

How to Develop a Microtransit Program

Estella Hollander

Mobility Planner, Mountain Line

Benefits of implementing inclusive planning techniques

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Mountain Line – Flagstaff, AZ

- Flagstaff, Arizona
 - Located in northern Arizona
 - 72,400 population
 - Northern Arizona University
 - Small-Urban
- Mountain Line
 - Transit authority for Northern AZ
 - Fixed route, paratransit, subsidized taxi program, vanpool
 - 9 fixed routes
 - Over 2.5 million fixed route rides annually (pre-COVID-19)



Small urban, four seasons, directly operated

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Objectives - Mountain Line GO!

- Utilizing on-demand microtransit technology
- Coordinating with the Mountain Line paratransit program
- Connecting people to the broader transit system
- Ensuring the program is accessible, equitable, inclusive, and usable by the diverse populations in Flagstaff



On-demand, connecting people, accessible, equitable

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

How Microtransit Works

- Flexible, real-time hailed
- Utilize emerging technology
- Alternative solution to big bus



Flexible, on-demand, partnerships

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Pilot Area – Huntington & Industrial Corridor

- Identified transit gap
- Home to 10+ human services/clinics
- Suburban/industrial land use
- Challenges for fixed route
- Physical barriers to access nearby transit
 - Railroad tracks
 - 1-40
 - Lack of sidewalks/crossings



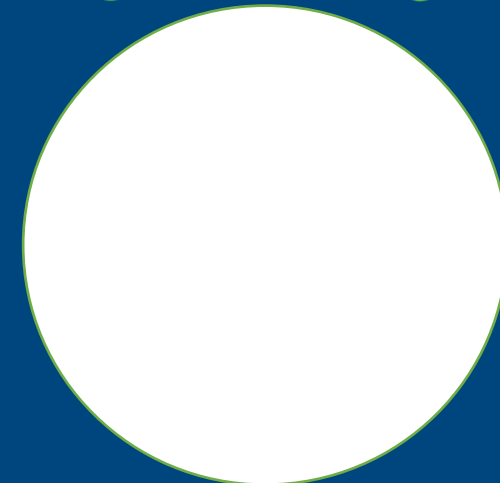
High need for mobility options, lack of transit access

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Planning Phase

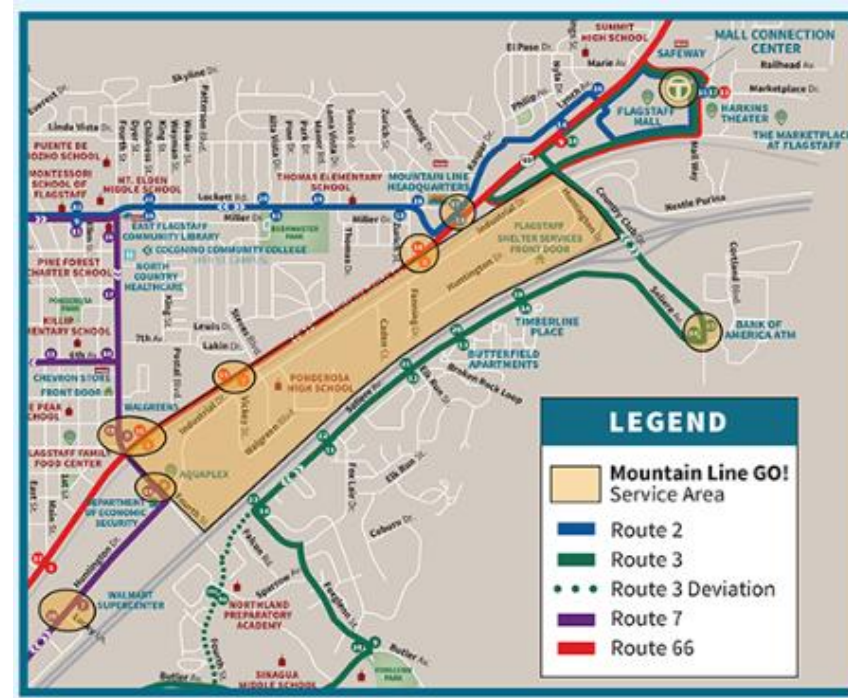
Steps	Purpose	Inclusion Activities
Understanding the corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation challenges and travel patterns in the area - Existing conditions - Smart phone and banking capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveying - Pop-up events - Small focus groups - Stakeholder input - Steering Committee input
Trade-offs discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coverage vs. Convenience vs. Cost - Service Size vs. Wait Times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering Committee meeting - Zoom polls – Majority rule
Defining the details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine hours, days, and fare of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey and pop-up event results - Steering Committee - Leadership final approval



