also providing insights into the diverse lifestyles of their senior population.

▶ **Charlottesville/Albemarle County Focus Group**
The largest focus group session took place at the Mary Williams JABA Senior Center in Charlottesville, Virginia, with around 30 participants. The qualitative data gathered from this group highlighted the unique challenges faced in more urban settings, along with expectations around expedited pick-ups and drop-offs which was something unique to urban residents.

▶ **Fluvanna County Focus Group**
In Fluvanna County, Virginia, a focus group session with approximately 11 participants was held at a Parks & Recreation-sponsored Senior Center. This session was particularly valuable for gaining insights into how the lifestyles and cultures can significantly differ from rural county to rural county. The data collected offered a clearer picture of their transportation habits, values of independence and autonomy, and identified unique needs specific to the Fluvanna community.

▶ **In-Person & Digital Surveys**
Surveys in English and Spanish were distributed physically and digitally to complement the qualitative data with quantitative insights. These seven-question surveys were designed to capture a broad spectrum of information regarding transportation usage, preferences, challenges, and the overall satisfaction with existing services. The combination of physical and digital surveys allowed for greater participation flexibility, ensuring a wider demographic representation within the collected data. There were 70 survey responses collected via this method, including leave-behind surveys.

▶ **Leave-Behind Surveys**
Printed versions of the survey were provided to centers in Nelson and Louisa County as leave-behinds. 35 surveys were collected through this method.

▶ **Data Analysis**
The analysis phase involved a comprehensive review of both the qualitative data from the focus groups and the quantitative data from the surveys. This dual approach enabled the AMSA team to identify common themes, trends, and variances in transportation needs across different communities. It also allowed for the comparison of rural versus urban mobility challenges and the identification of specific areas where transportation services could be enhanced or introduced. This data was used to develop the research insights in this report, audience profiles, and recommendations for branding and marketing strategies.

▶ **Intended Use of Data**
This report presents the culmination of research efforts, including surveys, focus groups, and audience profiling, designed to highlight the current landscape of transportation services within these regions based on feedback from the target audience. This data should aid PATH in identifying existing service gaps, inform route planning, isolate areas needing support, and ultimately lay the groundwork for strategic partnerships tailored to both immediate and long-term sustainable improvements.

Focus Group *Insights*

The focus group feedback from Greene County, Charlottesville, Albemarle, and Fluvanna reveal insightful perspectives on the transportation challenges and preferences among seniors and those living with disabilities in these regions of Virginia. Each area presents its unique set of issues, opportunities, and community dynamics, underscoring the need for a nuanced approach to improving mobility solutions. ***Here's a synthesized overview of the key findings:***

Greene County

In Greene County, **Jaunt stands as a crucial transportation service for those without alternatives, in spite of scheduling challenges and requiring a 24-hour notice.** Carpooling is a prevalent practice, highlighting the community's adaptability in overcoming transportation barriers. New residents, particularly those who don't drive, find it difficult to navigate the local transportation options. The community highly values the affordability and cost-effectiveness of the bus service, though its unavailability over the weekend poses significant limitations. Night driving and adverse weather conditions present additional challenges, amplified by the presence of wildlife for those who drive themselves. Accessibility to healthcare is also a notable concern, with some individuals forced to switch to more accessible providers. **The alignment of Jaunt's schedule with the school calendar further restricts mobility during school closures.**

There's a desire for more early morning routes, improved prescription fulfillment options, and extended routes to locations like Harrisonburg, Stanton, and Charlottesville (for evening events for more active seniors). The sole accessibility to UVA hospital, alongside the instability caused by frequent administrative changes in transportation services, amplifies the community's challenges. Information sources like the library, JABA newsletters, and local media play a vital role in keeping the community informed, reflecting the importance of a supportive and interconnected community network.

Mary Williams Community Center - Albemarle County

In the more urban environment of Albemarle County, transportation appears more accessible but is tainted by unreliability and logistical disconnects between operations and driver routes, complicating the travel experience. The community's closeness, reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights a significant reliance on social bonds and familiarity with drivers to navigate these challenges. **The lack of weekend transportation options and inefficient scheduling, where wait times can extend into hours, further restricts mobility and limits planning for daily activities.** This scenario illustrates the need for a more coherent and reliable transportation system that aligns with the community's lifestyle and requirements.

Another key pain point is the confusion surrounding the multiple transportation services available in Charlottesville, including MicroCAT, UTS, Jaunt, and rideshare options like LYFT and UBER. Despite the variety of services, there is significant confusion regarding scheduling and costs associated with some of these services. Additionally, there are numerous partner organizations and volunteer drivers within this area, but **there is a lack of clear information on how to contact or engage with these resources,** leaving many potential users in the dark about available options.

In addition, transportation expectations are different in this urban setting compared to areas like Greene and Fluvanna. In these more rural areas, a bus route from 9am to 2pm might be ideal for seniors looking to head into the city for medical appointments, shopping, and socializing, allowing them to be back home by mid-afternoon. However, in Charlottesville/Albemarle, such a schedule does not align with user expectations. **Residents here would much prefer a route with much higher frequency, expecting to be dropped off and picked up within a span of 1-2 hours, rather than 4.** This discrepancy highlights the need for tailored transportation solutions that consider the unique needs and expectations of different community segments to enhance overall accessibility and satisfaction.

Fluvanna County

Fluvanna County showcases a strong preference for independence with most residents preferring to drive themselves. The limited shopping options within close proximity necessitate travel to nearby Louisa or Richmond. The community's wariness towards outsiders and external services reflects a deep-rooted desire for autonomy and skepticism towards external parties that may not fully understand or appreciate their ways of living. **The high cost associated with most transportation options, both for individual users and community sponsors like Parks & Recreation, discourages the promotion and use of transportation providers in this area.** The community expresses a need for transportation solutions that are better optimized for their area, indicating a preference for smaller, more personalized services over traditional bus services. A notable interest in volunteer driving programs suggests an openness to community-led solutions. The collective sentiment leans towards establishing trusted, vetted transportation options that resonate with the community's values and daily life rhythms.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The feedback across these areas indicates a clear demand for flexible, reliable, and community-integrated transportation solutions. For PATH to effectively engage with these populations, it must:

Adapt Services to Local Needs: Recognize and respect the unique challenges and preferences of each community, from rural to urban settings.

Enhance Reliability and Accessibility: Address scheduling, routing, and service availability issues, particularly for healthcare access and weekend travel.

Foster Community Engagement and Trust: Leverage local networks, volunteer opportunities, and existing community bonds to build trust and tailor services.

Provide Clear Information and Support: Utilize local information sources effectively and offer support in navigating transportation options, especially for newcomers.

All focus group audiences were both receptive and excited to participate in this process and welcomed the opportunity to express their thoughts and concerns about transportation needs in their respective communities. For direct insights that can drive meaningful program optimization, we strongly recommend regular in-person conversations for ongoing feedback.

SURVEY *Analysis*

Survey Insights

Travel Frequency
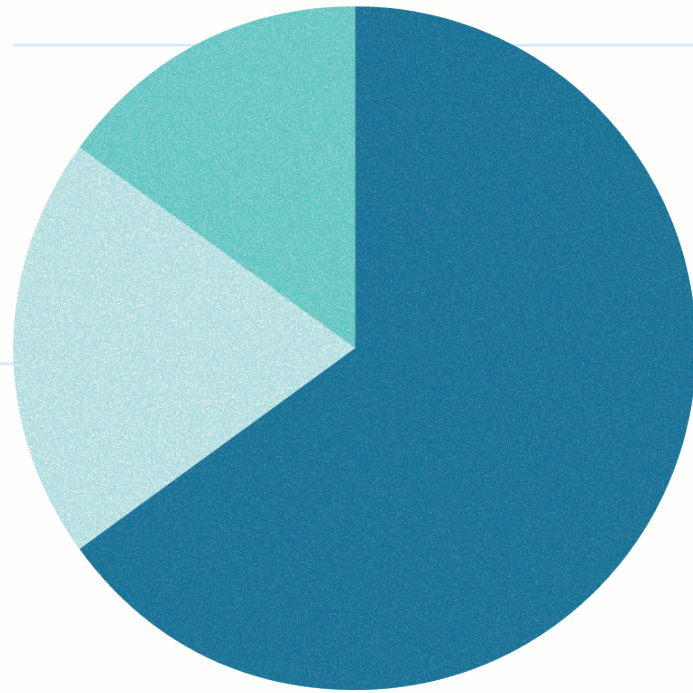
Less Frequent Travel

14.28%

traveling once a week or less might represent individuals with fewer personal or professional commitments.

