



## Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition

### Neighborhood Livability/Gerotrifecta Work Group

December 15, 2016 @ 10:00am – 11:30am

Retail Merchants Association, 5101 Monument Ave., Richmond, VA 23230

### Neighborhood Livability/GeroTrifecta Action Team

**Facilitator:** Karen Moeller, Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition

**Notes:** Sara Morris, Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition

**Goal:** Our region will offer housing, transportation, and design features that enable residents to live safely and with dignity through all the stages of their lives.

**Objectives:** Increase opportunities for affordable housing and home modification services for older adults, increase mobility and transportation infrastructure in order to decrease isolation of older adults and persons with disabilities, improve physical infrastructure including accessibility to housing and public transportation, promote public safety and make disaster planning widely accessible. *The Greater Richmond Age Wave Plan*

### The Meeting

Karen Moeller kicked off the meeting by explaining the focus of the action team. The team will shift from focusing on Neighborhood Canvassing to taking on the specific issue of transportation. Specifically focusing on the accessibility, safety and affordability of transportation options across the Richmond area. We will also be exploring a legislative platform for the 2018 General Assembly session.

Catherine MacDonald provided an overview of a Richmond Regional Transportation White Paper she wrote on behalf of Senior Connections. It was written to assess the needs, gaps and offer solutions based on best practices from around the country. The White Paper starts with showcasing the current regional transportation offerings including public transit, nonprofit transportation programs and for-profit programs including taxi services.

The White Paper showcases three similar size cities: Charlottesville, Charleston, SC and Portland, OR. Each city has a program that has been implemented to address transportation needs of their resident's. Charlottesville has an organization called [JAUNT, Inc.](#) JAUNT was created when several human services agencies realized it would be more efficient to have their client's share rides. JAUNT is currently owned by five local governments and is operating as a 501(c)3.

Charleston, SC implemented a program called [Senior Ride Connection](#). Senior Ride Connection is a community-based, non-profit organization providing caring and courteous door-to-door rides for seniors. This program works off of a membership model with an annual membership fee and fares per miles.

Portland, OR implemented a program called [Ride Connection](#). This one seems to be the most comprehensive. Ride Connection is a nonprofit that works with community partners to provide and coordinate transportation options primarily for older adults and people with disabilities. With partner agencies they are able to provide door to door services, transit training, free shuttle services for errands such as grocery shopping, transit for job seekers and commuters. By offering a variety of options they are able to find the right fit for each individual.

Catherine offered some recommendations to Senior Connections based on the research these include:

- Senior Connection's Ride Connections program serving as a clearinghouse for transportation services and a mobility management group to help seniors and individuals with disabilities more effectively use transportation services.
- Coordinate Ride connections with programs offered by the Shepherd's Center of Richmond and Chesterfield.
- Use the Senior Connections Advisory Council as an ongoing think tank on transportation and sponsor an annual forum on transportation to continually highlight progress and gaps.
- Invest in the success of Hanover Rides as a model for other localities in Planning District 15.
- Discuss with Bay Aging the potential for serving additional localities in Planning District 15.
- Senior Connections support and work with Richmond Regional Planning District Commission to identify solutions for enhancing specialized transportation services. This might include updating the list of providers, coordinating and enhancing information and referral services, and participating in study that will examine alternatives for coordinating transportation services.

[Bay Transit](#) provides transportation services for localities east of Richmond. Currently, the service has a line that reaches White Oak Village. This could be an opportunity to tack on to their services since they already serve New Kent and Charles City Counties. Another notable transportation provider is [Virginia Regional Transit](#). This organization serves multiple counties across the state for the general public.

The question was posed as to what the action team's specific population focus will be. The action team's focus will be the general population with a specific focus on the transportation needs of older adults. Currently, the region has a patchwork of services and will focus on a plan to align services to meet the needs of the region.

