Partnerships Between Transit Agencies and Transportation Network Companies

Wednesday, July 17, 2019
2:00-3:30 PM ET
Purpose

Discuss research from the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)’s Research Report 204: Partnerships Between Transit Agencies and Transportation Network Companies

Learning Objectives

At the end of this webinar, you will be able to:

• Understand state of the practice in partnerships between transit agencies and TNCs
• Describe case studies of contemplated and implemented partnerships
• Identify where to look for additional resources
The American Institute for Certified Planners has approved this webinar for 1.5 Certification Maintenance Credits.

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TCRP REPORT 204: PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN TRANSIT AGENCIES & TNCS

TRB National Webinar

July 17, 2019

Presented by Nelson\Nygaard
In partnership with KFH Group
RESEARCH TEAM

Terra Curtis
Principal Investigator

Meg Merritt
Principal-in-Charge

Carmen Chen
Lead Researcher and Author

Dave Perlmutter
Researcher and Author

Dan Berez
Researcher and Author

Buffy Ellis
Researcher and Author
KFH Group
How should partnerships between transit agencies and TNCs be pursued?
OUR APPROACH
GUIDANCE FROM INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP
TCRP Research Panel

Transit Practitioners

Industry Groups

TNC Staff

FTA Legal

Academics

Transit Union
More than 50 partnerships identified (as of early 2018)
44 survey requests sent to transit agencies across the country
37 survey responses and 20 follow-up interviews
Dialog with Uber, Lyft, FTA throughout
20 case studies, vetted by transit agency project managers
WHAT WE GATHERED

Motivations

Urban Context

Indicators of Success

Budget & Funding Information

Data Access & Contracting Approach
WHAT WE FOUND
Our agency is always looking for cost-effective ways to provide first-last mile solutions.”

-Transit Agency Rep
“The pilot’s biggest success is giving ADA-certified riders an additional mobility choice.”

-Transit Agency Rep
"We have shared goals."

-TNC rep
"Showing it is more effective than saying it."

-TNC rep
TARGET MARKETS
What types of customers does the partnership aim to address?

Late Night or Special Events
People with late night or special event travel needs

Suburban Mobility
People traveling in lower density environments

Paratransit / Dial-a-Ride
Customers of ADA Paratransit or Dial-a-Ride services

First/Last Mile
People connecting to transit

Guaranteed Ride Home
People with occasional trip needs
TARGET MARKETS
What types of customers does the partnership aim to address?

First/Last Mile: 55%
Paratransit / Dial-a-Ride: 40%
Suburban Mobility: 25%
Late Night/Special Events: 15%
Guaranteed Ride Home: 5%
PARTNERSHIP DESIGN
What mechanism does the partnership use to achieve its function?

20% Marketing Partnerships

80% Agency-Subsidized Trips
INFORMAL VS. FORMAL PARTNERSHIPS
Which partnerships involve an exchange of funds?

“Informal”
No exchange of funds

20% Marketing Partnerships

80% Agency-Subsidized Trips
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<tr>
<th>FTA Approach</th>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>Title VI</th>
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<td>Actively updating</td>
<td>Equivalent service</td>
<td>Cash and phone options</td>
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<td>NTD</td>
<td>Sunshine Laws</td>
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<td>Awaiting FTA ruling for TNC trips</td>
<td>Requirements and protections vary</td>
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<td>D&amp;A Testing</td>
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<td>“Taxicab exception”</td>
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“TYPICAL” STORYLINE

How have transit agencies approached TNC partnerships thus far?

Motivate

Find ways to save money, increase ridership, or demonstrate innovation

Engage

Commence informal talks or issue an RFP

Negotiate

Focus on data sharing, ADA, and Title VI

Operate

Terminate
Motivate

Transit agencies focusing on core transit service and quality improvements for customers of DAR

Engage

Collaboration enables headway on data sharing, solutions for WAV, cash pay, and non-smartphone customers

Negotiate

Transit agencies experimenting and ending engagement if goals can’t be met

Operate

Terminate

WHAT’S WORKING WELL?
How have transit agencies approached TNC partnerships thus far?
Project managers lack clear problem statements and there is inconsistent pilot ownership within transit agencies.

Project managers default to TNC contracting template in informal engagements, and skip planning for evaluation.

Leads to frustration on data sharing.

Transit agencies lack key performance indicators and ability to iterate smartly; can’t “get credit” in NTD.
LAVTA (DUBLIN, CA)

Background

- Suburban mobility
- Lyft, Uber, DeSoto Cab Company (ADA and Title VI)
- Shared rides only

Key takeaways

- Incentives for WAV trip availability and responsiveness
- Strong program management is critical with multiple vendors
- Impact on other fixed routes
- Third-party evaluation for a more in-depth analysis

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LAVTA)

GoDublin! – Livermore, CA

Partnership Development & Implementation

Why Enter a Partnership?