Daily Needs

20%

of respondents travel daily, illustrating the importance of resources and routes that are consistent and dependable for daily essential activities.
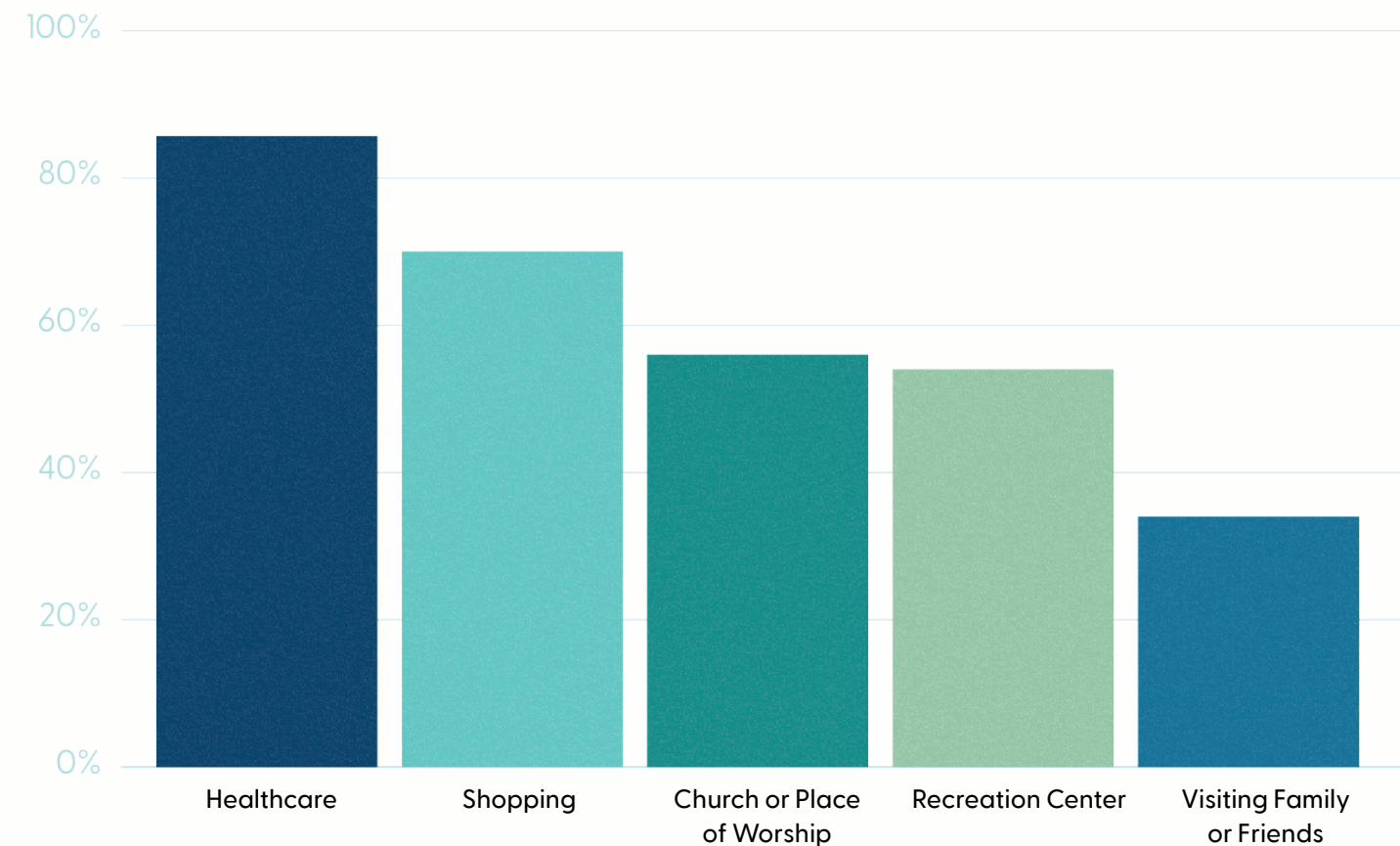
Frequent Mobility

64.29%

of respondents travel a few times a week, indicating regular but not daily mobility needs. This suggests that transportation services need to be reliably frequent throughout the week to accommodate the majority's schedule.

Main Reasons for Travel

(Bar chart categories: Healthcare, Shopping, Church or Place of Worship, Recreation Center, Visiting Family or Friends)

Healthcare as a Priority *85.71%*

Doctor's Appointments is the most cited reason for travel, highlighting the critical need for accessible and reliable transportation to medical facilities.

Shopping is Essential *70%*

Shopping was also a core reason for travel, suggesting that trips to grocery stores and shopping centers are routine necessities.

Church or Place of Worship *55.71%* | Recreation Center *54.29%*

Indicates strong community and recreational engagement, requiring services that can support social connectivity.

Visiting Family or Friends *34.29%*

Reflects the importance of maintaining social ties, which can contribute positively to mental health and quality of life.

Transportation Methods

(Bar chart categories: Personal Driving, Friends or Family, Buses, Taxi/Rideshare, Walking)
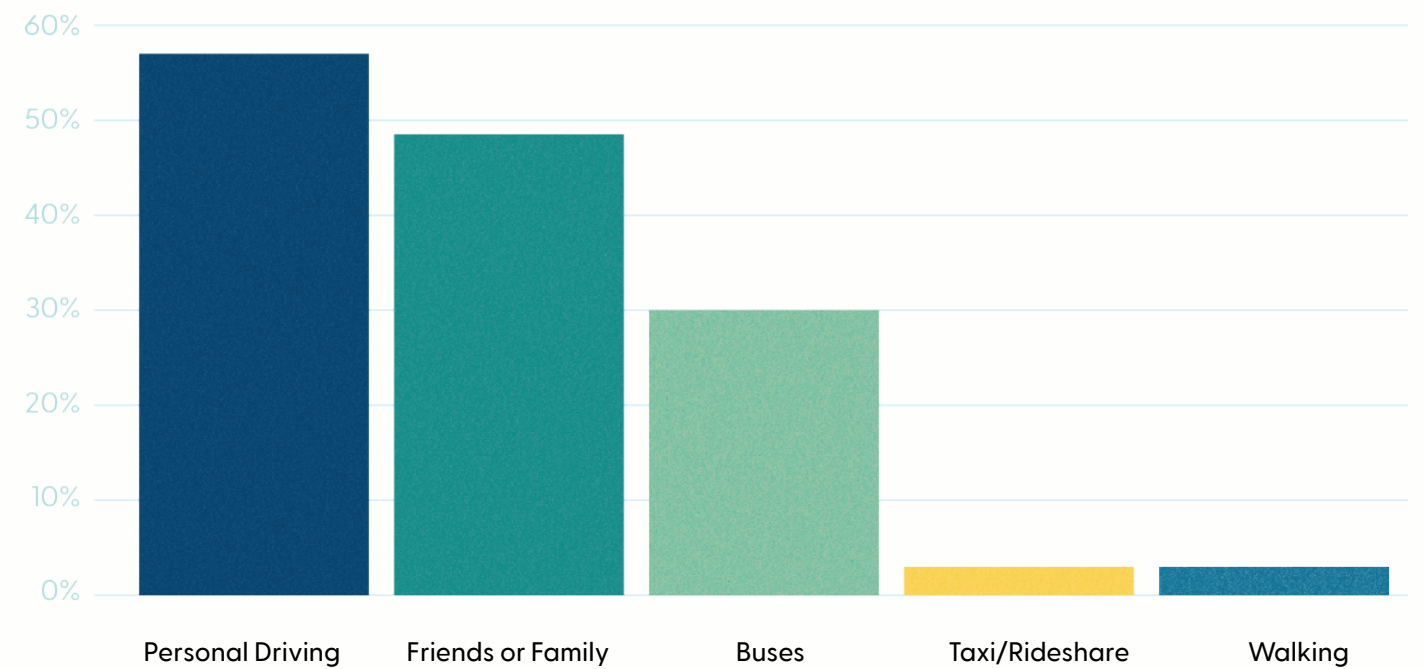
Personal Driving *57.14%*

More than half of the audience surveyed drive themselves, indicating a degree of independence among respondents.

Friends or Family Members *48.57%* | Buses *30%*

Significant reliance on these methods of transportation points to the importance of a supportive community and the need for reliable, safe and accessible public transit solutions.

Taxi/Rideshare *2.86%* | Walking *2.86%*

Minimal usage might reflect either accessibility issues or limited availability in their areas.

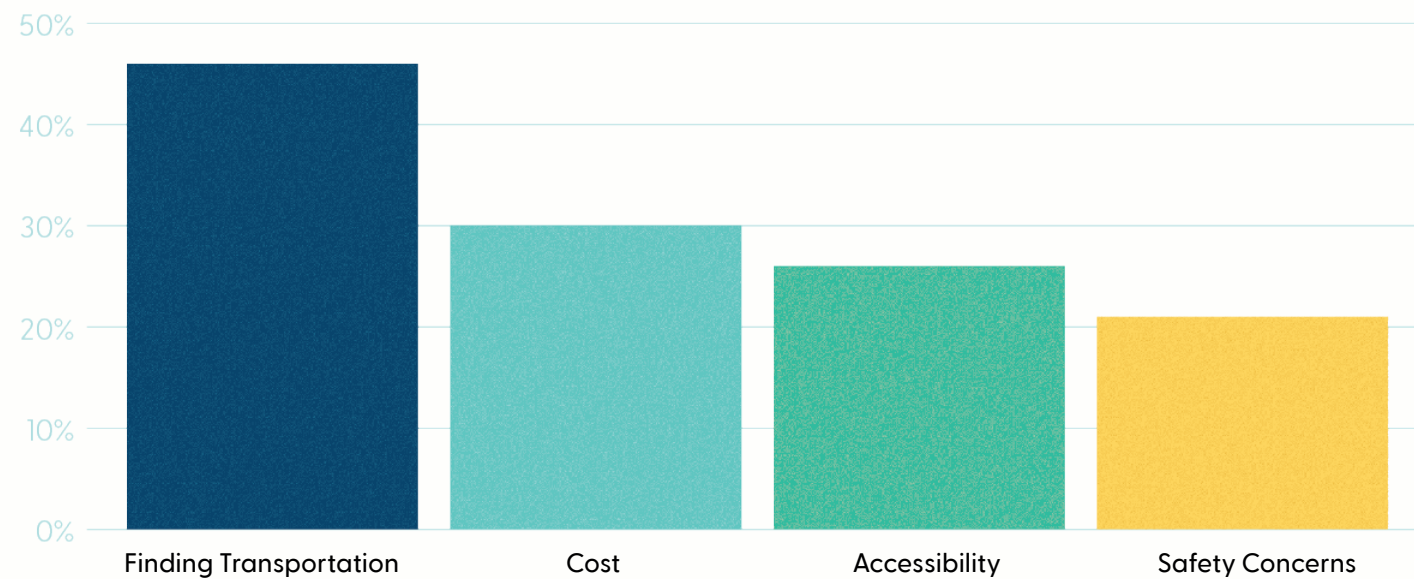## Interest in Transportation Services

High Interest in Support Services *78.57%*
Demonstrates a strong demand for services like PATH that can help seniors and those with disabilities find suitable transportation, possibly reflecting frustrations with current options.

