**Health Indicators of Grimesland, NC: Transportation**  
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### RATIONALE

Social determinants of health comprise the various economic, social, and environmental conditions that influence the well-being of an individual, and they are often unique to people of specific communities. To better understand how this manifests in Eastern NC, teams of LINC Scholars were tasked with researching and visiting towns around Greenville, to report the strengths and challenges of these communities with respect to various health indicators.

Our focus was on the resources and infrastructure related to transportation in the small town of Grimesland. Since most residents work outside of the town, and the closest healthcare facility is nearly 10 miles away, transportation is undeniably a factor of health and access for Grimesland’s aging population.

### METHODS

On a weekday afternoon, Anna Lisa and I drove to Grimesland and conducted an experiential “Windshield Tour” by driving through the town and taking photographs and notes of things that represented different health indicators. We referred to a map of the town to ensure that we drove along every street and noted all its resources. Taking standard precautions with respect to COVID-19, we also walked along the town’s main street and visited a local general store. We attempted to meet with someone in the town hall; however, nobody was available at the time. After the trip, we reconvened to conduct more background research using census data and the Grimesland Land Use Plan for more details on its demographics and infrastructure. We then presented our findings to our LINC cohort.

### OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Bridge across Tar River reconstructed in 2012
- Roads well-maintained with recently-added pedestrian walkways, but no bike paths

#### RESOURCES

- **Car Ownership**
  - Average of 2 cars per household
  - 8% of population does not own a vehicle
- **Auto Repair**
  - 6 car service businesses in town
- **Closest Airports**
  - PGV (15mi), OCW (13mi), RDU (111mi)
- **Public Transit – Pitt Area Transit System (PATs)**
  - On-demand shuttle service
  - Fare: $7 one-way, $14 round-trip, +$1/stop
  - Hours: M-F 6a-7p, Sat 6a-6p, closed Sun

### CONCLUSIONS- STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

Despite a population of under 500 and a total area of around 0.5 square miles, Grimesland has a well-maintained transportation network and appears to be growing, with recent developments in its main roads and walkways. However, due to its secluded location, Grimesland’s residents have a much longer commute to their places of employment than most of Pitt County. Likewise, they must drive nearly 10 miles to get to the nearest healthcare facility. Therefore, while Grimesland is serviced by PATS, its inconvenient hours and fares may still impede the access of residents to healthcare and employment. While 8% of the population does not own a vehicle, only 3.4% utilize public transit. The rest seem to compensate by carpooling, but a more consistent and accessible public transit system may increase its utilization.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ECU/VIDANT

Especially considering the lack of any healthcare facilities within a 10-mile radius of Grimesland, we encourage Vidant and ECU Physicians to consider expanding into the area to increase access to medical care and local employment. Additionally, they may work with PATS and other services to ensure more consistent, reliable, and accessible transportation. With an aging population and uninsured rate of 19%, Grimesland should not be overlooked by ECU and Vidant.

### SOURCES

- The Town of Grimesland Website  
  www.grimesland.org
- Town of Grimesland Land Use Plan (2019)  
  via www.grimesland.org
- U.S. Census Bureau (2018)  
  American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
  via www.censusreporter.org