

TRIP is different from other volunteer driver programs. Its design evolved from focus groups and was built on five innovative assumptions:

- If older adult and disabled riders recruit their own drivers, they will be empowered
- If they have something to offer friends and neighbors in exchange for rides, they will feel more comfortable asking for rides
- If volunteers are reimbursed for their travel assistance, they will be more likely to provide rides over an extended period
- If friends and neighbors can use their own automobiles, the need to purchase and maintain vehicles by the program is eliminated
- If passengers and drivers can schedule their own rides, requirements for staffing and infrastructure are significantly reduced.

Services, based on the innovative TRIP design, result in many benefits for the organization that operates it:

- A TRIP service is quick and inexpensive to start-up and operate
- A TRIP service can be a stand-alone service or it can harmonize with a menu of existing services
- Subscription software is available to fully manage and administer the TRIP service
- Because passengers recruit their own volunteers, dispatch costs and headaches are eliminated and the risk of using volunteer drivers is lowered
- It is able to provide economical service to underserved residents throughout diverse service areas regardless of age and economic status
- It is effective for serving the most difficult service segments – the very frail, those with debilitating sickness, and those needing escorts because of dementia
- Dialysis patients are another group better served by volunteer drivers
- TRIP is scalable to resource availability and its flexibility results in budget certainty
- Operational costs per passenger ride are very low – In some cases, less than fixed route subsidies.

#### Passenger Benefits:

- The service is free to users
- Advance scheduling is not necessary
- Curbside waiting and missed rides are eliminated
- Travel is in comfortable private vehicles
- Multiple stops are possible, making travel less arduous
- They have the ability to recruit volunteer drivers that passengers already know and want to be with
- Travel destinations can cross boundaries
- Travel is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Any level of service is possible, dependent on the needs and preferences of the passenger
- Travel is possible between cities without transfer or inconvenience
- A volunteer escort-driver makes each trip with their rider, assisting them as necessary and required
- An opportunity for enhanced companionship is provided.