Louisa Anomaly *39% of Louisa Respondents*
A significant subset from Louisa showed disinterest in a transportation support service, which could indicate either satisfaction with current options or a lack of awareness of potential benefits. **This disinterest was significantly higher than all other counties combined and requires further investigation to tailor services effectively.** A focus group in this area could help uncover more information.

Travel Challenges

Bar chart of Travel Challenges showing: Finding Transportation ~46%, Cost ~30%, Accessibility ~26%, Safety Concerns ~21%. Y-axis from 0% to 50%.

Finding Transportation *45.71%*
The biggest challenge noted is finding transportation. This aligns with the high interest in a service like PATH that helps provide transportation resources.

Cost *30%*
Economic factors play a significant role, indicating that affordable transportation is crucial.

Accessibility *25.71%*
Challenges with getting in and out of vehicles highlight the need for transportation options that consider physical limitations.

Safety Concerns *21.43%*
A noteworthy portion of respondents also highlighted safety concerns, suggesting improvements in service safety could enhance user trust and frequency of use.

Recommendations
Based on Insights

Enhanced Medical Transit Services | Develop specialized transportation services focused on healthcare needs, ensuring timely and reliable access to medical facilities.

Community Transportation Hubs | Establish local hubs, especially in areas like Louisa where there is notable disinterest, to provide information and coordinate a variety of transportation services tailored to community preferences.

Expand Affordable Options | Increase subsidies or introduce cost-effective transportation solutions to address cost concerns, making daily travels more accessible for lower-income individuals.

Improve Accessibility | Invest in accessible transportation options that cater to the needs of those with disabilities, ensuring that vehicles are equipped to handle various mobility aids.

Safety Enhancements | Implement safety measures and training for drivers to address safety concerns, potentially increasing the usage of shared transportation methods.

Information and Outreach Campaigns | Conduct targeted campaigns to raise awareness about available transportation options, focusing on benefits and safety to change perceptions, especially in communities like Louisa.

Weekend and Flexible Services | Given the significant interest in family and recreational activities, expand service hours to include weekends and more flexible scheduling to accommodate various lifestyles and needs.

Support for Caregivers | Develop programs that assist caregivers specifically as their transportation challenges can have a direct impact on those in their care.

Local Volunteer Driving Programs | Foster community volunteer driving programs that can provide personalized and trusted transportation for seniors, enhancing local support networks.

Regular Feedback Mechanisms | Establish continuous feedback channels to adapt services to evolving community needs and preferences, ensuring transportation services remain relevant and user-focused.

These tailored insights and recommendations aim to address the specific needs and barriers identified in the survey, fostering a transportation environment that supports the community's diverse requirements.

Travel Destination

Insights

Survey respondents were given the option to list specific places that they travel to regularly. This feedback revealed a necessity for reliable transportation to healthcare facilities, shopping centers, and community engagement spaces. These frequently visited locations can be categorized into specific themes that directly correlate with the expressed needs and preferences of the target audience.

► **Healthcare Facilities**

Primary Destinations: UVA Medical Office locations (Fontaine, Lee St, Ivy Rd, Northridge), UVA Primary Care, Martha Jefferson Hospital, Spine & Pain Management Specialist, Louisa Family Practice, Blue Ridge Medical, and various doctor offices.

Analysis: The dominance of healthcare facilities in the travel destinations underscores the survey finding that 85.71% of respondents prioritize doctor's appointments as a main reason for travel. This suggests a critical dependency on accessible transportation for medical needs, which is a vital consideration for service improvements.

► **Retail and Grocery Shopping**

Primary Destinations: Downtown Charlottesville, Rio Hill Shopping Center, 5th Street Extended Shopping Center, Wegmans, Giant, multiple Food Lion locations, Downtown Charlottesville Costco, Fashion Square Mall, various Walmart locations, and Sams Club Lynchburg.

Analysis: Reflecting the survey result, 70% of respondents travel primarily for shopping, these destinations highlight the importance of ensuring transportation services cater to shopping hubs. This is crucial for meeting daily living needs and supporting economic activities.

► **Community and Social Engagement**

Primary Destinations: Effort Church, Unity - Hydraulic Rd, JABA centers, Ridgecrest Church, County Live Baptist Church, New Life Church, various community centers, and Betty Queen Center.

Analysis: With a significant portion of the community visiting places of worship and community centers, there's a demonstrated need for transportation that support participation in social, religious, and recreational activities, especially on weekends and evenings.

► **Dining and Leisure**

Primary Destinations: Fabios, Mineral Restaurant, Jocs Restaurant, Ihop, and various casual dining locations like Pizza Hut.

Analysis: Although a smaller focus in the survey, the inclusion of dining establishments suggests a segment of the population values social outings which contribute to quality of life, indicating potential areas for targeted evening or weekend transport services.

► **Financial and Miscellaneous Services**

Primary Destinations: Credit unions, pharmacies, libraries (including Nelson Library), and various Walmart locations often housing banking and pharmacy services.

Analysis: The need for access to financial services and pharmacies aligns with the general dependency on transportation for essential services, reinforcing the need for routes that connect residents with multifunctional locations that serve multiple needs.

Recommendations
Based on Detailed Location Analysis

Tailored Medical Transportation Routes
Design routes that connect residential areas directly with the major healthcare providers listed, possibly using smaller, more nimble vehicles to offer frequent service during peak medical appointment times.

Consolidated Shopping Shuttles
Establish weekend and weekday shopping shuttles that loop through major retail centers and grocery stores, facilitating easy access for shopping, which is crucial for the 70% of respondents who travel for this purpose.

Enhanced Community Transport Services
Offer dedicated services for community and social engagements, particularly targeting older adults and those without personal transportation, ensuring inclusion in vital social and spiritual activities.

Evening & Weekend Dining Routes
Introduce evening services that cater to dining and leisure locations, enhancing the livability and social connectivity of the community, especially for those who may feel isolated.

Multi-Service Routes
Develop routes that strategically include stops at multi-service locations such as Walmarts and community centers where people can access a variety of services from banking to healthcare and social activities in one trip.

By focusing on these themes and aligning transportation services with the needs and preferences indicated by the survey data, **the community can significantly enhance the mobility, accessibility, and overall quality of life for residents.**

Audience *Profiles*

Navigating transportation is a significant challenge for seniors and individuals with disabilities in the areas that PATH serves, emphasizing a critical need for innovative and accessible transportation solutions. These profiles represent key segments of the target audience population with shared lifestyles, experiences and behaviors.

Independent **Isla Gonzalez**

Age: Late 70s   **Location:** Fluvanna

Demographics | Isla stands as a beacon of self-reliance in Fluvanna, navigating mobility with a robust spirit of independence. In her late-70s, Isla embraces the freedom of driving herself for errands and activities, a testament to her autonomy. Her routine includes frequent travels to Louisa and surrounding areas, where she manages grocery shopping, doctor appointments, and other errands. While Isla cherishes her current independence, she remains open to exploring future mobility solutions as she understands that she may not be able to drive herself for much longer

Mobility Needs

- Economically feasible, physically accessible and reliable routes that travel to the areas surrounding Fluvanna as these are her primary destinations.

- Transportation solutions that respect her desire for autonomy and incorporate flexible service options

- Personalized, smaller-scale transportation options over larger, more impersonal bus services. Services that are community operated by people she might know or recognize would be ideal

- Consistent and transparent communication regarding the availability, scheduling, and changes in transportation services is essential to keep her well-informed and confident in using these services.

Challenges

- Faces the reality of limited and costly transportation options, which could impact her self-sufficiency and raise concerns about future mobility and access to necessary services outside Fluvanna.

- Skeptical of transportation solutions proposed by external parties, fearing they may not align with the community's values or understand the unique logistics of rural living in Fluvanna.

Expected Outcomes

- Sustained independence in transportation without sole reliance on driving herself, preparing for a time when driving may no longer be viable.

- Enhanced community connection and support through transportation efforts, reinforcing Fluvanna's community ties and mutual aid.

- Increased contentment with localized transportation solutions that genuinely embody and cater to the community's ethos, ensuring services are both functional and familiar.

Community Engagement

Isla is deeply woven into the fabric of Fluvanna's community, leveraging local networks for support and information. Her routine trips to Louisa for groceries and appointments highlight her active participation in both her immediate and extended community. Isla values safety, trust, and the familiarity of transportation options, emphasizing the importance of solutions vetted by and for the community. Her approach to mobility, grounded in independence yet open to communal solutions, mirrors Fluvanna's collective ethos of resilience, resourcefulness, and shared support in addressing the transportation needs of its residents.

Empowered **Edward McKinney**

Age: Early 70s   **Location:** Charlottesville

Demographics | Edward is a resilient senior navigating the urban setting of Charlottesville from his wheelchair. Even in his 70s, his wheelchair-bound state has not deterred his zest for life, but rather sharpened his focus on maintaining independence and strengthening family bonds. Edward's daily routine is marked by independence and reliance on accessible transportation for healthcare, with a keen interest in staying actively involved in his family's life, especially in supporting his grandchildren's activities.

Mobility Needs

- Transportation services that are accessible and cater to the requirements of wheelchair users, ensuring Edward can travel comfortably and independently.

- An adaptable transportation system capable of accommodating last-minute plans, enabling him to attend family events, soccer games, and ballet recitals without the worry of being a burden to his loved ones.

- Weekend transportation services that acknowledge the importance of family and recreational activities, facilitating Edward's attendance at important family gatherings and events.

- Reliable and straightforward communication about transportation options and schedules, assisting Edward in planning his participation in family activities without undue stress.

Challenges

- Limited transportation services during weekends, which are crucial for attending his grandchildren's activities, sometimes leaving him feeling isolated from family milestones.

- Keeping up with changes in transportation services that could affect his ability to maintain an active role in his family's life, emphasizing the need for consistent and accessible information.

