10/10 Taxi MN responses to questions:

Metro Mobility Task Force: Service provider questions

Customer Accessibility and Customer Experience/Satisfaction:

Is an app required to access your service?

No, we do not require an app however that is an option through our zTrip app. We also have live dispatchers answering phones 24/7 to book rides, rides can be booked via the web, and requesters can upload trips into our system from formats like Excel or delimited text files (ideal for large amounts of next day trips).

We have a specialized group working in our dispatch center 24/7 who handle all trips related to ADA, Paratransit or NEMT.

How are your customer facing web pages and apps for accessibility by people with visual and developmental disabilities?

Adequate, however if challenges arise in use we recommend calling our 24/7 dispatch support. Our dispatchers are experienced and trained call takers. Our dispatch system also can establish standing trips (say to work and home 5 days a week, or for recurring medical appointments), pulls up a recent trip history for ease of booking trips to frequent destinations and allows trips to be made up to 2 weeks in advance.

Do your apps allow integration? (*Ie. Could we design a system where the customer can see status of a connecting trip, or pay for both trips?)*

Yes, our app allows for integration. You would not necessarily want or be able to pay for multiple trips at once. It can be done, however since there is a per mile factor in price it may not be ideal. We have also found that sometimes plans change and if a rider pays for both trips, but then doesn't take both legs of the trips there can be significant issues with billing. (Especially if Metro Mobility is paying for no shows)

We may need some more information to understand the specific features Metro Mobility is looking for here. If by connecting trips you are implying that going to the pharmacy and then back home is one trip then there is a decision that has to be made. The only way we would consider that one continuous trip is if wait time was added for the duration of time spent inside the pharmacy. $8.75 for every 15 minutes. Typically it is less expensive for Metro Mobility to subsidize for one ride and the wait time basically is a cost to the passenger just like excess miles. However this may not be the most desirable option with public transportation in mind, and you might choose to treat each one as one trip.

Will your drivers escort door-through-door and assist with bags or mobility devices, when needed and appropriate?
Yes, we currently do this for NEMT transportation and drivers are trained to do so whenever it's required. We prefer if this can be indicated when the trip is booked so that the driver is aware of when it is needed and avoids offering unneeded assistance when it is not desired (to avoid offending a customer).

How do you track and report customer complaints to your partner agencies?

We share all information, so however the partner agency prefers. In most cases the partner agency is acting as the broker for the trips and as such the recommended course is that customers contact them about complaints. If the partner agency doesn't broker the rides and essentially just sets up an account we share all complaints received with them (typically weekly).

Our system generates a complaint ticket for any and all complaints that goes to all local managers via email for follow up.

How are trip denials handled? How about Customer No Shows?
A lot of the trip denials depend upon the partner agency's preference. For next day trips this is typically not an issue as we have time to plan, however the standard policy is either trip denial 24 hours before the trip or by a specific cutoff time established for this situation.

ASAP trips or "ride now"/on-demand trips might be denied when the estimated time to pick up arrival is be too long. Usually the information is relayed to the passenger and they can decide if they want to cancel.

Customer No Shows happen and it is part of the business we operate in. Unless the partner agency wants to pay a small amount for no shows we typically don't charge anything. If a passenger has frequent no shows we track these and report them to the agency, but beyond that it really comes down to the partner agency's preference. For a legitimate no show we require the driver to be on site for 10 minutes (GPS tracked) with no communication or response from the passenger, and they must attempt to check in with dispatch.

Service requirements/Meeting demand:

In a time of workforce shortages, how does your agency ensure peak demands for service are met?

Due to the nature of our drivers being Independent Contractors and not hourly employees they are free to choose the hours that they drive. All drivers are highly focused on operating at the most profitable, or busiest hours, and naturally gravitate to these times. This allows us to cover peak demand efficiently. Additionally if allowed by the partner agency we have 2 other fleets operating in the metro area under our brands for SuperShuttle and Execucar which we can offload overflow trips to when needed.

Vehicles/Fleet

How do you serve non-ambulatory passengers?

Currently we only have ADA wheelchair capable vehicles in our SuperShuttle Fleet. We use these when needed, however none of our current contracts transport non-ambulatory passengers. We can acquire ADA wheelchair vehicles quickly if there is work for them to perform on a reliable basis, however. Nationally we have over 1000 such vehicles in operation in other markets and our training, safety, and dispatch staff are experienced in serving non-ambulatory customers.

What percentage of your fleet is lift-equipped?

3% of our total fleet that operate under the SuperShuttle Brand.

How are vehicles identified to customers as available to persons with various disabilities, assistance animals, Mobility devices or tie down equipment?

