

Fairfax County TOPS Program

Modernizing subsidized mobility for older adults, people with disabilities, and income-eligible residents



TOPS puts one open-loop card in the rider's hand, usable across taxis, rideshare, public transit, and Capital Bikeshare.

4,286

TOPS participants

48,000+

trips last year

3x

applications in <3 yrs

\$15.63

avg. cost per trip

The Client

Fairfax County Human Services Mobility Management (HSMM), a division of the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, provides affordable and accessible transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and residents with limited income — ensuring access to health care, social engagement, and independence. Fairfax County is home to roughly 1.2 million residents; seniors age 65+ are the fastest-growing segment (15.6%), and about 24% of households are income-constrained. TOPS (Transportation Options, Programs & Services) is a cornerstone of that mission.

The Challenge

Before TOPS, the County operated three separate paper-based voucher programs — Seniors On-The-Go!, TaxiAccess, and Dial-A-Ride — each with its own application and eligibility rules. The legacy model was inefficient and confusing, supporting only about 8,500 transactions a year across roughly 300 active participants, with applications entered manually into a standalone database. It left the County with:

- Fragmented enrollment and administration across three programs
- Limited transportation choice — essentially taxi-only
- Difficulty tracking data and measuring program performance
- No ability to use rideshare (TNC) providers, since drivers cannot accept cash
- First/last-mile, connectivity, affordability, and service-awareness barriers for riders

The Solution

Working with Fairfax County, MJM Innovations helped redesign the program into a single, connected mobility offering built on EZTransport. In Spring 2021, TOPS launched with a Visa-branded open-loop debit card (powered by Transcard) that consolidates multiple modes onto one card and lets riders choose the option that best fits each trip:

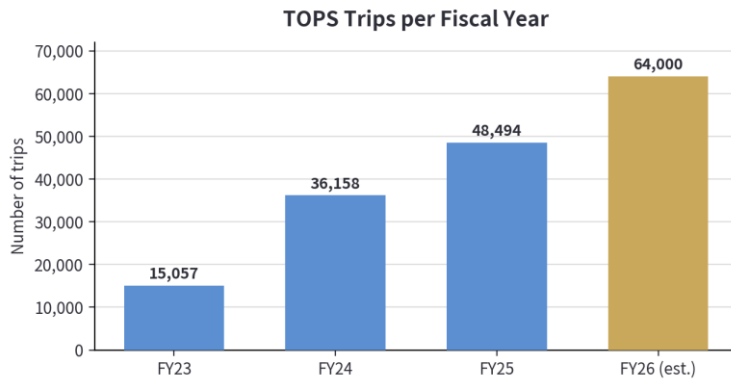
- Simplified, streamlined application through the EZTransport participant portal (plus a paper option)
- Administrative data access through the EZTransport admin portal for real-time program visibility
- Expanded options via restricted merchant codes: taxis, rideshare, public transit, and Capital Bikeshare
- Flexible funding: an \$80 subsidy added when a participant loads \$20, up to six loads for a \$600 maximum benefit
- Self-service via online portal and IVR to add funds, check balances, and review transactions
- Customer service through HSMM, with second-level escalation support from MJM

TOPS is part of MJM's broader Cashless Fare Collection suite:

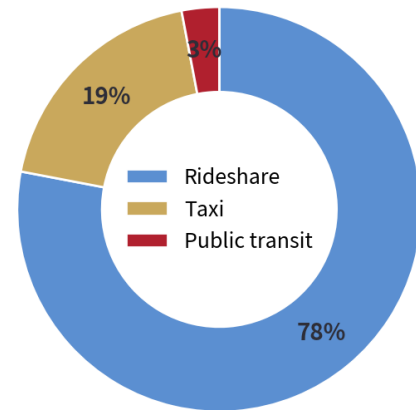
Product	What it delivers
EZTransport	Closed-loop + open-loop farecard system supporting agency-issued and bank cards; integrates with fareboxes and validators for fixed-route and paratransit.
EZRideFare	Mobile ticketing — purchase and activate fares by smartphone with barcode, QR, and NFC validation; reduces cash handling and dwell times.
EZQuickPay	Onboard tap-and-go contactless payments that work offline for paratransit and rural routes; enables fast boarding and real-time reporting.

The Results

The redesign turned a narrow taxi-voucher program into a fast-scaling mobility platform. Since launch, TOPS has grown to 4,286 participants and supported more than 48,000 trips in the past year. From January to October 2024 alone, staff processed 1,245 applications — tripling application volume in under three years. Demand became so strong that the County introduced a waitlist in October 2024 and closed it to new applications in August 2025, with 700+ applications currently waiting.



How TOPS Participants Travel



Other outcomes point to a broader, more engaged rider base and real-world modal flexibility:

- Average participant age dropped from 76 in 2021 to 59 in 2025 — the program is reaching a wider population
- Average cost per trip of just \$15.63
- Modal mix of 78% rideshare, 19% taxi, and 3% public transit — riders actively use the flexibility TOPS provides
- Streamlined internal operations, reduced risk of errors, and stronger program management
- Greater customer satisfaction and convenience, with online access for participants and staff

“Incorporating technology into the transportation network provides affordable and accessible transportation options — and lets participants choose the mode that works best for them.”

Susan Shaw — TOPS Program Manager, Fairfax County

Why It Matters

Fairfax County's experience shows that modernizing transportation assistance is more than a payment upgrade — it is a service-delivery redesign. By pairing digital administration, participant self-service, and open-loop modal flexibility, MJM helped the County expand rider choice, improve efficiency, and scale quickly to meet demand. It is a strong public-sector model for how technology-enabled mobility management improves both the rider experience and program performance.

