

Microtransit is a critical part of an integrated, all-encompassing transit system:



First-and-last mile

In most places — even in parts of the largest cities — high-frequency transit isn't within walking distance of where many people live and work. Microtransit can connect new passengers to buses and trains while taking single-occupancy cars off the road, relieving congestion and reducing pollution. For those without access to a vehicle, on-demand public transportation can help unlock employment opportunities, and provide access to medical appointments, grocery stores, and other essential services.

Transit deserts

Some cities and towns lack the population density necessary for efficient fixed-route buses or trains, resulting in infrequent and underutilized services. Microtransit can provide a more convenient and accessible service to riders in these types of areas, offering everyone in a service zone with access to a virtual bus stop (or, pickup point with a microtransit option) that is just a short walk away from where they live or work.

Paratransit and dial-a-ride

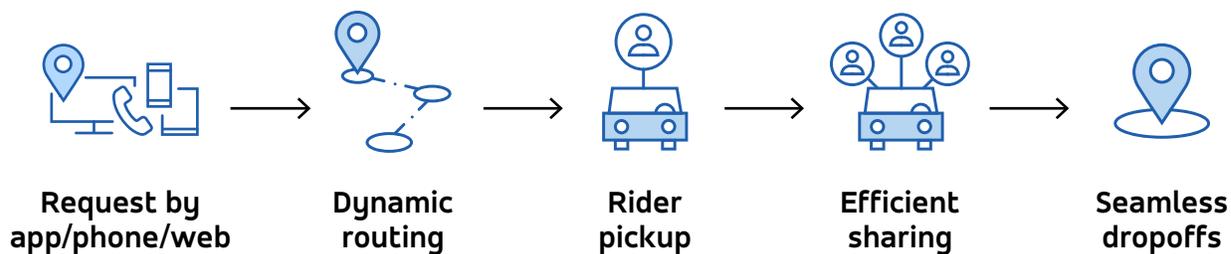
Paratransit and dial-a-ride services provide a critical lifeline for people who need access to transportation the most. These services help people who have mobility challenges, providing a service that replaces typically inefficient options that require long lead booking time and larger pickup and dropoff windows. Microtransit can offer higher quality service for riders by enabling on-demand rides in real time, while reducing trip costs by having more efficient shared rides.

Dynamic fixed lines

As both supply and demand shift with regulated social distancing measures, transit can be responsive, in real-time. Fixed routes can use on-demand technology to manage peak travel, book seats, and accommodate evolving safety practices.



How it works:



On-demand services allow people to request a ride by using an app or by calling a dispatcher, prompting a vehicle to that rider’s location. That vehicle is dynamically routed to pick them up and take them to their destination, while also being able to pickup and dropoff other passengers along the way, all within established capacity parameters and constraints. Smart routing means passengers or even deliveries going in the same direction are able to be grouped into the same vehicle – minimizing and even eliminating minor detours. By using dynamic routing technology, on-demand microtransit can optimize and balance rider convenience and overall service efficiency.

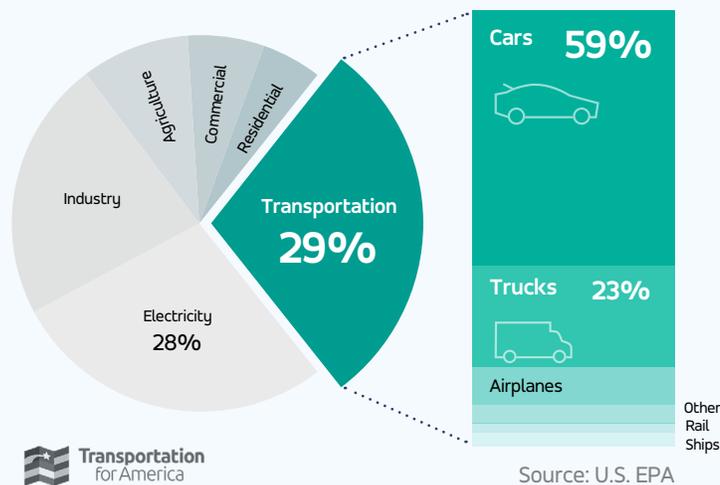


BCG – On-Demand Transit Can Unlock Urban Mobility

Transportation accounts for 29% of US greenhouse gas emissions, more than any other industry, with personal cars being the primary culprit.”

[READ MORE](#) →

U.S. Carbon Emissions, 2017



As part of an integrated, multimodal transit network, microtransit plays a key role in:

1.

Encouraging drivers of personal vehicles to switch from their own cars into public transit options, relieving traffic congestion and reducing carbon emissions.

2.

Promoting economic development by connecting customers to local businesses and workers to employment.

3.

Building local support for public transit funding by way of increasing ridership and transforming public transit into the preferred mode of travel over driving a personal vehicle.

4.

Providing equal access to jobs, critical services like medical appointments, and recreational opportunities for people who don't otherwise have a way to get to those services.





A turnkey on-demand service for a part rural, part suburban zone underserved by transit

PARTNER

The Regional Municipality of Niagara and The Municipality of Niagara-on-the-Lake

LOCATION

Grimsby, Lincoln, Pelham, Wainfleet, West Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada, Ont.