Expected Outcomes

- Improved access to healthcare and family events through a transportation system that prioritizes accessibility, allowing Edward to keep his healthcare commitments and family engagements without compromise.

- Enhanced ability to actively participate in his grandchildren's lives, attending soccer games, ballet recitals, fostering strong family bonds and ensuring he remains a figure in their upbringing.

- Increased satisfaction with the transportation services in Charlottesville, marked by their reliability, accessibility, and effective communication, thus enabling Edward to plan his activities with confidence and ease.

Community Engagement

Edward's primary focus lies in his family, with a particular emphasis on supporting and being present for his grandchildren's milestones and daily joys. While his interest in broader social activities is secondary, his dedication to family highlights a common desire among wheelchair-bound seniors to engage actively with loved ones without feeling like a burden. Edward's approach to navigating his mobility challenges, prioritizing family involvement and independence, reflects the aspirations of many seniors who seek to remain integral to their family's lives while managing the realities of physical limitations.

Rural **Rita Johnson**

Age: Late 60s   **Location:** Greene County

Demographics | Rita resides in the rural landscapes of Greene County, navigating the challenges of her late 60s with a spirit of optimism and perseverance. Vision impairments deter her from driving at night or during inclement weather, and lending her car to her grandson on an ongoing basis often make her reliant on Jaunt for her transportation needs. Rita is also very sociable and regularly meets up with friends at the JABA center as a core part of her daily routine. She also is an avid church-goer and attends service every Sunday.

Mobility Needs

- Reliable, affordable and accessible routes to local community centers and places of worship

- Direct, expedited routes to crucial services, including hospitals in Charlottesville for regular medical visits and specialized facilities in Fredericksburg.

- Simplistic routes to Harrisonburg and Staunton for family visits, shows and gallery tours

- Weekend transportation solutions to ensure access to community events and church service compensating for when her car is not available.

- Improved communication regarding transportation schedules and updates, keeping her well-informed amidst her limited driving capacity and car-sharing arrangements.

Challenges

- Adjusting healthcare providers due to transportation limitations impacts her health management, exacerbated by not always having her car available.

- Managing prescription refills and attending events are made difficult by sparse transportation options and her generosity with her vehicle.

- Staying updated with transportation service changes is challenging, especially with the frequent administrative shifts and her reliance on public transport and car sharing with her grandson.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced access to healthcare, enabling Rita to maintain her chosen providers without the need to compromise due to transportation issues.

- Increased ability to participate in community events, enriching her social life and overall well-being, despite the complexities of her transportation situation.

- Improved satisfaction with transportation services, thanks to better reliability, flexibility, and communication, accommodating her unique needs as a car sharer.

Community Engagement

Rita actively seeks information through local libraries, JABA newsletters, and community radio. Her engagement with neighbors, community groups and church members extends beyond seeking support; it's also about staying connected and informed. She navigates her transportation challenges with a sense of community spirit, whether by sharing her car with her grandson or by relying on Jaunt. Rita's story highlights the nuances of rural senior living, where family dynamics, community support, and transportation services intersect.

Veteran **Harold "Hal" Turner**

Age: Early 80s   **Location:** Greene County

Demographics | Hal is an 82-year-old disabled veteran residing in Greene County. Living alone with visual impairments, he embodies resilience and independence but faces significant mobility and accessibility challenges. Hal's reliance on public transportation and the support of neighbors underscores a communal interdependence that reflects Greene County's spirit.

Mobility Needs

- Transportation services that are specifically tailored for the visually impaired, including vehicles equipped for accessibility and drivers trained to assist disabled passengers.

- Direct routes to critical services such as hospitals, pharmacies, and grocery stores to minimize transit time and complexity.

- Weekend service availability to reduce isolation and allow for greater flexibility in personal and medical scheduling.

Challenges

- Navigating the transportation system with a visual impairment, compounded by the absence of services on weekends, heightens Hal's isolation.

- The complexity and inflexibility of current transportation options hinder Hal's ability to attend medical appointments, fulfill prescriptions, and participate in community activities.

- The reliance on advanced booking and lack of spontaneous travel options limit independence and spontaneity.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced access to healthcare and essential services through improved transportation options will directly impact Hal's quality of life and health management.

- Increased social engagement and reduced isolation through weekend service availability and transportation tailored to Hal's needs.

- Greater autonomy and independence, fostering a sense of dignity and reducing reliance on neighbors and community members for transportation assistance.

Community Engagement

Hal remains an active community participant through community centers and local resources. His engagement with the community center, local radio, and the library demonstrates a continuous desire to stay connected and informed. Hal's story and needs highlight the importance of inclusive transportation planning and community support structures in Greene County.

Navigating Nora

Age: Early 60s　　　　　　**Location:** Rural Virginia

Demographics | Nora, an early 60s newcomer to rural Virginia, finds herself navigating the complexities of caregiving in a new, rural town. Moving during the pandemic to support her senior-citizen parents, who are both unable to drive, Nora has taken on a pivotal role for her family. Living on a fixed income, her reliance on Jaunt's free transportation service becomes essential for managing doctor appointments, grocery shopping, prescription fulfillment, and responding to emergencies. The JABA community center serves as a beacon for Nora, offering a space for socializing, meeting new people, and learning to navigate her new surroundings.

Mobility Needs

- Relies on Jaunt for all transportation needs for both herself and her parents.

- Seeks affordable, accessible transportation options tailored to the rural Virginia setting, crucial for her family's well-being and her caregiving responsibilities.

- Desires information and access to community initiatives or volunteer driving programs that could offer personalized, reliable transportation solutions.

- Wishes for enhanced communication regarding transportation services, highlighting a need for clear, consistent updates to better plan and manage caregiving duties.

Challenges

- Encounters significant obstacles due to Jaunt's unreliability and its inflexible service in rural areas, impacting critical aspects of caregiving, such as medical appointments and emergency responses.

- Lacks awareness of alternative transportation options that could alleviate some of the challenges faced in her caregiving role, exacerbating feelings of isolation and uncertainty.

- Struggles to integrate and navigate local community resources effectively due to her relocation and constraints of caregiving responsibilities.

Expected Outcomes

- Aims to achieve a stable, dependable transportation solution that allows her to fulfill her caregiving duties without stress or disruption.

- Enhance her connection to the local community and build a supportive network through engagement at the JABA community center and beyond.

- Aspires for increased contentment with her living situation by finding transportation solutions that are both practical for rural Virginia and respectful of her family's unique needs.

Community Engagement

Despite being new to the area and facing the steep learning curve of rural living, Nora is keen on weaving herself into the fabric of her new community. Her visits to the JABA community center represent not just opportunities for social interaction but also crucial steps towards building a network of support and information. Through these engagements, Nora is gradually finding her footing, aiming to navigate the challenges of rural caregiving with resilience and resourcefulness. Her story highlights the broader experiences of senior caregivers new to rural areas, underscoring the importance of accessible transportation and community support in navigating the intricacies of caregiving.

Compassionate Carol

Age: Early 70s　　　　　　**Location:** Rural Virginia

Demographics | Carol, in her early 70s, has become an indispensable figure within her rural community, embodying the essence of compassion and support. She has taken on the significant role of being the primary means of transportation for the seniors in her immediate area, a testament to her commitment to her friends and neighbors. Daily, Carol diligently picks up each of her senior friends, bringing them to the senior center, running their errands, and ensuring they safely return home. Her routine is marked by a series of trips that cater to grocery shopping, prescription fulfillments, and social visits, all aimed at enhancing the lives of those in her community.

Mobility Needs

- A broader range of affordable, accessible transportation options that cater to the unique needs of rural seniors, reducing everyone's reliance on her as the transportation provider.

- More personalized transportation options that offer safety and comfort for her senior friends

- Clear and consistent communication regarding available transportation services to better coordinate and manage the daily transportation requirements of her senior friends.

Challenges

- Experiences significant stress due to being the primary, and often only, transportation resource for several seniors in her community, impacting her personal well-being.

- Confronts the reality of limited transportation in her rural area, which places a heavy reliance on her to meet the mobility needs of her friends.

- The lack of trusted and reliable transportation alternatives in her community limits her ability to offer viable options to her friends, heightening their dependence on her for essential errands and social activities

Expected Outcomes

- Aims to sustain her role in supporting her community while finding additional trusted transportation resources to share the responsibility, ensuring her senior friends remain connected and supported.

- Seeks to enhance community cohesion and mutual aid through collective transportation efforts, fostering a stronger support network within her rural area.

- Increased satisfaction for Carol and her senior friends with the local transportation solutions, fostering a community environment where seniors feel supported, valued, and less isolated.

Community Engagement

Carol's unwavering dedication to her neighbors places her at the heart of her rural community's network of care. She serves as more than just a driver; she's a vital link that connects her senior friends to the broader world, enriching their lives through social and healthcare access. Yet, Carol recognizes the importance of cultivating a sustainable ecosystem of support. By seeking out and advocating for additional transportation resources, she aims to inspire her community to collectively address the mobility challenges faced by its senior members. Her efforts underscore the necessity for a communal approach to transportation, one that ensures every senior has access to safe, reliable, and compassionate mobility solutions.

Defining
Common Themes, Needs & Expectations

Themes

1. Community Dependence vs. Independence
Across profiles, a balancing act emerges between individual independence and the need for community support, with transportation being a crucial element.

2. Rural Mobility Challenges
The unique difficulties of navigating rural settings are highlighted, including limited public transportation options and the vast distances to essential services.

3. Aging with Dignity
The desire to maintain autonomy, dignity, and quality of life as individuals age, despite mobility challenges.

4. Caregiver Stress
The emotional, physical toll on caregivers who become primary transportation providers for seniors, emphasizing the need for supportive resources.

5. Accessibility and Inclusivity
The necessity for transportation services to be accessible to all, including those with disabilities, ensuring no one is left isolated.

6. The Role of Technology and Communication
The importance of clear, consistent information about transportation services to effectively plan daily activities.

