Mobility Innovators

Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (Portland, OR)

Tri-County Metropolitan District of Oregon's (TriMet) achievements in open-architecture fare media, open data and multi-modal trip planning has made the agency a leader in payment technology.

- **Open-Architecture**: TriMet's Hop Fastpass system provides an open, flexible framework for using multiple technologies and payment systems. TriMet has transitioned away from the earlier paper-based fare collection system to an account-based system that offers riders a "virtual wallet," that allows them to pay for trips in a variety of ways (smartcard, contactless credit card or smartphone). It also allows customers to pay for rides at adjacent transit systems. Hop Fastpass moves away from "technology lock-in" and opens a door to payment integration and Mobility-as-a-Service.

- **Multimodal Trip-Planning**: TriMet used an FTA Mobility-on-Demand Sandbox Grant to extend its existing multimodal trip planner to include private mobility service providers. Thirty-eight private and public partners collaborated to develop a new, mobile-friendly trip planner. It enables users to make informed decisions about their travel options and their compete trip, including the first and last parts where a bus or train alone may not provide full access.

- **Fare Capping**: TriMet was the first agency in the country to offer fare capping, which automatically refunds ticketholders who have already paid the equivalent of an unlimited daily, weekly, or monthly pass. Fare capping is especially helpful for those who cannot pay for an unlimited pass up front due to financial constraints.

Jacksonville Transportation Authority (Jacksonville, FL)

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) has made pioneering strides in taking automated transit to the next level. At the same time, it has probed new approaches to mobility in general.

- **Unconventional vehicles**: Beachside buggies provide free, on-demand service with 8-seat electric carts and 14-passenger vans. In addition, JTA's open-air, on-demand three-wheeled tuk-tuks are a good mobility option during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Ultimate Urban Circulator**: JTA's Ultimate Urban Circulator is a multi-phased program aimed at converting and expanding Jacksonville's automated people mover into an automated vehicle network. A test track opened in 2017 to experiment with machine learning, and to assure that technological malfunctions do not pose safety risks.

- **Automated deliveries:** JTA is using automated vehicles to facilitate the safe transport of COVID-19 tests collected at the Mayo Clinic as an opportunity to use technology to respond to a community need. JTA is leveraging learnings from three years of testing automated vehicles.

King County Metro (Seattle, WA)

King County Metro provides innovative multimodal trip planning and payment, open mobility data, and mobility hubs for seamless transfers across multimodal journeys.

- **Crossroads Connect**: Crossroads Connect is an on-demand, shared-ride microtransit service linking communities, jobs, schools, and shopping to Metro bus routes.

- **Safe and Healthy Streets**: Metro is partnering with the city of Seattle in the Safe Healthy Streets Initiative, designed to make permanent changes to provide more street space for cyclists, pedestrians, and public transit users.

- **Low-income Fares**: The ORCA card is used successfully across seven transit agencies. It has been used to enable special low-income fares and is now allowing fare-free trips to qualifying persons.

Flint Mass Transportation Authority (Flint, MI)

The Flint Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) is an innovator in providing non-emergency medical transportation and addressing other needs through transit and mobility management and mobility navigation.

- **Funding support is derived from community partners**: Medical providers have been willing to pay for such services to ensure their patients are transported safely and reliably. Additional funding sources include Medicaid, farebox revenue, FTA's Section 5310 program, private foundations and non-emergency medical transportation.

- **Your Ride Plus**: MTA offers a personalized system to provide an increased level of specialized service.

- **Food and nutrition programs**: Such programs include "Rides to Groceries," "Rides to Meals," and connecting youth with summer jobs.

Miami-Dade Transit (Miami-Dade, FL)

Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) is an innovator in filling service gaps with more efficient service options and in developing a clever rider loyalty program.

- **Alternative Transportation:** Miami-area residents requiring transportation for essential trips between midnight and 5 a.m. can now use Miami-Dade Transit's recently launched Go Nightly on-demand ride option along nine bus routes that normally run overnight.

- **On-demand Shuttles:** A new dynamically routed, on-demand, app-based transit service provides first-mile/last-mile connections to certain Metrorail stations.

- **Transit Rewards Program**: The GO Miami Dade Transit mobile app includes a loyalty rewards platform where riders earn loyalty points when they view or interact with ads on MDT's mobile app, or when the use transit. In addition, riders can get rewards points for answering a daily survey promoting protective face coverings and social distancing measures, and for traveling outside peak demand hours to ensure sufficient seats for essential workers.

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (Pinellas, FL)

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) has been a trailblazer in contracting with transportation network companies (TNCs) to fill service gaps, and to provide essential mobility in a cost-effective way.

- **Shared-Ride Programs**: PSTA's TD Lateshift program helps low-income residents travel to and from work when bus service is not available. This program is in partnership with Uber, United Taxi, and Care Ride (wheelchair provider). During the pandemic, PSTA has offered shared-ride services to help essential workers who can no longer rely on buses because of capacity limits or reduced service.

