



## Webinar

# Rural Older Adult Driver Tailored Research-Integrated Plan (ROAD TRIP)

**When:** Thursday December 1, 2022, at 9AM EST

**Speakers:** Jon Antin, Ph.D. & Brian Wotring, MS, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI)

**Link to join:** <https://bit.ly/3qUlcazROADTRIP>

### **Motivation:**

Sixty-three million Americans living in rural environments face challenges every day when it comes to transportation. They may have to travel longer distances to crucial services, such as the grocery or drug stores and medical appointments. In rural areas, public and alternate transit options can be limited or completely non-existent, and people endure impoverished or missing supporting roadside infrastructures, such as sidewalks or wheelchair access.

Many older adults living in rural environments face these transportation challenges while also dealing with declining capacities. These can typically include physical, perceptual, psychomotor, and cognitive functional abilities, all of which impact safe mobility and driving.

**Objective:** The objective of the research is to develop and evaluate a program to provide individualized transportation solutions to rural older adults designed to help them retain mobility and provide enhanced access to vital services and desired activities.

**Methods:** Each participant, 65 years and older, will live in a rural or semi-rural area and express concerns related to their current transportation-mobility ecosystem. We will assess each participant to establish their current cognitive status and learn about their specific concerns. Next, researchers will observe each person while driving their primary vehicle for four weeks using naturalistic driving study techniques. Following this, the research team will integrate the driving and assessment data to devise and deliver a mobility enhancement plan tailored to that person's specific needs and situation. Mobility plans may include things like alternate route suggestions, vehicle-related adjustments (including CarFit), technology-based driving alternatives (e.g., telehealth visits), and more.

**Expected Outcomes:** We expect the beneficial outcomes will include greater mobility, increased driving safety, and enhanced feelings of independence, communal inclusion, and overall life satisfaction for the participants.