



PILOT Launch Event – what we heard

Metro recently announced the Partnerships and Innovative Learning Opportunities in Transportation program, which will fund projects that test how recent innovations in transportation technology can improve shared, active and equitable transportation options in the Portland region.

The program launch event on October 5, 2018 drew almost 100 representatives from public agencies, non-profit organizations and private companies. During the event, Metro staff set up networking stations with information on common types of emerging technology pilot projects, and attendees gathered at each station to discuss specific challenges and opportunities that they hoped PILOT projects would address. These conversations helped advance our shared understanding of how the Portland region can deliver on the potential of emerging technologies, and how various partners can work together to develop project ideas.

Below are handouts with examples of technology pilots from communities across the U.S. that were available at each of the five networking stations and summaries of the ideas that we heard at each station. If you're interested in applying for PILOT funds to implement one of these ideas (or one of your own), you can submit a letter of interest by October 26th, 2018. Metro will provide feedback on letters of interest and offer technical assistance through the application process to selected organizations. Find out more at <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/pilotgrants>.



Improving connections to transit

Creating new ways for people to reach high-frequency transit – especially in places where it's not easy to walk, bike or take a bus to stations.

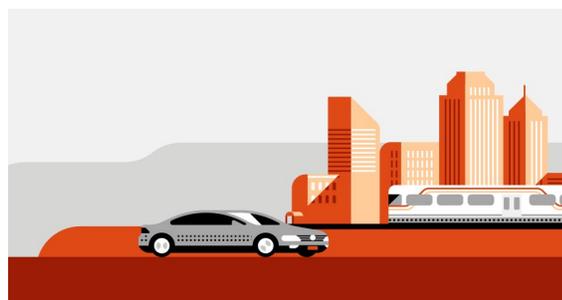
The Portland area has a network of light rail and high-frequency buses, but in many communities throughout the region it's not easy to get to a station. Emerging technologies, including the ideas listed below, can help people connect to transit.

Transit / ride-hailing partnerships

A number of transportation agencies across the U.S. have partnered with ride-hailing companies to offer discounted rides to and from transit stations, typically in suburban areas. Some of these programs have focused on low-income workers, older adults, disabled people or other underserved communities by offering deeper discounts to certain riders or creating options that allow people without a smart phone or credit card to request rides. There have been some success stories, but questions remain about how to best structure these programs to ensure that people use ride-hailing to connect to transit rather than for other trips.

Mobility hubs

A mobility hub is a transit station with vibrant community spaces and access to first- and last-mile connections such as car, bike, and scooter sharing; sidewalks and bike lanes; and spaces for carpoolers, taxis or ride-hailing services to pick up and drop off passengers. Bike share or car share are available at some stations in our region, but not always in the places where people most need new connections to transit. Few transit stations in our region offer the full array of transportation connections that a mobility hub aims to provide.



Improving connections to transit

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What we heard at the launch event

A number of attendees mentioned particular challenges that they hoped PILOT projects might be able to address:

- Connecting suburban jobs, major employers and other regional attractors
- Making transit “the obvious choice” and a trustworthy transportation option
- Integrating other modes and payment options with transit
- Addressing equity needs
- Bridging gaps in service to create first- and last-mile connections
- Developing partnerships and programs to help different communities access transit

Attendees also discussed several project ideas that might help to address these challenges:

- Partnerships with ride-hailing companies
- Bikeshare pilots that focus on stations where bike share currently isn't available or on campuses and other major destinations near transit
- Creating new employee shuttles that connect to MAX
- Locating electric vehicle charging infrastructure at transit stations
- Integrating the TriMet Hop pass with payment for ride-hailing and other new mobility services
- Crowd-sourcing data on ADA accessibility, safety and other aspects of transit access



Testing new shared or active options

Exploring how to best approach new types of shared or active transportation services

Our region is experiencing an explosion of new transportation services, and cities are working to find a balance between supporting innovation and managing risk. Many have turned to pilots to test new services on a limited or temporary basis and develop the information and experience to take longer-term, larger-scale action. Examples of pilots focused on shared and active transportation services include:

Dockless bike and scooter sharing pilots

Dockless bike and scooter companies promise to deliver a new active transportation option at little or no cost to the public. Many of the communities where these services first launched heard complaints about litter, safety issues and public oversight, but public agencies lacked the information they needed to fully understand and manage these concerns. Cities including Portland, Seattle and Washington DC decided to allow dockless bikes or scooters on a pilot basis, evaluate them, and use what they learned to develop permanent regulations and programs.

Microtransit pilots

A number of transit agencies are testing microtransit, which offers more flexible service using smaller vehicles than typical buses. Microtransit promises to deliver higher quality service more cost-effectively in areas that are hard to serve with conventional transit. The results have been mixed, but even pilots that have cost more or moved fewer people than anticipated have yielded valuable insights about where and how microtransit works best.



Testing new shared or active options

Exploring how to best approach new types of shared or active transportation services

What we heard at the launch event

Attendees discussed several project ideas that involve testing new shared or active options:

- Dynamic pricing for scooter share and other shared modes
- Shared e-bikes in suburban communities where distances might be too far for many to travel using a regular bike
- Access to bike share and/or scooters for high school age students
- Autonomous shuttles or bike share connecting suburban employment centers with transit
- Services to improve access to grocery stores, such as shuttles, shared ride services, grocery pickup and drop-off at bus stops or bicycle delivery, in low-income communities that lack grocery stores or direct transit connections to stores
- New ways to collect data to track and evaluate the impact of new mobility services



Providing equitable access to new mobility

Making new mobility services accessible and affordable for all – particularly those who need better transportation options the most.