- **Fast-Charge**: To reduce wait time for electric buses to be fully charged, PSTA opened a wireless charging station in June 2020**.**

- **Automated Shuttle:** In July, PSTA launched an automated shuttle pilot in downtown St. Petersburg.

Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Austin, TX)

Amid its many forays into innovation (including automated operations), the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Cap Metro) is noteworthy for its steps to incorporate the BCycle bikeshare program into its transit network.

- **Digital Fare Equity**: It has recently introduced a new account-based app to include a digital fare equity feature. Payments can be made by phone, smart card, or bank card, minimizing contact between customers and vehicle operators. Riders without a bank account or card can load smart cards with cash at participating retail stores.

- **Embracing Biking:** Cap Metro has taken numerous steps to incorporate the BCycle bikeshare program into its transit network. A partnership with the city aims to create long-term bikeshare service improvements by expanding fleets and stations and optimizing first and last mile transit solutions. Cap Metro has announced it will no longer be charging an annual fee for bike riders to use its MetroBike Shelters. In addition, transit users may soon be able to buy a one-day pass on their phones to use both public transportation and city-owned bicycles.

- **Strategic Mobility Plan**: Austin's Strategic Mobility Plan is a comprehensive multimodal transportation plan for the future of the city's transportation network. In addition, the City of Austin has developed a new mapping tool to combat gentrification and displacement to promote more affordable housing ahead of a proposed transit expansion.

Central Ohio Transportation Authority (Columbus, OH)

The Central Ohio Transportation Authority (COTA) is part of *Smart Columbus*, using $50 million from US DOT to embrace the reinvention of transportation, to accelerate human progress, and to serve as a model for other cities.

- **C-pass**: Downtown property owners are funding the Downtown C-pass program, providing eligible downtown workers unlimited access to the entire COTA bus system. The program is intended to reduce congestion and mitigate the need for parking.

- **COTA Plus:** COTA is rapidly expanding its "COTA Plus" on-demand microtransit. Customers within the defined zone can use the COTA Plus app to hail a COTA-branded vehicle to their nearest transit stop.

- **Coming Back Differently:** To help reduce inequities of low-income passengers and to adapt to changing community needs, COTA plans to restore services with different routes and schedules than those in place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans also include the expanded use of on-demand microtransit and additional cashless options.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (Dallas, TX)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) has been at the center of national conversations regarding Mobility-as-a-Service, app development, and modal integration.

- **Expanding GoPass:** DART's GoPass Mobile App provides travelers the ability to plan, book and pay for the mobility solution that works best for their needs. GoPass underpins a system designed to keep DART's multimodal transit system flexible, reliable, affordable, and more available to everyone by developing new technologies and services including fare equity and cash to mobile options. In addition to services operated directly by DART, GoPass now integrates NextBus, Via, Lyft, Uber, and BCycle bike sharing. The GoPass mobile app has been extended to Fort Worth's Trinity Metro, and to Tulsa, OK.

- **Microtransit**: DART received an FTA Sandbox Grant to pilot test an on-demand microtransit service integrated into DART's GoPass mobile app, to include the use of a TNC. In May 2020, DART contracted with Uber (Uberpool) to provide rideshare services, supplementing its GoLink microtransit program.

- **Pandemic Response:** Interactive smart digital kiosks at DART bus and light rail stations have been upgraded to be contactless to help address COVID-19 concerns. DART has also installed face mask and hand sanitizer dispensers on all buses, light-rail vehicles, and streetcars. DART also has initiated a special grocery pickup and delivery service for ADA paratransit riders and a partnership with the Dallas School District to deliver meals each week to students who are sheltering at home while on-site classes are on hold.

Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (Kansas City, MO)

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) is a trailblazer in providing on-demand micro-transit service. Learning from the experience of an unsuccessful micro-transit shuttle pilot in 2016, KCATA's relaunched program provides better experiences for riders who can request a trip specific to their origin and destination.

- **Flexible Microtransit**: Micro-transit ridership is currently 15 times higher than it was during the 2016 pilot. These on-demand services provide better experiences for riders who can request a trip specific to their origin and destination. Schedules and routes adjust based on demand, and address first- and last-mile challenges (with wait times under 15 minutes).

- **RideKC Bike and Scooter Integration**: KCATA has incorporated pedal bikes, smart, electric-assist bikes, and e-scooters into its family of mobility services under the RideKC brand. The goal is to build a single, interconnected transit system that gives people the ability to seamlessly move around the region with effective first and last mile transportation solutions in mind and is tied to a robust equity program.

- **Integrated Fare Payment**: To make commuting easy, convenient, and safe, KCATA now offers a combination pass that allows riders to check out a Bike Share bicycle and ride a bus using just one pass.