7. Seeking Sustainable Solutions
The collective effort to find long-term, reliable transportation solutions that support seniors' independence and community participation.

8. Value of Social Connections
The critical role of social interactions and community engagement in enhancing seniors' well-being.

9. Interdependence within Communities
The profiles underscore a theme of mutual support, where communities must come together to address shared challenges, particularly in transportation.

Needs

1. Accessible, Reliable Transportation
For seniors and caregivers alike, especially those who are wheelchair-bound or do not drive, to access healthcare, fulfill prescriptions, and participate in community events.

2. Support Networks
Stronger support systems to alleviate the burden on individual caregivers and provide multiple options for seniors' mobility.

3. Enhanced Communication
Clear information on transportation schedules, services, and changes to help seniors and caregivers plan more effectively.

4. Community-Based Solutions
Local initiatives that understand the unique needs of the rural and urban senior populations, such as volunteer driving programs.

5. Flexibility and Adaptability
Transportation services that can accommodate last-minute changes, especially for medical emergencies or unplanned needs.

6. Weekend Services
Expanded transportation service hours to include weekends, facilitating family activities and community engagement.

7. Education on Options
Awareness campaigns or resources to inform seniors and newcomers about available transportation solutions within their communities.

8. Safety Measures
Ensuring that all transportation options prioritize passenger safety, particularly for those with specific health concerns.

9. Financial Viability
Affordable or subsidized transportation options for those on fixed incomes, ensuring that cost does not prohibit access to essential services.

10. Integration with Healthcare
Coordination between transportation services and healthcare providers to streamline access to medical care.

Expected Outcomes

1. Increased Access to Healthcare
Enhancing transportation services improves seniors' access to medical care, which is crucial for maintaining health, prolonging the ability to live independently at home, and engaging actively with the community.

2. Reduced Reliance on Individuals
By diversifying transportation resources, communities can decrease the pressure on caregivers/friends and promote greater independence among seniors.

3. Enhanced Quality of Life
Access to reliable transportation directly correlates to improved access to healthcare, social opportunities, and reduced isolation.

4. Increased Independence
With more transportation options, seniors can maintain autonomy and continue participating in family and community activities.

5. Community Resilience
Stronger, more connected communities that are excited to collectively address the mobility needs of their aging populations and work through solutions and improvements together.

6. Caregiver Relief
With additional transportation resources, caregivers can experience reduced stress and a more sustainable caregiving experience.

7. Safe, Comfortable Mobility Options
Seniors feel confident and secure using transportation services tailored to their needs.

8. Active Community Engagement
Seniors remain engaged and active in their communities, contributing to their social well-being and sense of belonging.

9. Sustainable Transportation Solutions
Long-term, reliable transportation solutions that adapt to the evolving needs of the senior population.

10. Improved Accessibility
Transportation services become more accessible to all seniors, regardless of their physical abilities or where they live.

11. Strengthened Support Networks
The development of a comprehensive support network that ensures no senior is left without access to essential services due to transportation barriers.

Key Considerations *for Engaging the Audience*

Understand the Specific Needs and Preferences
The audience's primary needs include reliable access to healthcare, grocery shopping, and community engagement. Recognizing these needs, PATH should tailor its communications and services to address them directly, highlighting how the organization can facilitate access to these essential services. In addition, ongoing direct engagement and feedback is crucial. Because of the nuances from county-to-county, in person engagement and segmenting strategies by county will be key.

Ease of Use and Accessibility
Any platform or service introduced must be straightforward and accessible. Given the audience's varying levels of comfort with technology, solutions should be offered through multiple access points, such as phone-based services alongside digital platforms.

Continue to Build Trust through Community Partnerships
With a small team, leveraging existing community networks and partnerships with organizations like JABA, the Blue Ridge Health District, Jaunt, and UVA will continue to be a tool in significantly extending PATH's reach. These partnerships can also help build trust within the community, as these organizations already have established relationships with the target audience.

Clear, Consistent Communication
Effective communication is key to getting buy-in. Information about PATH's services should be disseminated through channels the audience trusts, such as local community centers, libraries, and through partners like JABA. Messaging should emphasize safety, reliability, and ease of access to transportation services.

Leveraging Findings for Immediate Impact

Rapid Response to Critical Needs
Initially focus on enhancing access to healthcare by coordinating with medical facilities and transportation providers for direct routes. This addresses the immediate, critical need identified in the data.

Community Workshops and Information Sessions
Conduct workshops in partnership with local organizations to educate the community about PATH's services, how to access them, and to gather feedback for further improvements.

Pilot Programs with Partners
Launch pilot transportation programs in collaboration with existing services, focusing on high-need areas identified through the data, such as routes to healthcare facilities and grocery stores.

Applying this Data
in Next Steps

- Finalize branding
- Procure domain name
- Marketing asset alignment & design
- Marketing plan alignment & execution
- Website alignment & design

When building out the brand, website and marketing implementation plan for PATH (Partnership for Accessible Transportation Help), several strategic considerations are crucial to ensure the brand effectively reaches and resonates with its intended audience. ***These considerations include:***

1. Clear Brand Positioning
PATH should establish a clear brand identity that reflects its mission of providing accessible transportation solutions. The brand should communicate empathy, reliability, and a deep understanding of the community's unique needs.

2. Inclusive and Accessible Messaging
All marketing materials and communications should be designed with accessibility in mind. This includes using large, readable fonts, high-contrast colors, and providing information in multiple formats (audio, visual, text) to accommodate various disabilities.

3. Community-Centric Approach
PATH's marketing should emphasize its community roots and commitment to serving the local population's specific needs. Highlighting stories of individuals or groups who have benefited from PATH's services can create a powerful narrative that resonates with the target audience.

4. Ongoing Strategic Partnerships
Continuing to collaborate with local organizations like JABA, Blue Ridge Health District, Jaunt, and UVA will amplify PATH's reach and credibility. These partnerships can also provide additional channels to disseminate marketing materials and gather community feedback.

5. *Multi-Channel Marketing Strategy*

Implement a multi-channel marketing strategy that uses a mix of traditional (print ads, brochures, community bulletins) and digital (social media, email newsletters, website) platforms. Ensure that digital platforms are accessible to people with disabilities.

6. *User-Friendly Digital Presence*

Develop a website and social media presence that are not only informative but also easy to navigate for individuals with various disabilities. Including features such as screen reader compatibility, alternative text for images, and easy-to-understand navigation can enhance the user experience.

7. *Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms*

Create avenues for the community to engage with PATH and provide feedback on services. This could include in-person workshops, surveys, community forums, or feedback forms on the website. Listening to the community's voice can guide service improvements and marketing messages.

8. *Educational Content*

Offer content that educates the target audience on how to access and use PATH's services. This can include instructional videos, step-by-step guides, and FAQs. Providing clear, helpful information can reduce barriers to service adoption.

9. *Sensitivity Training for Staff and Volunteers*

Ensure that all staff and volunteers are trained in disability awareness and sensitivity. This training should extend to understanding the unique challenges faced by rural communities. Knowledgeable and empathetic staff can significantly enhance the brand experience for users.

10. *Measurement and Adaptation*

Establish clear metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing efforts. Regularly review these metrics and be prepared to adapt strategies based on what's working and what's not. Continuous improvement should be a core aspect of the marketing plan.

Resource *Links*

- **Focus Group Raw Data Notes**
- **Digital + Print Survey Responses**
- **Copies of Physical Surveys**
- **Surveys**
- **Travel Itinerary**

Marketing Implementation Plan

AMSA Creative 2024

PATH *Brand Summary*

▶ Enhancing & Unifying Public Transportation Services

The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) is leading a community-focused effort to transform transportation accessibility for older adults and individuals with disabilities across the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Nelson, Greene, Louisa, and Fluvanna, Virginia, through its new transportation counseling initiative, PATH (Partnership for Accessible Transportation Help). By partnering with public transportation and services like JABA, Blue Ridge Health District, Jaunt, and, PATH aims to enhance transportation options and assistance in central rural areas of the state.

Recognizing the increasing need for reliable, affordable, and accessible public transportation for the health and safety of some of our most marginalized communities, PATH offers riders professional, free, and reliable assistance with coordinating and planning their means of transportation effectively.

PATH is uniquely positioned as a mobility management program that bridges and connects public transportation partners servicing this marginalized group across a single centralized phone number and website. By centralizing assistance through an accessible and user-friendly platform, PATH aims to streamline access to transportation services ensuring that every individual can navigate their journey with confidence and ease.

Through strategic alliances, PATH seeks to amplify its impact by cohesively sharing information with riders on how these services interconnect to form the collective public transportation network available to the community. Additionally, PATH recognizes the opportunity to take the learnings from their close interactions with riders to better inform and guide future efforts to better serve the needs of the broader community.

Whether coordinating transit schedules, arranging specialized services, or providing essential information and referrals, PATH ensures that every rider receives personalized support to meet their unique needs.

As PATH continues to expand its reach and impact, it remains steadfast in its commitment to driving positive change and advancing the impact of transportation accessibility. By unifying public transportation entities and connecting communities, PATH not only enhances mobility, but also fosters a sense of empowerment and inclusion among marginalized populations. As PATH paves the way for a more accessible and equitable transportation landscape, it remains dedicated to empowering individuals and communities to reach their full potential.

Where PATH is Now *Vs.* Where PATH is going

- PATH currently operates as a **free informational hub** for all local public transportation entities across the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Nelson, Greene, Louisa, and Fluvanna, Virginia.

- PATH is a new community focused public transportation service based in Virginia whose current primary goal is **growing its brand awareness amongst their target audience.**

- PATH is currently limited to the locations and regions they **can provide transportation services to as outlined by observed community** need and engagement.

- PATH aims to establish itself as abroadly recognized and **trusted partner with neighboring transportation entities.**

- PATH plans to expand their services to include **ride scheduling** and confirmation as requested by riders through the use of their hotline number.