Most customers call or book rides via phone dispatch, web or app. When this occurs the trips are only offered to the vehicles that have the capability to transport the trip (ex. Wheelchair accessible). Dispatch staff will communicate expectations to the customer as to when their specialized ride is available.

All vehicles are always available to anyone who can use them (by federal law). This includes service animals or any other ambulatory trip including any mobility device such as a walker.

How do you ensure the vehicles are safe and reliable? Do you review maintenance records? Inspected?

All vehicles for specialized transportation go through a yearly DOT inspection. We own the vehicles and also have a rigorous preventative maintenance and inspection program in-house, and we track all maintenance, data and actions which is information that can be made available to our partner agencies as required.

Do you share vehicle tracking information (GPS) with partner agencies for customer complaint resolution?

Yes. As well as for any other reason partner agencies might want GPS information on our fleet.

Fares/Payment

How are apps modified, if at all, to display the subsidized fares (rather than the whole fare) to the customer?

Regardless of app, phone or web booking, and whether or not the passenger, agency or caretaker etc. book the ride; once it is booked under the account the contracted rules for that account apply. So for example our typical price is $10 for the first 5 miles and $2 each additional mile after that. Comparing to current same day premium model our contracted rules would be something like passenger pays $5, Metro Mobility pays next $15 and then passenger pays excess. For our standard pricing the account would be set up to charge the passenger $5 for the first 10 miles (a $20 value) then $2 each additional mile. We would then invoice Metro Mobility for the $15 per trip, but include the information about the trips so that data about overall mileage is always available. The passenger would see only $5 amount until they exceeded the subsidized threshold and then would see increases in $2 increments.

In reality, the system is dynamic and adjustable for any account or agreement, so whatever the partner agency and 10/10 Taxi agree to will always be in effect on these rides and we can program our system and app to reflect whatever payment agreement is in place and what the passenger and driver need to see for each particular specialized contract.

About 1/3 of Metro Mobility passengers consistently pay cash. Have you made any exceptions to your no cash policy for unbanked customers?

Yes, we always accept cash in vehicle, as well as any credit or debit card.

Do any of your public private partnerships include fare payment integration?

In some of our other markets they do, not in the Twin Cities metro area currently.

If your service utilizes pre-paid cards, can they integrate with our region's Go-To Card?

The answer is yes, on pre-paid cards. However no company would be able to use the current Go-To Card as is currently operated by Metro Transit without special equipment provided by Metro Transit.

The Go-To Card operates on a Closed Loop System. This system is not a merchant system, and according to Metro Transit only the specific equipment provided by Metro Transit can interact with the Go-To Card.

Some transit agencies have moved to an open loop system, if Metro Transit ever choose that option then yes we could integrate. The only other option currently would be installing readers (like the ones on every bus) in every vehicle.

Driver Training

Metro Mobility has unique training requirements for its contracted providers to ensure adherence to Council service quality standards and to meet regulatory requirements for service.

Do you have Special Transportation Services (STS) certified drivers?

Yes, NEMT qualified drivers. State fingerprint background checks, Drug testing, DDC course certification from the National Safety Council, ADA training, HIPIAA and all other requirements.

Are drivers trained to utilize tie-downs and assist with mobility devices?

Those who drive vehicles capable of transporting these devices go through additional training.

How would you administer unique training requirements that may be required under separate agreement?

Whatever training is required we will have all drivers who participate in rides generated by the partner agency complete. We have Elearning platforms and classroom depending upon the training requirements. Through our parent company resources, we have virtually every possible training course that may be required available to us as we operate everything from busses to taxis all over the US and Internationally.

How do your policies prevent discrimination based on location (perception of "bad neighborhood" or average rider rating?)

We have incentives for drivers who accept rides in locations that are tough to cover. We NEVER rate our riders. We do prioritize account trips. And to be quite honest a large part of our traditional taxi business (non-contract) and NEMT business occurs in the areas perceived as bad and which typically are underserved by TNCs.

Safety / Security

Incident Response reporting and tracking

How are vehicle location data monitored (GPS)? Is there a centralized dispatch or control center that knows the location of the vehicles?

The GPS is tracked through tablets locked into each taxi. Each tablet is uniquely coded to the vehicle, and anytime the tablet is active GPS is available. There is a centralized dispatch that knows the location of all vehicles, and area management also can access the system and locate vehicles.

How are drivers communicating with law enforcement or emergency medical personnel if needed?