Final Program

Mountain Line GO!

- Comingled service with paratransit
- First mile, last mile service
- Fare: \$1
 - Payment on-board with cash
 - Through the app with credit card
 - Free promo codes
- Booking a ride: App, website, calling option



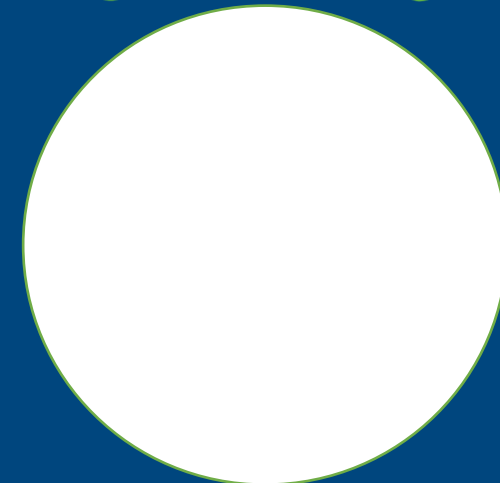
Mountain Line GO!

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Implementation Phase

Topic	Action Items	Inclusion Activities
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-creating materials - Identifying target audiences - Defining types of materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering Committee meetings - Zoom brainstorm break out groups
Software Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading proposals - Scoring - Making decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 participants on committee
Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test service prior to launch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small testing group with participants and agency staff
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel training - Human service staff training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel training with students - Webinar and in-person trainings for staff
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop scoring criteria - Develop rider satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering Committee meetings

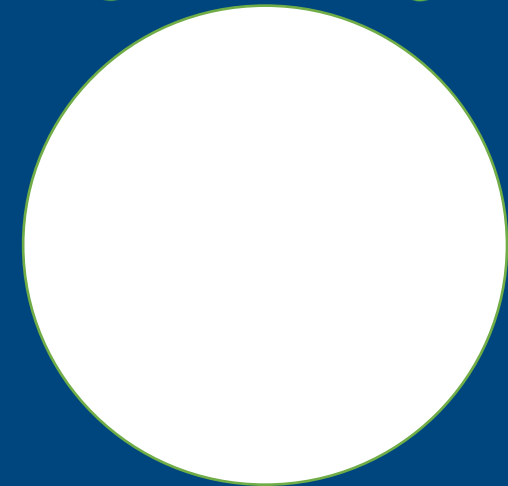


Outcomes

- Over 2,500 trips in 23 months
- Overall rider satisfaction: 4.75 out of 5
- 63% of riders are older adult and/or person with disability
- Percentage of trips from Flagstaff Shelter Services to:
 - Walmart: 25%
 - Medical Care/Services: 16%
 - Connection Center: 28%
 - Housing Authority: 5%



How to...



WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

On-demand, connecting people, accessible, equitable

Continuing past the pilot...

- Grant funded pilot for 8 months
- July 1, 2022, became a permanent program
- Comingling: Minimal additional cost
 - Increased trips per hour by 3%
 - Average of 2% of trips are comingled

Cost effective, increases productivity, reduces downtime

How to...

WITH
nadtc
NATIONAL AGING AND DISABILITY
TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Lessons Learned

- Community Champions
- Inclusion takes time
- Change is hard
- Creative outreach
- Increased oversight

Building community, communication

