

# Considerations for TNC Partnerships: Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities



**Federal Transit  
Administration**

## Introduction

Recent technological advances have driven an unprecedented expansion of the menu of transportation services, especially through the integrated set of tools and services together known as Mobility on Demand (MOD).

Public transit agencies are increasingly turning to MOD for help providing convenient, accessible transportation for their customers who are seniors or people with disabilities, often through public-private partnerships (P3s) with shared mobility providers. While they are still required to maintain ADA complementary paratransit service, an increasing number of agencies are pursuing P3s as a way to improve service levels and customer experiences for paratransit services and beyond. However, successfully implementing mobility P3s, especially with transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft, can prove to be more complicated than they might initially appear.

This brief provides a framework for public agency stakeholders considering shared mobility P3s, to ensure that new partnerships are built from the beginning to include people with disabilities, including people in wheelchairs. While written with TNCs in mind, many of the discussions can be adapted for projects centered on other shared modes, such as microtransit or carsharing. Ultimately, planning for people with disabilities and seniors early in the process can help assure beneficial, accessible, and equitable service for everyone.<sup>1</sup>

The brief is organized as follows: first it addresses the need for public engagement; then it examines how an agency can lay the groundwork for an accessible TNC partnership. Finally, the full body of considerations is presented in the form of a concise checklist; this final section also includes a list of additional resources and information sources.

**Mobility on Demand (MOD)** An integrated and connected multimodal network of safe, affordable, and reliable transportation options that are available and accessible to all travelers. [FTA Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation]

**Transportation Network Companies** Transportation providers such as Uber and Lyft are codified in California law as Transportation Network Companies, or TNCs, creating a term now widely used as shorthand for these services (also variously called ridesourcing, ridesharing, or ridehailing). TNCs provide online platforms to connect passengers with drivers and automate reservations, payments, and customer feedback. Riders can choose from a variety of service classes, including drivers who use personal (non-commercial) vehicles; traditional taxicabs dispatched via the providers' applications; and premium "black car" services with professional livery drivers and vehicles. TNCs have become one of the most ubiquitous forms of shared mobility. See TCRP Research Report 188: *Shared Mobility and the Transformation of Public Transit*  
<http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/174653.aspx>

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<sup>1</sup> This report uses "individuals with disabilities" and "people with disabilities" interchangeably, per the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities funding guidelines: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>