



CASE STUDY



Arlington On-Demand

An on-demand public transit solution for a city with no fixed route service.

PARTNER

The City of Arlington

LOCATION

Arlington, TX

LAUNCH

December 2017

CHALLENGE

Convince people to take fewer personal car trips and embrace public transportation

USE CASE

Provide a comprehensive public transit service for commutes and other trips



Customers book rides using a localized app or by phone

Overview

In September 2017, Arlington City Council opted to replace a low-volume fixed-route bus, the Metro Arlington Xpress (MAX), with Via’s comprehensive microtransit solution. Prompted by the University of Texas at Arlington, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) launched MAX service in August 2013. The City was committed to improving mobility in Arlington, but had no dedicated vehicles or operators and a limited budget, and required an end-to-end service.

70%

OF ARLINGTON RIDERS ARE REPEAT RIDERS

2/3

OF TRIPS ARE FOR FIRST/LAST MILE

Before MAX, Arlington was the largest U.S. city without a public transportation system. Arlington’s story was one that we transit advocates have heard many times: a city government recognizes a need for alternative options to driving alone in personal vehicles, yet the residents of that city voted down measures supporting transit investment time and again. Voters in Arlington had rejected three transit bond measures since 1979 before welcoming Via’s on-demand transit solution.

“We are at the beginning of an exciting transportation technology revolution... With the success we’ve already had, I feel certain that we’ll be expanding it and lengthening it.”

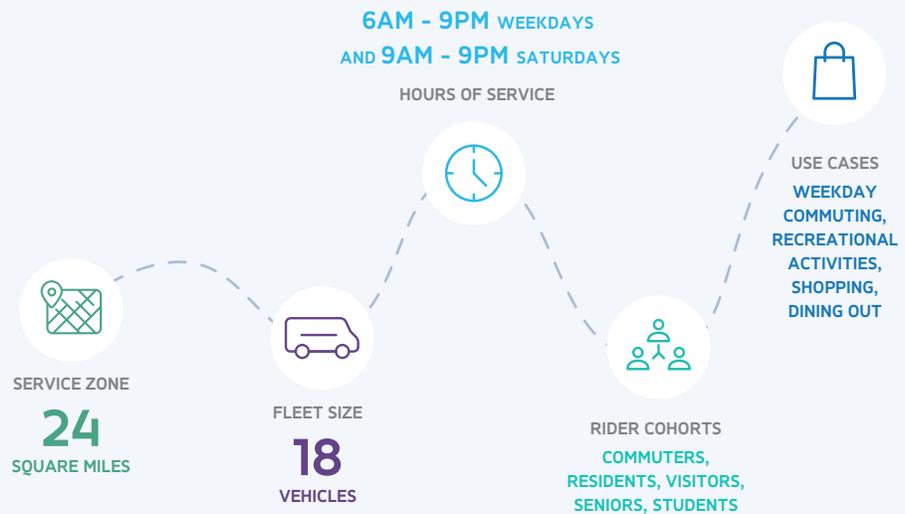
– Jeff Williams, Arlington Mayor

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

– Alicia Winkelblech, Arlington Strategic Planner

Solution

In December 2017, Via launched Arlington On-Demand using a fleet of 10 custom-branded Mercedes Metris vans. Customers book rides using a localized app or by phone, and can pay with a credit or debit card, or a prepaid card for unbanked users. Through an integration with the city paratransit system, Handitran, Arlington On-Demand is accessible to riders of all physical abilities. Customers pay a flat \$3 fare per person per trip to travel anywhere within the broad service zone, which includes the University of Texas at Arlington, AT&T Stadium, and the downtown and entertainment districts. The service also provides a convenient first/last mile option, which accounts for 2/3 of the trips. The zone includes CentrePort Station, connecting riders to DFW airport and employment centers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area via the Trinity Railway Express. Customers also have the option to purchase a ViaPass for \$15 per week, which covers up to four trips per day. The service operates from 6am to 9pm Monday through Friday, and from 9am to 9pm on Saturday.



Results

From its transit-averse roots, Arlington has emerged as the first city to run solely on microtransit, delivering over 120,000 rides with an approval rate of over 97 percent. As a testament to the success of the project, the City Council renewed and expanded Via’s contract in December 2018, which includes a significantly larger zone and eight more vehicles. In addition, the Southeast Tarrant Transportation Partnership (SETT) presented Via with the 2018 ‘Innovator Award’. Arlington provides an example of how similar cities can deliver an affordable, flexible alternative to operating their own public transit systems.