THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY IS

NOW

How Transit Agencies are Using Innovative Services and Technologies to Improve Access and Mobility while Solving Problems

Will Rodman, Principal
Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

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I ask them….

"*What problems are you trying to solve?*"

They say…

"**My agency wants to.....**
Reduce the cost of ADA paratransit"

"**My agency wants to.....**
Minimize the cost of serving customers trips in areas unsuitable for fixed-route transit, such as:
- Key gaps in fixed-route network
- Low-density suburban areas"

Objective #1: Use TNCs to reduce the cost of ADA paratransit

1. How can use of TNCs reduce the cost of ADA paratransit?

a. Use TNCs as non-dedicated service provider for ADA paratransit service to potentially **reduce the cost per trip**

b. Use TNCs as a "non-ADA" alternative for ADA customers to reduce the ADA paratransit demand and hence to potentially **reduce the total cost**

Objective #1a: Use TNCs as non dedicated service provider for ADA paratransit

1a. Use TNCs as non-dedicated service provider for ADA paratransit service to potentially **reduce the cost per trip**

FOR SCHEDULERS
Overall unit cost can be reduced by assigning to TNCs unproductive trips (peak-overflow trips, trips in low-demand areas and at low-demand times, long, out-of-the-way trips)

FOR DISPATCHERS
Over all unit costs can be reduced by using TNCs to respond to late-running vehicles, break-downs and re-emerging no-shows

FOR BOTH
TNCs don't have to have provide accessible vehicles – but if they do, they would provide more options for schedulers and dispatchers

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES/OBSTACLES

Have they been – or can they be – addressed?

SCHEDULING ISSUES

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Trip requests are typically booked and scheduled in advance

Most apps provide immediate response only, however…

SOLUTIONS

TNCs have introduced concierge services, which can intake trip requests in advance – from paratransit schedulers or dispatchers – and will dispatch them live to TNC drivers

Some TNC apps now allow advance scheduling, activating the request to ensure timely pick-ups

DISPATCHING ISSUES

ADA Paratransit

VS

TNCs

Paratransit agencies/contractors or taxi companies coordinate service delivery. Know real-time location of vehicles

Totally decentralized except for concierge services

SOLUTIONS

New concierge services could serve as point contact for dispatchers

Through API links, real-time vehicle location and events could be available to paratransit dispatchers

Many where's my ride calls would be no longer be placed if customers have smart phones and access to vehicle locations

DRIVER ISSUES

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Transit agencies require stringent eligibility criteria, background checks, and driver participation in drug and alcohol checking

Transit agencies also require consistency in driver training

TNCs eligibility criteria and background checks not as stringent, although NYC, Houston and Austin require fingerprinting of all TNC drivers

TNCs require training for drivers of accessible vehicles probably not as comprehensive

SOLUTIONS

Voluntary driver participation, as is the case with taxis

Use LiveScan fingerprinting technology to rapidly access state and Federal criminal records (typically 48 hour turnaround), with follow-up where disposition is slower*   * Bruce Schaller, Schaller Consulting

VEHICLE ISSUES

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Minimum specifications for vans per the ADA

New accessible vans must meet ADA standards

Age/mileage limits determined by transit agency

Older modified accessible vehicles must have NMEDA label

TNCs have vehicle age limits; typically between no older than 10-15 years old; varies per city

SOLUTIONS
May have to limit participation to drivers of new/NEMDA vehicles that meet transit agency age/mileage limitations

INSURANCE ISSUES

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Transit agencies require specific levels of vehicle insurance

Transit agencies require indemnification

No additional insurance is required

Third parties are required to indemnify TNCs; individual drivers are not

SOLUTIONS

Voluntary vehicle owner participation, as is the case with taxis

EXAMPLES?

None yet for using TNCs to serve <u>ADA Paratransit</u> trips

which brings us to….

Objective #1b: Use TNCs as a "non-ADA" alternative for ADA customers

1b. Use TNCs as a "non-ADA" alternative for ADA customers to reduce the ADA paratransit demand and hence to potentially **reduce the total cost**

ADA paratransit service?

Taxi or TNC?