The first natural option is to use their cell phone to dial 911. But in our system on the tablets locked in to each taxi we have an emergency button that immediately alerts dispatch. Dispatch will try to contact the driver immediately as well as send an alert to all local managers. If the driver does not respond to dispatch they immediately contact police and proved the GPS location. Additionally local management and dispatch send a fleet wide message and try to get to the scene to assist in any way possible.

How are incidents and accidents reported, tracked and shared with the transit agency?

Typically there is a specific accident form that the agency requires to be filled out. We always do this form as well as our own.

We use a system called WebRisk for all accident reporting and tracking for all of our fleets. This is updated within 24 hours of an accident occurring. We upload any documentation related to an accident into WebRisk for future reference if needed.

We would report any accidents to the partner agency within 24 hours or less, and provide any information out of WebRisk ongoing. In some cases partner agencies have required us to report via their risk management systems electronically and we can do that as well.

How do you track and report customer complaints to your partner agencies?

Typically our partner agencies provide a path for complaints that goes directly to them and will contact us for resolution.

We track and report any complaints we receive and would openly share with the partner agency.

Do you carry liability and insurance coverage required as standard in Council contracts?
Yes, and specifically to the limits desired by the contract. We also will produce Certificates of Insurance (COIs) that list the Council as Additional Insured and as a Certificate Holder. Insurance includes auto and liability, but also General Liability that covers the Council at gap points such as entering/exiting the vehicle.

MBTA partnerships (Uber/Lyft)

How is a shared ride model implemented with the MBTA the Ride pilot (Uber/Lyft)?(ie. when a certified customer requests a ride through this program, does the driver pick up other riders? Do the other passengers have to be certified, or can they be general public?

10/10 Taxi does not currently have an MBTA contract. However we do provide shared ride on NEMT transportation. And our SuperShuttle fleet in MN does shared ride to and from the MSP airport.

We use routing software similar to the Trapeze software used by Metro Mobility. Currently we use TransiTrak for the taxi fleet routing, and a proprietary program called SDS for SuperShuttle. Both programs use algorithms and trip information to route shared ride trips efficiently.

According to the website, all of MBTA **the Ride's** service area is covered under the Uber/Lyft pilot program. Does this include rides with service protected by federal regulation (ADA, FTA)?

Are these ADA rides treated differently?

Are drivers informed of the certified status of the customer and that this would be a subsidized ride? For 10/10 Taxi:

When the ride is booked it would be under the specific account for Metro Mobility and all drivers qualified and taking the rides would know that it is subsidized.

For the certified status it depends upon the preference of Metro Mobility and the booking process:

If riders are qualified and allowed to contact 10/10 Taxi directly for rides and use the service we can create unique PIN number or similar that is required to be entered on the credit card machine (just like you would enter a PIN for a transaction at a retail store) to allow the ride to be on the metro mobility account.

If all rides are first brokered through Metro Mobility and then offloaded to us we would rely on these riders being already certified by Metro Mobility.

Regulatory Compliance and Consumer Fraud

Identity validation

How do you ensure that the person eligible for the service is the person being transported?

If riders are qualified and allowed to use the service and Metro Mobility allows the customer to book the ride, we can create unique PIN number or similar that is required to be entered on the credit card machine (just like you would enter a PIN for a transaction at a retail store) to allow the ride to be on the metro mobility account.

It is also possible through our TransiTrak routing software to capture the rider or caretaker signature (sign on glass technology). This system also time stamps points in the ride such as pick up arrival time, pick up departure time and drop off time. Additionally this allows us to generate trips sheets that we can provide to the partner agency.

Data sharing

What is organizational policy on data sharing with partner agencies? As a public agency, the Metropolitan Council needs to ensure transparency and accountability to public.

We are accustomed to data sharing requirements and are able to meet them as a contract requires. Typically, our partner agencies are granted full access to all our system data on request or on regular reporting intervals.

Employee testing/screening

Does provider comply with FTA requirements of public transportation such as FTA Drug and Alcohol screening, post-accident testing, and other Safety Sensitive position requirements?

Yes, but it would be important to note and make sure the Met Council is aware that any vehicle in the US that has a capacity of 7 or less does not have the FTA requirements. Only some of the FTA requirements apply to 8-15 capacity vehicles and only 16+ capacity vehicles have all of the FTA requirements.

These requirements need to be written into any contract if you want them to be mandated by the provider.

Are drivers subject to DOT physicals?

No, in MN this is only required for Limos and vehicles of 8 or greater capacity. Anything smaller is deemed a taxi and subject only to municipal laws, not state.

DOT physicals are easy and inexpensive to get (they are a drug screening and eye exam essentially), so if required in the contract drivers doing these trips would acquire them.