- PATH aims to act as a **reliable informant to their transportation partners** to outline identifiable growth opportunities based on the information gathered from call activity to their hotline service. This data collection point will serve as a means to better understand and identify growing public transportation changes and demands.

PATH'S *Goals*

Service Calls Quota | As part of PATH's initial plans of operation, there is a goal to meet a quota of 2,000 calls into the PATH Service Desk hotline in the first year. PATH plans to meet that goal by executing marketing tactics aimed at building awareness of the PATH Service Desk number to their target audience.

Establish Brand Identity | PATH has a goal to develop a simple, memorable and effective brand that inspires usage and program adoption by the local community. PATH aims to establish a brand identity as a reliable and community-driven organization that unifies all public transportation services. PATH aims to be the one-stop shop for all transportation services in Region 10.

Build Brand Awareness | PATH has a goal to conduct (20) presentations about their services to community leaders, potential partners, stakeholders and target clientele to build brand awareness and generate interest.

Establish Partnerships | Establish and maintain five community partnerships with local external organizations that can help expand PATH in its mission.

Gather Insights | PATH aims to gather valuable customer-based insights via phone calls with prospective riders to inform future program expansion. PATH will utilize this information to support the growth of their public transportation partners, as well as help them better understand and adapt to the unique needs of the local community.

Mission Statement

Provide Reliable and Accessible Mobility Coordination

PATH aims to be identified as a dependable and resourceful public transportation information and referral service to the local counties that make up central Virginia. By the use of a public hotline, PATH offers riders timely and professional responses questions and travel arrangement requests. PATH is a reliable, accessible transportation solution specifically tailored for both urban and rural communities.

Ensuring the Trust, Health, and Safety of Riders

Safety is paramount in all aspects of public transit, and PATH prioritizes the unique needs of riders to ensure their trust, health, and safety. That is why PATH sets the standard to understand and accommodate the individual needs of riders when offering travel coordination services. It is part of PATH's mission to ensure that older adults and those with disabilities are provided helpful guidance and reassurance that they can use public transit without hassle or delay. PATH offers insightful information on what transportation options are best available in alignment with the rider's expressed needs and concerns.

Leading Partnership and Unity in Public Transportation

In partnership with the current public transportation service providers, PATH serves as an overarching umbrella and unifier for all modes of mobility systems. By bringing all modes of public transit to one central hub of information – PATH can develop a more comprehensive transportation network for riders while also encouraging the ongoing collaboration between all stakeholders.

Community Building and Improvement

PATH is dedicated to its role in fostering continuous improvement and community integration transportation services. By offering free informational services and individual transit plans, PATH believes that it will strengthen the connections and prosperity of communities often marginalized by the lack of transportation options.

Organizational Structure
Terms and Role Definitions —

PATH Service Hotline
The main telephone number for which riders can contact PATH for questions and requests **(888-879-7379).** The hours of operation for the hotline are Open **8:30 am to 5:00 pm.** The hotline can also be reached via the organization's website at Pathva.org.

PATH Service Desk
The identified physical location of the PATH Hotline number where Path Riders can contact the transportation counselor during their hours of operation.

PATH Transportation Counselor
The Transportation Counselor is responsible for answering and logging calls made with the PATH Service Hotline. The service agent is the main point of contact to ask questions and receive transportation assistance.

PATH Riders
Members of the community that utilize PATH's transportation assistance services. These are the clients who's testimonials, feedback, and stories of impact will be essential to the growth and development of PATH's brand identity.

PATH Transportation Partners
Private and public transportation agencies that collaborate and work alongside PATH in its mission. This includes but is not limited to taxis, buses, cabs, and shuttles that work in collaboration with PATH's network of transportation services.

PATH Healthcare Partners
Medical institutions and providers who are partnering with PATH to improve healthcare accessibility.

PATH Community Leaders
Other community-oriented organizations or entities that offer the PATH program with shared resources.

Defining
PATH Branding

Brand Messaging
and voice

► **Building Brand Awareness and Consideration**

As PATH establishes its role within the local community, it is important to emphasize the unique value proposition of PATH, highlighting its role in transforming transportation accessibility for older adults and individuals with disabilities. PATH sets itself apart from others by uniquely addressing and supporting those who require additional accommodations and may not have access to more private means of transportation. PATH will use engaging storytelling and customer experience visuals to illustrate the positive impact of PATH on communities and individuals.

► **Professionalism and Care**
- Demonstrate professionalism in all communications, reflecting PATH's commitment to providing reliable and trustworthy services.
- Show empathy and understanding towards riders' needs and concerns, ensuring that every interaction with PATH conveys a sense of care and support.
- Prioritize accuracy and clarity in information dissemination, demonstrating PATH's dedication to delivering high-quality service to those dependent on mobility assistance.

► **Inclusivity: Being a Champion for All**
- PATH must Champion inclusivity in all messaging, emphasizing PATH's commitment to serving diverse communities and individuals with varying needs.
- Use inclusive language and imagery that reflects the diversity of riders and ensures everyone feels represented and valued.
- Highlight PATH's efforts to break down barriers and create a more accessible and equitable transportation environment for all members of the community.

Target Audience
and program partners

► **PATH Riders:** Beneficiaries of PATH's services seeking reliable, affordable, and accessible transportation options. This audience is primarily composed of older Adults and People with Disabilities.

► **Local Public Transportation Services:** Partnerships with JABA, BRHD, Jaunt, and UVA contribute to enhancing transportation options and assistance.
Healthcare Providers: Entities collaborating with PATH to improve healthcare accessibility for the target audience.

► **Community Organizations:** Entities collaborating with PATH to address transportation needs and improve mobility services.

► **Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC):** Leads the community-focused effort and oversees PATH's operations.

► **Government Agencies:** Entities supporting and funding PATH's initiatives to promote transportation accessibility and inclusivity.

Suggested *Language*

Here is some suggested language to help communicate the program and many of its benefits to PATH's primary audience and partners:

Senior Riders

PATH for Senior Riders: *"PATH is a dedicated transportation information and referral service that understands the unique mobility needs of senior citizens. Whether you need a ride to a doctor's appointment, the grocery store, or a social event, PATH makes transportation easy and accessible. By calling our service hotline, you can receive personalized assistance in finding the most convenient and safe travel options, helping you maintain your independence and stay connected with your community."*

1. "Convenience at Your Fingertips": *"With PATH, scheduling a ride is as simple as making a phone call. Our service eliminates the hassle of navigating complicated public transport schedules, providing you with a straightforward, user-friendly solution."*

2. "Empowering Your Journey": *"PATH ensures that you have the freedom to attend essential appointments, engage in community activities, and maintain your independence. Our hotline provides personalized assistance, making transportation easy and accessible, ensuring you're never left behind."*

3. "Safety First Mentality": *"At PATH, the safety and security of our riders are a number one priority to us. PATH exercises a safety first mentality to ensure the wellness and security of their riders ."*

4. "Beyond Just a Ride": *"By calling our PATH service hotline, you tap into a network dedicated to supporting your active lifestyle. We connect you with reliable transportation options tailored to meet the specific needs of seniors, ensuring you can navigate your community safely and comfortably."*

5. "Customized Travel Options": *"We understand that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to transportation. PATH can connect riders with offers customized travel options to fit your personal schedule and preferences."*

6. "Stay Active and Engaged": *"Don't let transportation issues keep you from the activities you love or the errands you need to run. PATH helps you stay active and engaged with your community, keeping you connected to the people and places that matter most."*

Disabled Riders

PATH for Disabled Riders: *"PATH offers a specialized transportation referral service tailored for individuals with disabilities. Recognizing the challenges you may face in navigating traditional transportation systems, PATH provides a simple solution through our hotline, where you can access information on accessible transportation services designed to meet your specific needs. This ensures you can travel safely and comfortably to your destinations, empowering you to participate fully in all aspects of community life."*

1. "Tailored for Accessibility": *"At PATH, we understand the unique challenges faced by disabled riders. Our hotline provides direct access to transportation services that prioritize accessibility, ensuring your travel needs are met with the utmost care and consideration.*

2. "Responsive and Reliable": *"We are committed to enhancing your mobility with services that are both responsive and reliable. Call PATH to access transportation solutions that respect your individual needs and promote your independence."*

3. "Prioritizes the Safety and Security": *"At PATH, the safety and security of our riders are a number one priority to us. PATH works diligently to ensure their riders have a positive and safe experience during their means of transportation."*

PATH'S
Partners

PATH Transportation Partners
(JAUNT, CAT, etc.)

PATH for Transportation Partners: "PATH works collaboratively with transportation providers like JAUNT and CAT to provide valuable customer feedback and enhance the amplification of local transit services. By partnering with PATH, you gain access to a wider network of riders. PATH helps work to answer customer's questions, resolve customer service issues, and market the services of their transportation partners by providing additional support in customer referral and scheduling. PATH will help their clients find more rides, allowing them to access more services, stay engaged in the community, live longer in their homes and live a healthier life.

▶ **"Enhancing Service Together":** *"Partnering with PATH enables you to amplify the impact of your services. We provide customer based feedback that can help inform routes and improve schedules, ensuring your transportation solutions effectively meet community needs."*

▶ **"Collaborative Impact":** *"By collaborating with PATH, your organization taps into a larger network, expanding your reach and enhancing the efficiency of your operations. Together, we drive change that makes transportation more inclusive and accessible."*

▶ **"Data-Driven Improvements":** *"Our partnership is grounded in data-driven strategies. PATH collects and shares insights that help you optimize your services, aligning them more closely with riders' actual requirements, thus enhancing user satisfaction and service usability."*

For Prospective Transportation Partners: **"Expand Your Reach with PATH":** *"Joining forces with PATH allows you to expand your service reach into underserved areas, tapping into a new customer base while fulfilling your mission of accessible transportation for all. Together, we can bridge the mobility gap, creating a stronger network that benefits both our organizations and the communities we serve."*

PATH Support Partners
(JABA, BRHD, etc.)