LAUNCH

August 2020

USE CASE

Comprehensive first-and-last-mile and point-to-point on-demand transportation for commuting and general purposes

GOAL

Expand transit coverage with a flexible, scalable solution in an area where fixed route transit was not feasible

NRT On-Demand



Overview

The western Niagara region is a sprawling area that's part rural, part urban, and wholly underserved by transit. Struggling to provide wide and efficient transit coverage for residents, the Regional Municipality of Niagara partnered with Via Strategies, Via's consulting team, to evaluate the feasibility of on-demand transportation across the region. The study concluded that an on-demand solution could provide better coverage and improved service than would a fixed route alternative.

30%

OF RIDES ARE SHARED

400%

INCREASE IN AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP IN THE FIRST 6 MONTHS, DESPITE COVID



Arlington On-Demand

The first city in the U.S. with a citywide on-demand transit system

PARTNER

The City of Arlington

LOCATION

Arlington, Texas

LAUNCH

December 2017

USE CASE

Providing city-wide on-demand transportation for all residents

GOAL

Reduce number of private trips, encouraging use of public transportation and providing access to all residents



In September 2017, the Arlington City Council opted to replace a low-volume fixed route bus, the Metro Arlington Xpress (“MAX”), with Via’s comprehensive microtransit solution. Before MAX, Arlington was the largest U.S. city without public transportation. Arlington’s story was a familiar one: The city government recognized a need for alternatives to driving alone in personal vehicles, yet the residents voted down measures supporting transit investment time and again, rejecting three transit ballot measures since 1979.

10X

INCREASE IN PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP SINCE LAUNCH

400,000

FEWER VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED AS OF 2020, REDUCING CONGESTION IN THE CITY

“Our ridership has been great. Our customer satisfaction has been super. The convenience of not having to worry about either, how do you get to the bus station, or when you get off the bus, how do you get to where you want to go — it’s just been off the charts.”

– Jeff Williams,
Arlington Mayor

“It does truly feel that Via is a partner, not just a vendor that the city has hired.”

– Alicia Winkelblech,
Senior Strategic
Initiatives Officer,
City of Arlington

“It’s awesome to know I don’t need a car right now and still have [transportation] at a low cost.”

– Vincent, Arlington
On-Demand rider

Solution

In December 2017, Via launched Arlington On-Demand with 18 vehicles in a reduced zone within the city of Arlington. The service now features a fleet of 53 – soon scaling to 68 – custom-branded Mercedes Metris and Sienna vans that cover the entire city. Customers book rides using a customized app or by phone, and can pay with a credit or debit card, or with a prepaid card for unbanked users. In addition to providing point-to-point transportation across the entire city, the city is enhancing regional mobility by providing first-and-last-mile connections for riders traveling to the Dallas-Fort Worth area via the Trinity Railway Express.



SERVICE ZONE

99 SQUARE MILES



FLEET SIZE

68 VANS, INCLUDING 14 WAVS



HOURS OF SERVICE

6AM-9PM WEEKDAYS
9AM-9PM SATURDAYS



RIDERS

COMMUTERS, RESIDENTS,
VISITORS, SENIORS, STUDENTS

Results

From its transit-averse roots, Arlington has emerged as the first city to run solely on microtransit, delivering over 494,000 rides as of February 2021 with an average rider rating of 4.8 out of 5. Ridership has increased tenfold since the service launched, resulting in reduced congestion in the city by more than 400,000 vehicle miles.

As a testament to the project’s success, Arlington On-Demand has expanded every year since launch and grown to serve the entire population. Via’s flexible platform has allowed the service to quickly adapt to demand changes as a result of COVID-19, as well as incorporating measures to ensure riders’ and drivers’ safety.

“We wanted it done in a cost-effective way that doesn’t leave people waiting around. Fixed-route transit service isn’t feasible.”

— Rob Salewytch,
Program Manager,
Niagara Region Transit

“We looked at buses, but with the input expenditures and the fact they would be empty most of the time, it didn’t make sense. This does. The point-to-point aspect is huge.”

— Jeff Jordan,
Mayor of Grimsby

Solution

In August 2020, Via and Niagara launched NRT On-Demand, a turnkey service in the western part of Niagara Region. The service utilizes 10 vans, includes accessible vehicles, and covers the entire region, connecting residents to community centres and GO Transit connections, as well as point-to-point destinations. The service quickly expanded by two vans to include Niagara-on-the-Lake and serves the Old Town and Virgil, and provides connections to regional transit in Glendale. For both west Niagara and Niagara-on-the-Lake, riders can book rides through an app or by phone, and students and seniors can access special concession fares.



SERVICE ZONE

1000+ SQUARE KILOMETRES



FLEET SIZE

12 VANS (4 WAVS)



HOURS OF SERVICE

WEST NIAGARA:
MON - SAT 7AM-10PM

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE:
MON - SAT 7AM-7PM



RIDERS

STUDENTS, SENIORS,
OTHER RESIDENTS, TOURISTS

Results

NRT On-Demand has exceeded expectations. Ridership growth remains strong — up over 400% in the first six months, despite tough market conditions resulting from COVID-19. A total of 10,300 rides have been completed with 98% on-time performance, an average wait time of only 13 minutes, and an average rider rating of 4.8 out of 5. Nearly 30% of rides are shared, and vehicle utilization continues to improve. There is great potential for exponential growth in a post-pandemic Niagara.