Services like ride-hailing and car, bike or scooter share have the potential to give people who don't have access to a car the same mobility that owning a car provides. In order to deliver on this promise, we need to find ways to overcome the barriers that many people face to using these services. Ways that communities have tried to do this include:

Equitable bike share programs

Publicly-operated bike share services in several U.S. cities offer discounted memberships to low-income users, and some take steps to remove other barriers. In our region, the Biketown for All program offers reduced-cost memberships in Portland's bike share program to Portland-area residents living on low incomes. Biketown for All members can also receive bike safety classes and a free helmet, and a cash payment option is available. A separate program, Adaptive Biketown, rents out specialized bikes to people with disabilities.

Community education and outreach

Expanding access to new mobility often begins with understanding how people might benefit from services that they aren't yet familiar with. Projects like OakMob 101 have brought car and bike share vehicles into communities where those options aren't available to develop recommendations on how to make new mobility services more widely accessible. In general, case studies from a variety of different pilot projects have found that conducting education and outreach to community members is critical for success, especially when it comes to engaging underserved communities.



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What we heard at the launch event

A number of attendees mentioned particular challenges that they hoped PILOT projects could to address:

- Reaching suburban and rural communities
- Lack of access to WiFi, costly data plans, e-mail and credit cards
- Language and cultural barriers
- Lack of access to new mobility services and privacy concerns among immigrant and refugee population

Attendees also discussed several project ideas that might help to address these challenges:

- Crowd-sourcing data on ADA accessibility, safety and other aspects of transit access
- Designing new services from the ground up based on underserved communities' needs and input
- Making services and information available via text
- Providing free memberships or rides to underserved communities
- Testing real and perceived barriers to using new mobility services among specific underserved or culturally specific communities
- Promoting pilot projects to make sure that underserved groups are aware of and take advantage of them



Providing better travel information

Using information and incentives to help people make choices that benefit both themselves and the community

In many areas of our region, it's now possible to reach your destination just as quickly and conveniently by using some combination of transit, active transportation, and new mobility services as you can by driving. But people sometimes get stuck in their travel habits, and providing incentives or better information - particularly online, which is how most people now get information on their transportation choices - can help them take advantages of new shared or active options. Below are some concepts that experts believe can help change people's travel behavior:

Integrated trip planning and payment

Many experts see a future in which all travel options are combined in a single app, making it easy for people to plan and pay for a trip even when they're using multiple modes. Transit agencies across the U.S., including TriMet, have taken steps in this direction by enhancing online information about transit schedules and arrivals and integrating information on ride-hailing, bike share and other services into transit trip planning tools.

Dynamic commute matching and incentives

Employers and transportation organizations have been providing carpool matching resources and commute challenges for a long time. A new wave of tools are available that take advantage of real-time information to help people find a carpool match or offer people incentives to leave their car at home that vary based on factors like what mode they take, how many passengers they carry or how crowded the parking lot is that day.



Providing better travel information

Using information and incentives to help people make choices that benefit both themselves and the community

What we heard at the launch event

Attendees discussed several project ideas that involve providing better travel information:

- Making the regional bike map and other bicycle data available to app developers
- Creating online resources that make it easier and more convenient for people who use special needs or on-demand transit to learn about options and book trips
- Improving the availability of real-time transit information, both on-site and online
- Culturally-specific outreach and training to communities of color and other underserved communities
- Sharing information to help people with limited mobility find safe, barrier-free routes



Improving options for underserved communities

Making new mobility services available to the people and places that need new options the most

As housing prices climb in the region's centers, people of color and people living with low incomes are being displaced to areas that lack good transit service and safe bicycling and walking facilities. Removing the barriers that people face to accessing new mobility services is an important first step, but in order to create a more equitable transportation system we need to concentrate new options in the communities that need them the most and where people may not be able to access or afford them. Examples of programs that have worked to address disparities in access include:

Electric car sharing

Electric vehicles can save people money on gas, but many low-income people cannot afford the extra cost to purchase a vehicle. Several communities in California have launched programs to make shared electric vehicles and chargers available in underserved communities. In our region, the Community Electric Vehicle Project, a collaboration between Hacienda CDC and Forth, made shared electric vehicles and chargers available in Portland's Cully neighborhood, which is home to large Latino and immigrant communities.

Guaranteed rides home for shift workers

Many lower-income workers don't work 9-to-5 shifts, which often means that transit runs during one leg of their commute, but not the other. Transportation agencies and employers, including Oregon Health Sciences University here in the Portland region, have subsidized ride-hailing trips for shift workers during times when transit isn't available, giving these workers an affordable round-trip to and from their jobs.



Improving options for underserved communities

Making new mobility services available to the people and places that need new options the most

A number of attendees mentioned particular challenges that they hoped PILOT projects might be able to address:

- Lack of late-night transit options for shift workers
- Challenges accessing new mobility services for people with special mobility needs
- Lack of car-free options in areas that lack frequent transit service
- Lack of north-south transit connections
- Transportation to schools in underserved areas
- Challenges accessing options for houseless people
- Lack of data on dangerous traffic conditions to understand barriers to active transportation in underserved communities

Attendees also discussed several project ideas that might help to address these challenges:

- Targeting new mobility services on underserved areas with limited access and connectivity
- Sharing rides or fleets of vehicles among community organizations that provide transportation services
- Improving data on underserved communities' transportation needs
- Allowing community organizations and underserved people input into how services operate