### **Ken Lantz presentation**

As we talked about earlier, there is not a specific regional transit plan. Currently, we are seeing a patchwork of services being offered. Therefore, we are in need of one entity to take on the task of aligning the services to create a cohesive regional transportation system. Some entities that are eligible would be: private nonprofits, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, information referral networks, private for-profit providers, faith-based coalitions, human services agencies, local governments, tech based services, or creating a new entity. Of course, all of these agencies come with their own challenges. We would need for their evaluation criteria to match as well. This includes: grant eligibility, a regional service area, work rules and labor laws that foster the mission and the ability to work with for-profit providers across county lines. It is desirable that the entity have a positive public image, core functions to support the effort, flexible by-laws and management support.

With the criteria in place, Senior Connections seems to be the best fit. Earlier this week, Senior Connections agreed to take on the task through the revitalization of their Ride Connection program. Richmond Regional Planning District Commission will work with Senior Connections to create a cohesive regional transit system. Currently, the organizations are working to clarify the roles between each organization and assist in finding and securing funding for the initiative.

The oversight for this project will be Senior Connections Board of Directors and Advisory Council which represent each county and various partner organizations. Senior Connections can also apply for funding



including Section 5310 funds which are specifically for transportation above and beyond fixed routes. Individuals from the Elderly and Disabilities Advisory Committee will provide great assistance on this project.

Some other models to explore would be Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC). They are a rural model serving the citizens of the southwest portion of the state. They have won multiple service delivery awards and have a comprehensive business model.

One component that came up a few times was the relationship that is often built between the riders, driver and scheduler. We do not want to lose sight of the sensitivity to disabilities and the comfort that a rider may get from speaking with a specific person. Perhaps there is an opportunity to create a sensitivity training. Ken mentioned that he knew of a safety training program called [Passenger Assistance Sensitivity and Safety \(PASS\) Training](#).

The Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) is currently working on their Regional Vision Transit Plan which is set to wrap up in the Spring. This extensive look at Richmond's regional transportation will identify gaps and create solutions to be implemented by 2040. With the initiation of the Bus Rapid Transit route from Willow Lawn to Rockett's Landing there may be increased public interest in instituting public transit service in other parts of the region. Currently, GRTC is 50% owned by the City of Richmond and 50% by Chesterfield County. Henrico County, one of the largest consumers of the services currently pays for the transportation services.

Another great advocate for transportation is the Richmond Hill group: RVA Rapid Transit. One of the biggest transportation challenges that the region faces is that the outlying localities and areas will have the highest concentration of older adults. The availability of services is currently slim for those individuals. It would also be ideal to partner with UZURV or Uber drivers to create sensitivity training for those drivers. Improved transportation services can lead to fewer missed appointments and fewer hospital readmissions.

### **Advocacy**

The action team has decided to explore bills related to transportation. Maya Op De Beke, Annie Rhodes, and Sara Morris chose 3 bills that are related to transportation and impact older adults. The first is Senate Bill 591 which requires background checks for Taxi Cab providers, the second is House Bill 1021 which would require background checks for Medicaid nonemergency transportation providers. The last is Senate Bill 862 which states that driving after the forfeiture of a license would be a criminal offense, but changing the wording to only include the operation of a vehicle on a public roadway.

Annie has set up Google Alerts for each of the bills we have identified so that the action team will have access to the latest information of each bill. The group has created a list of bills that impact older adults and would like to hear from the group regarding any organization's legislative platforms.

### **NEXT MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> from 10am-11:30am**

**Location TBD**

## ATTENDEES

Name	Organization Affiliation
<b>Adrienne Cummins</b>	VCU Gerontology Student
<b>William Carter</b>	Suntrust Bank
<b>Amy Marschean</b>	Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
<b>Maria Holperin</b>	Community Volunteer
<b>Ken Lantz</b>	Richmond Regional Planning District Commission
<b>Bill Liepis</b>	Community Advocate
<b>Molly MacBean</b>	VCU Gerontology Student and VanGo
<b>Catherine MacDonald</b>	Greater Richmond Age Wave
<b>Karen Moeller</b>	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition
<b>Sara Morris</b>	Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition & CATCH Healthy Habits
<b>Maya OpDeBeke</b>	VCU Gerontology Student
<b>Annie Rhodes</b>	VCU Gerontology Student
<b>Jelisa Turner</b>	Henrico County