D.C. Prepares to Launch Transportation as a Service

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Why did we select this article?

We selected this article because of Washington D.C.'s long-term commitment in boosting for-hire vehicles occupancy rates, while also improving low-income residents' access to transportation and in reducing congestion from traffic. Therefore, we consider it a best practice example in this field.

Key findings

The transportation sector is changing rapidly, with increasing popularity of services as Urber and Lyft, or self-driving taxis experiments that are likely to revolutionize the entire category. In this scenario, the city of Washington wants to start now to help fill the seats of the vehicles on the road, while also helping provide better transportation options for low-income residents. The idea is to create a transportation-as-a-service model for taxis and ride-hailing drivers to tap into and provide discounted options for eligible residents.

"The mayor has been making investments to help our communities be more livable and to prime D.C. for the future," said Ernest Chrappah, Department of For-Hire Vehicles director. "Mobility at its core enables people to go to work and be productive members of a community; it promotes independent living.".

- A TaaS pilot project has been implemented in the city. The pilot framework involves establishing a single access point for qualified residents to book and pay for the nearest for-hire vehicle at an affordable rate for travel within city limits. To start, eligible individuals will be low-income or those in need of transportation to medical appointments, such as people with disabilities and seniors. Later service

will be expanded to those who currently spend more than 65 percent of their disposable income on travel.

- A mobile phone won't be necessary to book rides, but many of the same on-demand options should be available.

- During and after the pilot, users will be surveyed to determine if their health outcomes have improved or if they've missed doctor visits. In terms of quantitative data, the district expects to able to predict how many cars an expansion of TaaS might get off the road - reducing congestion. The city will also keep track of the number of trips made and economic impacts like the rise in incomes of participating drivers.

https://www.routefifty.com/smart-cities/2018/10/dc-launch-transportation-service/151839/

Reference: Dave Nyczepir (2018), *Government Executive*'s *Route Fifty. Washington D.C:*