

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES:

How Partnerships are Helping to Reduce Hunger and Increase Access in Delaware County



PARTNERSHIPS THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE



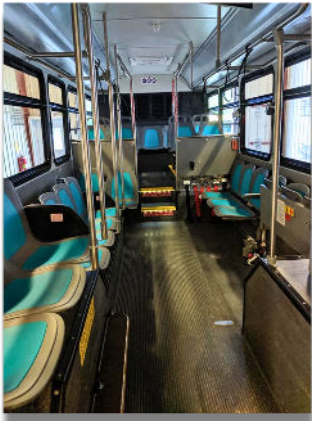
Coordinated grocery cart assembly and distribution and finalized survey questions.



Provided grocery cart dimensions and acceptable cart options as well as distributed surveys to riders prior to distribution.



Offered funding and strategic support to strengthen outreach and sustainability.



BACKGROUND

Delaware County Transit (DCT) staff faced growing concerns about food insecurity and transportation barriers for residents in need and noticed an increasing challenge among their riders. Public Transit policies limit the amount of freight a passenger can bring on board buses to what they can carry unassisted on one trip. This was creating a barrier for riders and residents that utilize transit to access food pantries and grocery stores. Many riders must leave items behind or make hard choices about what they can carry to feed themselves and their families. This often forces them to take additional trips, increase transit costs, and take up valuable time they can't spare. Many riders face mobility limitations that require them to use a cane, walker, or wheelchair. Additionally, many riders bring young children that require assistance and the use of strollers.

THE INITIATIVE

GROCERY GETTER



SCAN FOR MEAL AND PANTRY LOCATIONS



Brought to you by:
Delaware Public Health District
Hunger Alliance
DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT

If found, please call Delaware County Transit (740) 363-3355. Not for resale.

Through joint planning, the partners launched a program that connected transit riders to "grocery getters".

With funding from the Ohio Department of Health for the Healthy Eating and Active Living grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention State Physical and Nutrition Program, the Delaware Public Health District enabled the purchase of grocery carts to be distributed to vulnerable residents to increase the amount of food accessed in one trip to the pantry.





THE IMPACT

- DCT's top two **trip reasons** for rides in 2022 were employment (22,943) and **shopping (23,329)**, provided through their FLEX service.
- **88 unique** Delaware County Transit Riders traveled to and from People In Need (PIN) 565 times between January and September 2025.
- **Transit services** were optimized through strategic planning efforts to serve high-need neighborhoods through the DCT FLEX service where drivers pick up riders and take them curb-to-curb.
- **75 DCT** approved **grocery carts** were purchased for distribution to pantry clients.
- **50% of DCT riders** that were surveyed indicated the need to get more groceries onto transit buses to make it easier for them to get groceries.

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"This partnership made a real difference for families who are in need of food. Having transportation to food resources that allow our clients to get what they need in one trip, has changed lives. One of our clients was brought to tears when they received a grocery cart. Running a food pantry can be a challenge but it's moments like these that remind us why we do this work."

– Kathy Hoff, Executive Director, People In Need



LOOKING AHEAD

The success of this initiative has paved the way for ongoing collaboration, with plans to expand services and continue addressing food insecurity in Delaware County. Through planning the grocery cart distribution, it was identified that older adults living in independent households and assisted living environments would benefit from access to grocery carts as they travel to and from grocery stores and utilize transit in Delaware County.



CALL TO ACTION

To learn more about food access and insecurity, visit [Delaware County Hunger Alliance](https://DelawareCountyHunger.org) (DelawareCountyHunger.org).

To learn more about the Partnership for a Healthy Delaware County and related health behavior strategies, visit [The Partnership page](https://DelawareHealth.org/ThePartnership) (DelawareHealth.org/ThePartnership).

To learn more about Delaware County Transit's Strategic plan, visit [Delaware County Transit](https://DelCoTransit.com/Strategic-Plan) (DelCoTransit.com/Strategic-Plan.)