PATH for Support Partners: *"PATH is an integral resource for community organizations and entities that interact daily with our target audiences, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. As a partner, you play a crucial role in connecting these individuals with PATH's services, enabling them to overcome transportation barriers and access vital community resources and services more effectively."*

1. **"Community-Focused Collaboration":** *"PATH works alongside organizations like yours to deepen community connections. We provide transportation solutions that enable your clients to access the services they need, enhancing the overall effectiveness of our community programs."*

2. **"Strengthening Support Networks":** *"Our collaboration enriches the support network available to our mutual clients, ensuring they have reliable access to essential services and opportunities for community engagement."*

3. **"Unified in Service":** *"Together with PATH, your organization becomes part of a unified effort to remove transportation barriers, making our services more accessible and impactful across the community. Path can help agencies and volunteer groups provide transportation to those in need through ride scheduling, software, staff, vehicles, insurance, and other necessities."*

PATH Healthcare Partners
(UVA, etc.)

PATH for Healthcare Partners: *"PATH collaborates with UVA's Department of Parking and transportation to ensure that transportation barriers do not prevent patients from accessing medical care. By integrating PATH's services with your patient care strategies, we can enhance patient compliance with treatment plans and follow-up appointments, improving health outcomes and patient satisfaction with the accessibility of services."*

▶ **"Connecting Care":** *"PATH enhances healthcare access by ensuring that patients can reliably reach their medical appointments. Our partnership ensures no one misses essential care due to transportation issues, supporting better health outcomes."*

▶ **"Healthcare Mobility":** *"By working with PATH, you help us create solutions that cater specifically to the needs of patients, making transportation to healthcare facilities seamless and stress-free."*

▶ **"Integrated Health Services":** *"Our collaboration bridges the gap between healthcare needs and transportation services, integrating efforts to provide comprehensive support to those we serve."*

For Prospective Healthcare Partners: **"Enhanced Patient Accessibility":** *"Partnering with PATH enables you to offer your patients an integrated healthcare experience where transportation barriers are minimized. This collaboration not only helps in improving patient outcomes but also increases your healthcare facility's accessibility, ensuring all patients can attend their necessary appointments reliably."*

PATH's Leadership Team (TJPDC)

PATH within TJPDC: *"As part of the Thomas Jefferson District Planning Commission, PATH aligns with our broader goals of improving regional transportation solutions. This program not only serves the immediate mobility needs of seniors and disabled individuals, but also provides critical data and insights that help shape future transportation planning and policy decisions within the district."*

▶ **"Visionary Leadership":** *"Under the guidance of TJPDC, PATH is setting standards in mobility management. Our strategic approach ensures that transportation services are not only comprehensive but also a step ahead in meeting community needs."*

▶ **"Strategic Development":** *"With the leadership of TJPDC, PATH continuously evolves, adapting to new challenges and opportunities in transportation, ensuring our programs remain effective and forward-thinking. PATH helps further the mission of TJPDC's Regional Transit Partnership by presenting a unified single source to access all the transportation services, CAT, UTS, and Jaunt. (One-Stop-One-Call)."*

Government Entities/PATH's Funding Sources

PATH for Government Entities and Funding Sources: *"PATH represents a vital component of our community's infrastructure, ensuring that seniors and adults with disabilities can travel freely and safely. Your support and funding make it possible for PATH to continue expanding its services, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life in our regions and fulfilling our collective commitment to accessible and equitable transportation solutions."*

1. "Accountable and Impactful": *"PATH is committed to transparency and accountability in every aspect of our operation. We ensure that every dollar invested is directed towards significantly improving transportation accessibility and efficiency."*

2. "Investment in Community": *"Your support enables PATH to drive essential changes in transportation services, directly impacting the lives of those in the community by providing them with reliable access to necessary services and activities."*

3. "Measurable Outcomes": *"PATH is dedicated to delivering measurable outcomes that reflect the effectiveness of our transportation solutions. We closely monitor and analyze data collected from our service interactions to continuously improve and adapt our offerings. This rigorous approach allows us to provide stakeholders with concrete evidence of our impact on the community."*

4. "Helps Historically Underserved Populations." *"Equity and inclusivity is at the heart of PATH's mission to serve and support those in our community whose voices are often overlooked. By focusing our efforts to be of service to senior and disabled community members, we believe PATH can foster spaces that are supportive to underserved populations."*

5. "Expanding Opportunities": *"PATH Helps people reach employment and other opportunities by removing the barrier that transportation needs can create for certain demographics. By removing the limitations of public transportation, community members will feel empowered to explore and engage with their community more freely."*

6. "Increases Public Transit": *"PATH services will help reduce the use of single occupancy vehicles. By encouraging more collective adoption of public transportation services the local community can benefit from less vehicle congestion, less accidents, and less emission of green-houses gasses."*

7. "Supports Human Service Agencies": *"PATH is uniquely and intentionally positioned to partner and collaborate with different public service agencies and their clients. By being a conduit to collaborate with these agencies, we help amplify shared missions to help those in need."*

Community Outreach and Partnerships

PATH aims to act as the unifying umbrella for the communitie's various public transportation services into one recognizable, cohesive, and easily accessible place. That is why being knowledgeable and tuned into the needs and growth opportunities of the transit partnerships is essential to PATH's mission statement. Here are a list of campaign ideas that can help foster the necessary community outreach and partnership efforts:

Community Integration and Support

▶ **Volunteer Programs:** Promote and support volunteer driving programs in a county like Fluvanna, where there is a preference for more personalized services.

▶ **Informational Sessions:** Host regular sessions at community centers and libraries to help new residents and others unfamiliar with the local transportation options.

▶ **Targeted Outreach:** Partner with healthcare providers to facilitate transportation to medical appointments, addressing the crucial need for accessible healthcare transportation.

Community Feedback Forums

▶ Conduct forums alongside local events to gather input on service improvements and to discuss the integration of additional transportation assistance based on expressed community needs.

▶ Conduct semi-annual focus groups and surveys to gauge the effectiveness of the engagement strategies and identify areas for improvement.

▶ Use engagement metrics (event attendance, newsletter readership, social media interactions) to refine and target communication strategies.

▶ Gauge and report customer satisfaction through client testimonial survey collection and review. Feedback positive testimonials and personal success stories within digital and print marketing materials.

▶ Online Performance Metrics: Track engagement rates, service usage statistics, and satisfaction levels.

PATH Hotline Service Desk Scripting

Given that the primary customer interaction will be through the use of the PATH service desk number, it is important to establish a uniform and professional experience for potential riders. A well-polished script is recommended to help foster guidelines on how to create a welcoming, inclusive, and solutions-driven tone of voice. In addition, a script ensures that the team is able to capture the information most pertinent for your data collection efforts supporting program expansion in every phone call.

PATH Transportation Phone Script

► *"Hello, thank you for calling the PATH transportation service desk, this is [FIRST NAME]. How may I assist you today?"*

► *"Could you please provide me with some details about your specific transportation needs? Let me check the available transportation options in your area and see how we can assist you."*

► *"Do you have any specific accommodations you may need in order to enter and exit these vehicles [listed modes of transportation]?"*

► *"Just to make sure I understand your request, you are interested in coordinating travel arrangements from [place and time] to arrive to [place and time], is that correct?"*

► *"I'll take care of the booking for you right away. It was my pleasure helping you [RIDER's NAME]. If you ever have any questions or need assistance in the future, don't hesitate to reach out to us. Have a great day!"*

► *"I am sorry we were unable to accommodate your travel needs today, is there anything else we can help you with?"*

► *"I am sorry we were unable to accommodate your travel needs today. We are currently collecting information to help us improve transportation access in your area and would love to understand if there are any other places that you have difficulty traveling to regularly. Your direct feedback is going to be used to help us understand where we need to focus our efforts to better meet your needs. Do you mind giving me just a few more minutes of your time by sharing this information with me?"*

► *"If you have any questions or concerns regarding your travel arrangements, please feel free to call this number again."*

Navigating
Pain points

We understand that PATH is on a journey to becoming an invaluable transportation resource in the communities it serves. That said, as it stands today, the program is not yet poised to align with every need or every route for every person, just yet. These talking points are designed to help your team navigate some of your audience's biggest transportation grievances when they arise in phone conversations:

1. Unreliable Transportation

▶ **Understanding the Impact:** *"We recognize that unreliable transportation can disrupt your daily plans, especially important appointments. We really appreciate your honest feedback to help us identify and address the most critical gaps."*

▶ **Commitment to Improvement:** *"Thank you so much for letting us know where our services fall short. We aim to work directly with transportation providers to enhance reliability. Your feedback is crucial for bringing about meaningful changes."*

▶ **Long-term Goals:** *"Every report of an unreliable service helps us build a case for more consistent transportation options that our community needs. We're committed to making reliability a priority in our conversations with our service providers."*

2. Limited Accessibility

▶ **Acknowledging Difficulties:** *"We understand that limited accessibility can make transportation a major hurdle. It's important for us to know what barriers you face, whether it's a lack of suitable vehicles or insufficient service coverage."*

▶ **Enhancing Service Options:** *"Your experiences inform our efforts to advocate for more accessible vehicles and services. Sharing your challenges helps us focus on securing resources that improve accessibility."*

▶ **Planning for Everyone's Needs:** *"We strive to ensure that every member of our community can travel with ease. Let us know how we can make our services more accessible to you, and we'll work to bring those improvements to life."*

3. High Transportation Costs

▶ **Addressing Cost Concerns:** *"We recognize that the cost of transportation can be prohibitive. Hearing about your experiences helps us identify where we need to push for more affordable solutions."*

▶ **Efforts to Reduce Costs:** *"By understanding your financial challenges with transportation, we can better advocate for subsidized rates and cost-effective services tailored to your needs."*

▶ **Creating Cost-Effective Solutions:** *"Your feedback on costs helps us negotiate and plan services that are not only accessible but also financially sustainable for all. We're exploring partnerships that could help reduce these costs."*

Each of these talking points aims to convey empathy and a proactive approach, ensuring that stakeholders understand PATH's commitment to listening and responding to the community's needs. These points also encourage continuous feedback, which is essential for ongoing improvements and advocacy for better transportation solutions.

