



Meeting Date: May 19, 2026
Action Item: USURV Voucher Program Update – CARE Plus & Low Income Subsidy

BACKGROUND:

GRTC currently operates CARE On-Demand through a non-exclusive voucher agreement with UZURV. Under the contract, eligible riders book trips directly with the contractor, riders pay a \$7 booking fee, and GRTC subsidizes trip costs up to a maximum of \$15 per one-way trip. CARE On-Demand is a discretionary, optional service that supplements GRTC's fare-free fixed-route and ADA CARE services.

CARE Plus is also a discretionary paratransit service, currently operated separately through WeDriveU at a significantly higher average cost per rider. To reduce costs, improve efficiency, and relieve pressure on federally required ADA CARE service, staff proposes to fully integrate CARE Plus into the existing UZURV voucher program rather than continue operating it as a separate service.

Under this approach, CARE Plus would no longer exist as a distinct operating platform and would instead become part of the unified CARE On-Demand voucher program, administered under the existing UZURV contract and supplemented by GRTC policy decisions related to eligibility, rider subsidies, and usage limits.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- CARE Plus will be absorbed into the CARE On-Demand voucher program, with all eligible trips delivered through UZURV.
- The UZURV voucher program will continue to operate fully within the terms of the existing contract, including the \$15 per-trip maximum GRTC subsidy.
- GRTC will implement an income-based subsidy, under which the \$7 CARE On-Demand booking fee will be waived for riders who qualify based on Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- The \$7 booking-fee waiver will apply to:
 - CARE On-Demand riders who qualify by FPL (Current CARE On-Demand and previous CARE Plus)
- GRTC will implement a cap of twenty-four (24) subsidized trips per rider per month across the CARE On-Demand voucher program, including trips previously provided under CARE Plus.

- ADA-mandated CARE service remains fare-free, uncapped, and unchanged.

FINANCIAL IMPACT AND SAVINGS:

- Transitioning CARE Plus from WeDriveU to the UZURV voucher program reduces average operating costs from approximately \$47 per rider to approximately \$16 per rider, generating over \$1.0 million in gross annual savings.
- Waiving the \$7 booking fee for FPL-qualified riders across the unified CARE On-Demand program is estimated to cost approximately \$225,000 annually.
- After accounting for this equity investment, net annual savings to GRTC are projected at approximately \$800,000, while improving affordability for low-income riders and protecting ADA paratransit capacity.
- The 24-trip monthly cap further ensures subsidy exposure remains predictable and controllable.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the GRTC Board of Directors:

1. Approve the consolidation of CARE Plus into the CARE On-Demand voucher program, operated by UZURV under the existing contract, effective August 2.
2. Approve an income-based policy providing a waiver of the \$7 CARE On-Demand booking fee for riders who qualify based on Federal Poverty Level (FPL), applying to both existing CARE On-Demand riders and former CARE Plus riders.
3. Approve a cap of twenty-four (24) subsidized trips per rider per month within the CARE On-Demand voucher program.
4. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to implement these changes.

Ellen Robertson, Secretary
GRTC Board of Directors

Date