Here is the "bet" that transit agencies are making when they implement a subsidy program TNCs as a cost-reducing strategy – whether using taxis or TNCs or both:

The total savings from each TNC/taxi trip that would have been made on the ADA paratransit service

>

THE TOTAL SUBSIDY FOR THE NEW TRIPS GENERATED

$45 per trip - cost of ADA trip
- $15 per trip – TNC/taxi subsidy
$30 saved for each trip diverted

=

$15 per TNC/taxi trip subsidy
x 2 new trips
$30 in additional subsidies

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES/OBSTACLES

Have they been –
or can they be –
addressed?

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Current FTA policy interpretation:
Drug and alcohol testing requirements waived only if customers have choice between multiple providers

However many agencies have one-company programs w/o drug and alcohol testing.

TNCs do not require drug and alcohol testing

SOLUTIONS

Open up program to any operator that meets ground rules

Do not invoke requirement if only one entity participates

Drivers volunteer

EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICE

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Equivalent service for individuals with disabilities required (w/ Federal funds)
- **Same fares, response times, driver training, etc.**

Some transit agencies provide accessible vehicles to taxi companies

Both Uber and Lyft provide accessible service in some cities but not all, and service levels may not be equivalent

SOLUTIONS

Transit agencies ensure equivalent service by infusing accessible vehicles into the TNC (or taxi) fleets.

TNCs contract with an accessible service provider

TITLE VI REQUIREMENTS

ADA Paratransit

vs

TNCs

Dispatch and payment services that require credit cards and/or smartphones may violate Title VI

All taxis take cash and have multiple hailing options

Sponsoring agencies must monitor taxi response times to low-income neighborhoods

TNCs are cashless; most require credit cards.

TNCs mostly require smartphones

New concierge services offer hailing alternative

SOLUTIONS

Use both TNCs and taxis

Ghost cards

EXAMPLES?

MBTA's TNC pilot (9/16)
WMATA's Abilities-Ride (3/17)

ON-DEMAND PARATRANSIT PILOT

- TNC pilot for selected customers to accompany taxi subsidy program pilot program

- Customer pays first $2.00 per trip; MBTA subsidizes up to $15.00 (customer pays overages)

- Payment through TNCs during pilot (credit cards only)

- Post pilot period, MBTA may issue "ghost cards" to customers w/o credit cards

- Trip reservations primarily by accessible mobile app; call-in option available

- Equitable access for customers who need accessible vehicles

Pilot started September 2016

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
THE RIDE
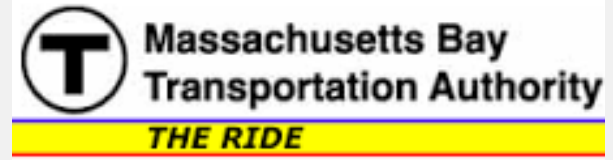
ABILITIES-RIDE

- Part of Metro's successful paratransit alternatives initiative for MetroAccess customers

- Customer pays first $5.00 per trip; WMATA subsidizes up to $15.00 (customer pays overages)

- 4 one-way trips/day; Maryland customers only

- Trip reservations primarily by accessible mobile app; can choose direct or shared ride

- Metro to partner with multiple providers; drivers must pass background checks/undergo training

- Equitable access for customers who need accessible vehicles/use service animals

- Estimated savings: $4-$6m in Year 1 based on $29/trip ($44 less $15); assumes some new trips

Metro ⟨♿⟩ Access

Service to start – March 2017

Why is it a "non-ADA" option?*

- Decision totally up to the customer; WMATA will not "steer" eligible customers to the alternative service

- Decision does not impact customer's ADA paratransit eligibility or right to schedule trips on MetroAccess

- None of the vehicles used are owned or operated by Metro

according to WMATA

Objective #2: Minimize the cost of serving customer trips within or between areas unsuitable for fixed-route transit:

- Key gaps in fixed-route network
- Lower-density areas

2. How can TNCs/microtransit be used to better serve <u>and</u> reduce the cost of transit within or between hard-to-serve areas?

- By using TNCs to provide an on-demand mobility solution with no fixed and lower operational costs

- By using microtransit to provide more flexible and efficient service

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES/OBSTACLES

Have they been – or can they be – addressed?