We also understand that not all of PATH RIDER's concerns will align with the points identified above. Here are some more general talking points to address their frustration and underscore PATH's role in working WITH them to improve transportation services:

▶ **Acknowledging Limitations:**
"We appreciate you sharing the transportation challenges you're facing. While PATH is continually evolving, there are areas we are still working to improve. Your input is crucial as it helps us understand where to focus our efforts."

▶ **Encouraging Ongoing Engagement:**
"Your experiences and the issues you face are important to us. Even if we can't provide an immediate solution, your feedback is invaluable. It helps us prioritize changes and, with time, allows us to advocate for and implement more comprehensive transportation services."

▶ **Emphasizing Continuous Improvement:**
"Thank you for reaching out with your concerns. We want you to know that each piece of feedback we receive is a step towards enhancing services. We are actively working with community partners to expand and refine transportation solutions to better meet your needs."

▶ **Setting Realistic Expectations:**
"We understand how vital reliable transportation is for your independence and well-being. While PATH aims to meet the community's needs as effectively as possible, there are instances where we may not have an immediate solution. We are committed to being transparent about what can be realistically achieved in the short term."

▶ **Building Trust Through Honesty:** *"We are here to listen and to learn from you. By understanding your specific needs and the gaps in service, we can better strategize improvements. We may not have all the answers today, but we are dedicated to finding solutions that will help our community thrive."*

These talking points not only address the current limitations of the PATH program but also highlight the team's commitment to growth, community engagement, and transparency. This approach fosters trust and encourages continuous dialogue, which is essential for the program's success and responsiveness to community needs.

Value Proposition
Seniors and Adults Living with Disabilities

PATH recognizes that there is an ongoing demand for reliable transportation services that can fulfill the unique needs of senior adults who do not have a means of private transportation. Through the use of focus group surveys with local members of the community, PATH has identified opportunities to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding the mobility options available to rural areas.

By providing reliable and accessible transportation, PATH opens up new opportunities for older adults and individuals with disabilities, allowing them to participate more fully in their communities. More importantly, seniors and people with disabilities will be able to reach more health care services, groceries, and social connections.

Health and Safety	Independence	Access to Opportunities
Support to Caregivers	Community Building	Financially Inclusive

Here are specific talking points that can be integrated into the call center script, when possible, that address each of the value propositions that PATH offers to seniors and adults living with disabilities:

Health and Safety
- ► *"At PATH, our transportation partners prioritize your health and safety. Our vehicles are regularly sanitized and equipped with accessibility features to ensure a safe and comfortable journey every time."*
- ► *"Our drivers are trained to assist with any special needs you may have, ensuring you reach your healthcare appointments on time and without stress."*

Independence
- ► *"We understand the importance of independence in your daily life. PATH's services allow you to schedule your own rides according to your personal routine, giving you control over when and how you travel."*
- ► *"With PATH, you can maintain your autonomy by attending social events, managing your appointments, and running errands independently."*

Access to Opportunities
- ► *"PATH opens doors to new opportunities by providing reliable transportation to essential services and community events. Whether it's grocery shopping, a community workshop, or a local gathering, we do our best to help you get there."*
- ► *"Our service is working to ensure that you can access diverse facilities beyond your immediate neighborhood, from healthcare centers to community events"*

Support to Caregivers

► *"We're here to support caregivers as well. PATH offers peace of mind, knowing that your loved ones have safe and reliable transportation options when you're not available."*

► *"Use our services to reduce the transportation burden on caregivers, allowing them more time for personal care and less stress about logistics."*

Community Building

► *"By using PATH, you contribute to a larger community initiative aimed at connecting and engaging all members of our society. Our services encourage community interaction, helping you stay connected with friends and participate in local events."*

► *"Join our community rides to experience shared trips to popular destinations like markets, churches, or special community events."*

Financially Inclusive

► *"PATH is committed to being financially inclusive, offering subsidized fares for those who qualify and providing cost-effective solutions for all our riders. We ensure that transportation is not a financial burden on you or your family."*

These talking points are designed to clearly communicate the benefits of PATH's transportation services, tailored specifically to meet the needs of your audience, ensuring callers feel supported and informed about the resources available to them.

Marketing Campaigns

By implementing these strategies, PATH will effectively reach its target audience, engage with the community, and drive awareness and utilization of its services.

Marketing Materials - *Print Assets*

▶ **Flyers:** These flyers will include general information about PATH on their services, means of contact, and hours of operation. The PATH Hotline Service number should be the primary call to action in all materials. As a way to increase visibility of the brand to target areas of the community, it is essential that the flyers be distributed at community centers, libraries, healthcare facilities, local events, and local businesses.

▶ **Brochures:** Brochures offer a more informative and in depth approach to increase PATH's brand awareness to a wide general audience. It is important to display brochures at partner locations and distribute at community events and fairs. Encourage PATH transportation partners to keep a supply of printed brochures out and visible at select locations that PATH riders frequent.

▶ **Magnets & Decals:** Magnets serve as a means for current and potential PATH riders to have an easily accessible reminder for how to contact the PATH Hotline Service Desk. Provide magnets as giveaways at local gatherings and events and encourage PATH Transportation Partners to adhere a decal to their public transportation vehicle. The decal can be a method for PATH Riders to easily recognize and confirm that the method of transportation they are using is an identified member of the PATH network.

Distribution Methods

1. Partner with community centers, libraries, healthcare facilities, and local businesses to display and distribute materials.
2. Utilize community events, fairs, and local gatherings for broader distribution.
3. Coordinate with local government offices and public transportation hubs to ensure availability of materials to a wide audience.

► **PATH Webpage:** The pathva.org website is the central hub for all information to PATH's services, partners, regions of transit, mission statement, and contact information. The URL should be clear and visible on all flyers, brochures, business cards, and many of the marketing materials. This will be the first introduction to PATH for many people interested in the program's services and should provide program resources that answer many of the prospect's questions. In addition, there should be a contact form option for anyone wanting to get in touch with the program that is averse to calling the hotline.

► **Social Media Posts:** With PATH's social media channels, it is recommended that there be consistent and regular updates, stories, and interactive content on platforms like Facebook, which is popular among the target age group. The posts should be conducted with PATH's brand voice (as noted in the sections above) and should always include an identifiable call to action to encourage interactions. Content should be templatized in PATH's brand colors and signature to create brand recognition and set itself apart from its stakeholders and partners.

► **Email Newsletters (Recommendation):** A recommendation to update PATH Riders of the services and updates - Monthly newsletters can be sent out to email subscribers with a list of comprehensible service updates, community stories, and promotions. This is also a great way to share periodic updates about service changes, community stories, and promotions. The email should be short and easy to read with a call to action to explore the pathva.org website or to call the hotline service number for any questions or transportation requests. Example: County-specific Newsletters - Distribute tailored newsletters to each county that address specific local transportation issues and updates.

► **Video Content:** Short clips showing the ease of using PATH services, customer testimonials, and instructional guides. Video content of PATH Riders using the transportation services and clips of the different partners that make up the PATH is highly encouraged.

► **Powerpoint Template:** This is a community facing presentation that can help inform others of PATH's services, contact information, and value proposition. The template should be used as a templated elevator pitch to PATH's services, value proposition, mission statement and brand.

PATH Digital Content Themes

Marketing content themes serve as the backbone for content strategy, ensuring consistency and relevance across all marketing communications. Here are some of the benefits of content themes:

▶ **Consistency:** Content themes help maintain a consistent voice, style, and message across various marketing channels. This consistency is crucial for building brand recognition and trust among the audience.

▶ **Relevance:** By focusing on specific themes that are important to the target audience, content pillars ensure that all content is relevant and engaging. This relevance helps to attract and retain the attention of the audience, increasing engagement and conversions.

▶ **Efficiency:** Content pillars streamline the content creation process. Once the pillars are defined, it becomes easier to generate ideas and produce content that aligns with the overall marketing strategy. This efficiency can save time and resources in content production.

▶ **SEO Optimization:** Structured around key themes, content pillars help in enhancing search engine optimization (SEO). By consistently producing content under each pillar, brands can target specific keywords more effectively, improving their visibility and rankings in search engine results.

Here are the content pillars that the AMSA team is recommending for the PATH program:

▶ **PATH Connects:** Highlighting human stories of connectivity and support provided by PATH. These can be customer testimonials and positive feedback that shows how others have benefited from partnering with PATH.

▶ **PATH Growth:** Showcasing the expansion and improvement of PATH services. Lean into your community building efforts in these instances, for example:
  - *"Thanks to community feedback, we're excited to announce that JAUNT is launching a new service line from Greene to Charlottesville that will run every two hours!"*

▶ **PATH Partners:** Highlighting the ongoing collaboration efforts of PATH's pre-existing partners and announcing any new partnerships for the PATH program. This pillar is a great way to build credibility by associating PATH with organizations that are well-known to the target audience.

▶ **PATH in Action:** This content theme aims to give visual evidence to how PATH engages its riders within the community as a trusted service provider. This content theme will be best paired with videos and photos of riders using PATH's services, PATH staff executing daily operations, as well as organizational partners giving recognition to and promoting PATH in their own materials and client interactions.
  Example: Highlight good storytelling of successful pick-ups and drop-offs, spotlight drivers in a personal and approachable manner, share images of buses and taxis that have the PATH sticker on them.

▶ **PATH Alerts:** This content pillar should be reserved for any PATH-related updates, like weather-related closures and changes. This content theme is focused on providing riders with timely information and helping them be aware of any pertinent changes to public routes and schedules. PATH should aim to provide information in a clear and concise manner that helps riders make informed decisions on transportation services available to them in light of road closures, inclement weather, and route changes.