Due to declining bus ridership, LAVTA compiled a comprehensive review of its Wheels fixed-route bus system in the summer of 2016. Bus routes that did not meet productivity thresholds were eliminated, leaving less populated areas in Dublin with limited transit service. LAVTA developed the GoDublin! pilot to provide residents with affordable on-demand transportation and to increase access to the Dublin BART station and Wheels Transit Center:

- Partnership Development

  LAVTA initially explored other options, such as minibus routes, to replace routes with low ridership. However, LAVTA ultimately entered into a contract with Uber and Lyft, the only TNCS in the area, due to their popularity with customers. The DeSoto Cab Company, which has its own ride-hailing app, was selected as a third vendor to provide wheelchair-accessible rides and allow for cash payment and ride requests by phone.

  Although LAVTA intended to launch the pilot in August 2016 to coincide with service changes, contract negotiations delayed the launch by five months. The program was scheduled to end in June 2018, but was extended to June 2019 to allow more time to evaluate the program and analyze trends.

  Dynamic Parameters

  GoDublin! uses geofencing technology to provide a 50% discount (up to $25.00) for trips that start and end within Dublin city limits (a six-square-mile region). Only shared rides booked through UberPOOL, Lyft Line, or DeSoto Share are eligible for the promotion. Customers who do not have access to a

  Impact on other fixed routes

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**CAPITAL METRO (AUSTIN, TX)**

**Background**
- First mile/last mile
- RFQ with 3 respondents
- RideAustin, local non-profit TNC, selected
- Data sharing, including O/D and identifying details

**Key takeaways**
- If public records request, transit agency will reveal very little
- Lead time for planning, outreach

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**CITATION:**

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**CAPITAL METRO (CAPMETRO)**

**Exposition Area Innovation Zone Pilot – Austin, TX**

**Partnership Development & Implementation**

**Why Enter a Partnership?**

In June 2014, Capital Metro (CapMetro) completed a service change plan that eliminated and rerouted several fixed bus routes that did not meet productivity thresholds. In 2017, a subsequent transit study focused on reorganizing bus routes and substituting low-performing service with six “Mobility Innovation Zones.” These innovation zones were envisioned to serve as testing grounds for alternative transportation pilots. The Exposition Innovation Zone was chosen as the first pilot due to the elimination of a bus route that left a one-mile stretch of Exposition Boulevard without transit service. As a result, CapMetro developed a first mile/last mile pilot to provide service between the Exposition Innovation Zone and two of the nearest bus stops. The pilot will run through December 2018, with the possibility of extension to June 2019.

**Partnership Development**

CapMetro issued a formal RFQ in May 2018, and all three TNC providers in the area (RideAustin, Uber, Lyft) submitted proposals. After discussion with all three vendors, CapMetro selected RideAustin, a local non-profit TNC that was willing to meet CapMetro’s data sharing requirements.

**Basic Parameters**

RideAustin provides unlimited, fully subsidized rides between the Exposition Innovation Zone and two of the closest bus stops. The subsidy is automatically applied to weekday rides between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. that begin and end in a geofenced service area. The service area consists of a one-square mile area in the Innovation zone, and a quarter-mile radius surrounding each bus stop.
GRTC (RICHMOND, VA)

Background
- Same-day service for ADA paratransit riders
- RFP with deliberate focus on ADA and Title VI
- 2 “hybrid TNCs” – UZURV and RoundTrip
  - 2-hour advance reservation
- Drivers receive ADA and sensitivity training; provide door-to-door service when needed
- Extensive data sharing

Key takeaways
- “We did our homework”
- Slow approach to ridership growth
- Clear communications about trip costs necessary
OMNITRANS (SAN BERNARDINO, CA)

**Background**

- Same-day service for seniors and people with disabilities
- Arrangement with Lyft and local taxi company provides monthly subsidy of $40 per participant
- To use Lyft, purchase “code” for $40 giving $80 worth of service for rider’s personal Lyft account
- To use taxi, purchase for $40 onto a debit card that gives $80 worth of taxi trips

**Key takeaways**

- Use of local taxi company provides wheelchair-accessible service and trip requests by telephone
- Data sharing difficult at first but improving
- Transit agency pleased that pilot is providing another mobility option beyond ADA paratransit
How might we apply these lessons learned?
WHAT MAKES A GOOD PILOT?

The ingredients

FUNCTION
What problem are we trying to solve?

MARKET
What areas are hurting for attention?

MODE
What mode best suits capacity needs
WHAT MAKES A GOOD PILOT?

The recipe

MARKET

Spread the word

EVALUATE

Iterate and Critique

DECIDE

Reinvent, Scale, or Terminate
HOW SHOULD PARTNERSHIPS BE PURSUED?
Do it for a reason, and check whether it’s working.
Today’s Participants

• David Perlmutter, Nelson\Nygaard, dperlmutter@nelsonnygaard.com
• Terra Curtis, Nelson\Nygaard, tcurtis@nelsonnygaard.com
• Carmen Chen, Nelson\Nygaard, cchen@nelsonnygaard.com
• Buffy Ellis, KFH Group, Inc., bellis@kfhgroup.com
• Meg Merritt, Nelson\Nygaard, mmerritt@nelsonnygaard.com
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  – Networking opportunities
  – May provide a path to become a Standing Committee member
• Get involved with TCRP: http://www.trb.org/tcrp/tcrp.aspx
• For more information: www.mytrb.org
  – Create your account
  – Update your profile
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