

Twice is Nice Interim Report

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

PATH (Partnership for Accessible Transportation Help)

May 12, 2025

Introduction

TJPDC's PATH program applied for and received a \$5,000 grant from Twice is Nice to create the Transportation Assistance Fund (TAF). The Transportation Assistance Fund helps older adults in the Region Ten area whose needs cannot be met by existing transportation options. PATH's TAF program helps people with the cost of one-time or occasional transportation. Funds from the Twice is Nice grant are distributed equally between the city of Charlottesville and the five counties in Region Ten. PATH's Transportation Assistance Fund will be able to help 1-3 people in each county by paying for transportation to medical appointments and other essential services when they cannot get there by other means. PATH continues to look for support for this program through grants and donations from the public.

Total number of people who receive benefits

We can provide rides for 6-18 older adults with this grant money, depending on the cost of the ride. Fares are based on the individual's needs (stretcher, wheelchair, etc.) and distance travelled. We started sending out information about the program in March. One person from Greene County has used the Transportation Assistance Fund so far. We had six other potential users who did not meet the eligibility criteria. The person who received assistance needed transportation to a medical appointment. He did not need a wheelchair accessible vehicle or any other help with mobility and his ride cost \$192. There are two people who have indicated they will need assistance getting to and from an upcoming medical appointment or procedure. Both meet the income requirements, but do not have a date for their appointments. One is in Fluvanna County, and the other in Louisa County. Because our funds are limited, we have marketed the program by sharing information about the Transportation Assistance Fund and the eligibility requirements with limited human service agencies in each county, and with JABA. They can help identify suitable candidates for the TAF. We set our criteria high so that we can help the most people with the greatest needs.

Program Improvement

Since this is a new initiative, we created policies and procedures for using the Transportation Assistance Fund and created a data collection system to keep track of users. We finalized our

criteria, including the income requirements, and developed a procedure to review and approve use of the fund. We modified our process as we considered the best way to manage the fund for potential TAF recipients.

We keep track of income and money spent on a spreadsheet and in our database, and set up a process to accept private donations from the public.

Because the fund is meant to be used as a last resort, we did not advertise it widely at first but rather let human service agencies know so they can refer eligible candidates. We have started promoting the service more broadly now, so more people know assistance is available.

New Funding Commitments

PATH applied for a grant from the Louisa County Community Fund to support the Transportation Assistance Fund in Louisa County. PATH continues to look for other grant opportunities that will either fund the TAF in general, or that will contribute to the fund for a specific county as is the case with the LCCF grant. PATH can accept donations from the public to the Transportation Assistance Fund through the TJPDC Corporation website (<https://tjpd.org/tjpd-corporation/>). Our hope is to raise enough money to sustain and increase the program for as long as there is a need. PATH is working on developing partnerships to address many of these needs in a more permanent way, so the Transportation Assistance Fund can focus on seniors with extraordinary needs.

In Kind Donations

PATH and TJPDC supply all the staff time and materials used to support the Transportation Assistance Fund, so that 100% of the money in the fund can be used to provide transportation for qualifying members of the community.

Volunteer Contributions

There are currently no volunteer contributions to the Transportation Assistance Fund.

Learnings

We learned how to start a transportation assistance program and select the applicants with the most need. Balancing the need with the resources we have is a focus of our efforts. We developed our eligibility criteria and processes so that we can help the people who need it most.

We learned that while regular taxis and uber type services cost less than non-emergency medical transport, they are also less reliable. We used the Transportation Assistance Fund to schedule a

ride for someone with a taxi company. They confirmed that the ride was scheduled, but when the day of the appointment arrived, they said they did not have anyone who could provide the ride. To avoid another situation like this, we will be using transportation companies that specialize in non-emergency medical transportation. They have far better reliability and better training in assisting older adults and people with disabilities.

Expenditure of Grant Funds

The Twice is Nice grant funds are divided equally between the City of Charlottesville, and the Counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson. Potential recipients are screened for eligibility (see attached checklist), and approval is decided by the PATH Transportation Counselor and Program Manager. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis but will be decided in a fair and consistent manner. People who are eligible will receive assistance on a first come first served basis until we have used all the allocated funds for each county.

PATH schedules rides for people in need who meet our criteria and uses the TIN funds to pay for the rides. PATH uses private transportation companies to provide rides for our clients. These private companies provide confirmed reservations and have specialized services ranging from Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles to vehicles with stretcher service. For the person in Greene County who received a ride through the TAF, we used H&M Transport to bring him to and from his appointment on Pantops. We will also use Brittany's Transport, Reliable Rides, Priority Patient Transport, and others, depending on the needs of the rider, and who is available.

Promotion of Twice is Nice

PATH conducts Transportation Solutions Workshops in each county in Region Ten. During the workshops we talk about the Transportation Assistance Fund, that it was started with a grant from Twice is Nice, and then we explain your program and mission.

On our [website](#) we list Twice is Nice as one of our partners with a link to the Twice is Nice website.

So far this year, PATH has done 8 workshops - at Feeding Greene Food Pantry, Fluvanna County Public Schools, JABA's Community Centers in Greene County, Scottsville, and Lovingston, The Center at Belvedere, and public libraries in Louisa and Crozet. At each workshop PATH talks about the Transportation Assistance Fund, and about Twice is Nice and the work you do to support older adults in the region. PATH will continue to promote Twice is Nice and its mission with our community partners and the public.

Some of the upcoming PATH events include regular bus field trips at The Center at Belvedere, a Health Fair at Fluvanna Holiness Bible Church in August, and the Spring Creek Healthy Living Expo

in September. This summer we will be looking for community partners to increase transportation services in the rural counties.