PRICING ISSUES

Call-N-Ride / Dial-A-Ride Fixed-Route Transit

vs

TNCs

Riders typically pay a fixed fare for service

Fares dynamically change based on supply and demand

SOLUTIONS

Agency provides full or partial subsidy up to a fixed amount (i.e. half of fare up to $5) and customers pay the rest

Customers pay a flat fare and agency fully subsidizes remaining cost

DISPATCHING ISSUES

Call-N-Ride / Dial-A-Ride

vs

TNCs

Riders typically request a ride by calling driver or a telephone dispatching service

Riders can only request riders through a smartphone app

SOLUTIONS

Provide service using both TNCs and taxis, with requests using regular telephones going to taxi company

TNCs provide portal/API link to "concierge" service, provided by partnering organization

ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

Call-N-Ride / Dial-A-Ride Fixed-Route Transit

vs

TNCs

All are accessible or accessible alternatives are provided

TNCs offer accessible services in some areas (although not compliant with ADA)

SOLUTIONS

Same as non-ADA subsidy programs

PAYMENT ISSUES

Call-N-Ride / Dial-A-Ride Fixed-Route Transit

vs

TNCs/Microtransit

Riders can pay with cash or payment card (which can be filled with cash or a credit card)

Fares are paid with a credit card connected to the app

SOLUTIONS

Provide alternative taxi service that riders can pay for with cash

Eliminate fares for TNC/microtransit rides

Emerging solutions:
- *Ghost* credit card accounts managed by sponsoring agency; customers cash deposit matched with subsidy
- TNC/microtransit accept agency fare cards

DIRECT CONNECT

- Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority wanted effective first/last mile solution
  - Pinellas Park: High transit ridership area w/ poor neighborhood feeder links
  - East Lake: To replace unproductive service that was eliminated

- PSTA subsidizes Uber or Taxi rides that begin/end at designated bus stops

- PSTA pays half of fare up to $3

- Can book through Uber or Taxi app, or using Taxi telephone dispatch

- Program will expand county-wide, with $1 flat fare in the fall
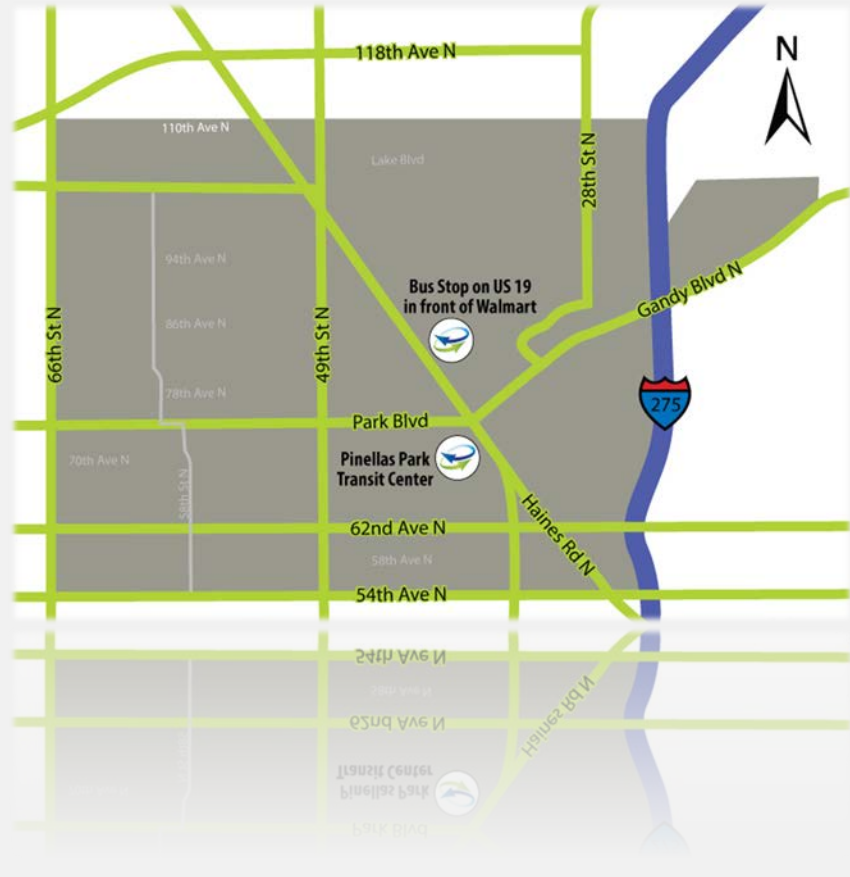
TD LATE SHIFT

- Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority wanted to provide late night service for low-income riders (from late shift jobs)

- Provides up to 23 free Uber or taxi rides per month between 9 pm and 6 am to qualifying riders

- Funded with $300,000 demonstration grant from Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

WHEELS ON DEMAND

- **LAVTA had three goals:**
    - Eliminate underperforming route
    - Supplement low frequency route
    - Provide alternative to at capacity BART parking

- Users can ride anywhere in two service areas using UberPool, Lyft Line, or a taxi

- Two fare models, depending on service area
    - Subsidize half of fare up to $5 dollars
    - $3 flat fare, remainder subsidized

- LAVTA projects $5-$7 subsidy per trip, less than half of $15+ subsidy for bus service

RIDE KC: BRIDJ

- KCATA wanted to fill key gap in fixed-route bus service

- Insufficient concentration of demand in each area to justify fixed route service

- Exact times and stops regularly change based on data collected by Bridj

- $1.50 fare, same as local bus

- Payment through Bridj app

- KCATA owns the 14-passenger vans, which are driven by KCATA operators

- $1.3 Million, 1 Year Pilot Program
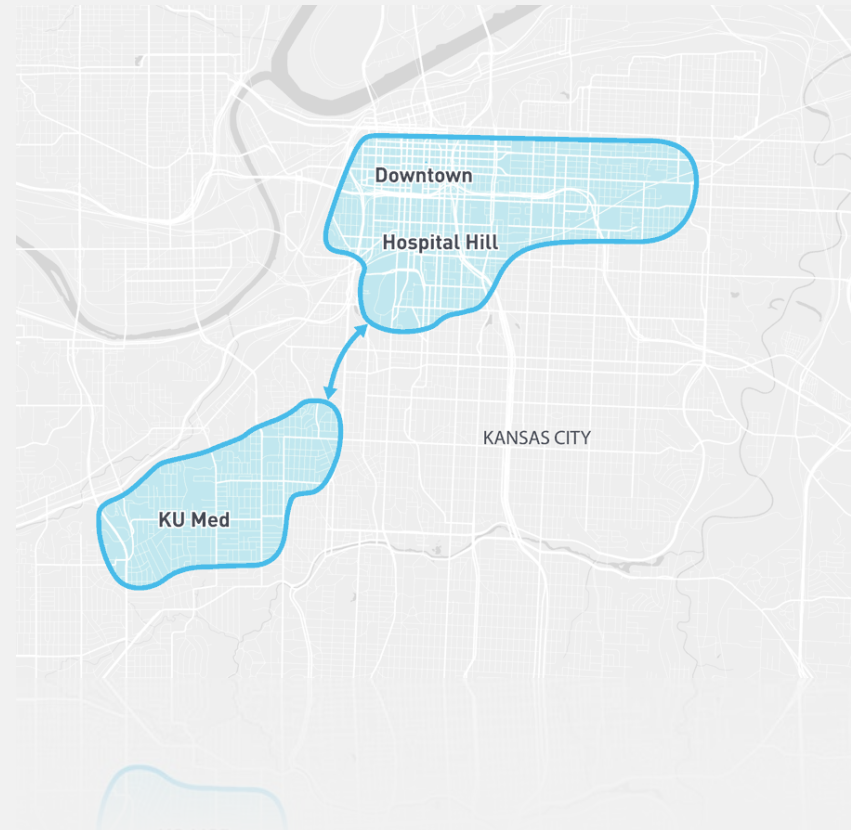
Use of Autonomous Vehicles?
With Passenger Assistants?

The Discussion Begins…

Thank you!
And let us know how we can be of help!

Will Rodman

(617) 521-9405
wrodman@nelsonnygaard.com