



There is no one size fits all microtransit solution

Microtransit gives your agency flexible transportation options to meet your community's changing needs.

Here for the journey.

How to build a microtransit system that works for your community

There is no one size fits all microtransit solution. From demographics to geography, each community has different needs and transit challenges to overcome. Fast-growing communities need a way to connect new developments to existing fixed-route buses. Communities spread out over large areas need a way to offer public transit without long waits or running empty buses along sparsely populated routes. From first-mile/last-mile to bringing transit to transit deserts, microtransit is how agencies across North America are filling their transit gaps.

But the question is—how do you create the right microtransit solution for your community?

Agencies need solutions that fit the needs of their community without building costly custom solutions or locking into inflexible pre-packaged offerings. Agencies need a solution that gives them flexibility without custom coding or bringing new systems into already taxed IT departments. Agencies need a solution as unique as they are.

In this eBook we'll cover:

- Why microtransit is a growing trend in public transit today
- Key microtransit use cases
- Benefits to your agency
- Benefits to your community
- What you need to create the right microtransit solution for you and your community



Microtransit means mobility options for everyone

Paratransit provides everyone in your community with equitable access to transportation. Someone who couldn't easily use regular fixed-route buses has a way to get to appointments, shopping, and around town. This on-demand model for paratransit works extremely well and was an obvious blueprint for today's microtransit solutions.

There are more than 100 microtransit systems across 40 U.S. States in operation. That number is growing as more and more communities look at microtransit as a flexible tool to serve their communities in new and better ways.

Microtransit doesn't replace paratransit. Microtransit and paratransit aren't either-or, but rather yes-and. Microtransit enhances your paratransit operations with more flexible service delivery options like using Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) or connecting people to accessible options on your regular fixed-route service. Specialized paratransit vehicles are still essential for your community, however, to support the growing demand of paratransit riders and the population at large, combinations of community shuttles, vans, buses, and TNCs can be the solution people need to get where they need to go quickly, efficiently, and affordably.

Most importantly, expanding the scope of on-demand mobility means you can more efficiently use the resources you have—from vehicles to people—to deliver more to your community than you were before.



Benefits to the community

Transit is about connecting. It goes beyond getting people from A to B, it's about connecting people to the places and people throughout their community. It's about helping people rely less on private cars and making public transit a more convenient option. Microtransit fills in the gaps that fixed route, light rail, and commuter rail can't support.

Microtransit is the flexible option that lets you affordably extend your service to more people than you ever could with fixed-schedule solutions alone.



Promoting public transit by making it easier to use

Let's say you'd like to take transit to a doctor's appointment instead of driving, but you look at a trip planner and you see it will take three times longer on the bus to get to the doctor than by car. This is a typical scenario for people across North America and is exactly why people don't take transit. It's not cost, it's convenience. It's routes that no longer meet a growing population or aren't practical for regular fixed route service.

But what if microtransit could let you take a trip on transit in about the same amount of time as driving? Microtransit gives people a practical and affordable way to get around without a car. It's not transit as a taxi service; it's finding those opportunities to get people where they need to go when they need to get there the most efficient way.

“Microtransit is the lifeblood of your community. It connects people to so many more opportunities than fixed route alone could ever do”

- Nila Zaman, Industry Solutions Manager, Trapeze Mobility on Demand



Access to community, jobs, healthcare, and more

As communities grow, infrastructure, like streets and transit, can't always keep up. New community hubs and office parks can't always be built where people already are. Sometimes new facilities are built in growing parts of a city, which means there might not be fixed-route service to those areas where people live. More than a few cities have built retail and commercial centers with the promise of good jobs, only to learn there was no way for people to get to those jobs.

This is the crux of the first-mile/last-mile problem. You can get people most of the way to a new distribution center, recreation complex, community hub, or hospital, but maybe not all the way. Microtransit lets you connect the former green field parts of your city to existing transit hubs. Before trying to create fixed route schedules to reach these places, microtransit fills the gap in the short term and gets people to these places now. If you don't know how many people will be going to the community center or working at a new industrial park, you can't plan service for those areas. If you don't know what kind of demand a new neighborhood will have, how can you plan for it—until it's too late to build the transit habit for residents.

Microtransit helps families get kids to after-school activities and seniors to appointments and social gatherings. It's solving the challenge of getting to the closest bus stop or transit hub. Not everyone needs a full paratransit service, but they could use help just getting the trip going.

It's connecting people. It's giving everyone practical options to leave their cars at home. It's giving people flexible options to get where they want to go. Microtransit lets you bring a community together. Serve parts of your community where you can't run fixed routes, but still have enough people who need to get places.

As we try to rely less on cars, reduce congestion, and limit emissions; microtransit gives people options, opportunities, and convenience for connections that are missing in our cities today.



How agencies benefit from microtransit

Many of the benefits to your community are benefits to your agency as well. You have people underserved by fixed route schedules, microtransit helps you reach them. As you strive to optimize all your resources—people and vehicles—microtransit could let you use a paratransit vehicle to pickup and drop-off someone on the way back to the depot when it might ordinarily be running empty.

Not everyone needs a lift-equipped paratransit vehicle. Some people could use—and maybe prefer—a taxi or other TNC instead. You can offer the same, or better, paratransit service by only using your expensive lift-equipped vehicles when you need them. Freeing up these vehicles means you could let people book last-minute paratransit service, instead of days in advance.

Microtransit gives you options. You don't have to put off providing service to new areas because the demand isn't there for a regularly scheduled bus. You can provide those connections while the community grows and you learn exactly when people travel, where people are in the neighborhood, and where people need to go. Armed with this data you can make smart decisions for growing your service area to meet demand when the time is right.

Microtransit lets you offer new or better service in transit deserts or where fixed route schedules only allow for headways of an hour or more. No one wants to wait an hour for a bus. No one wants the hassle of planning a short trip that might take hours just because your scheduled service is too infrequent.

Building trust in public transit makes you a more integral part of the community. When people realize it's more practical to leave their car at home and take multi-modal transit, your agency will be able to improve transit services to your community.

Microtransit is the complementary add-on to all the other parts of your service. As agencies like Whatcom County learned, once you let people know they have an affordable and convenient alternative—they take it.

Putting the right pieces together to create the right microtransit solution for your community

Trapeze offers everything you need in a single, complete solution

For over 30 years, Trapeze has worked on solving the on-demand transit problem and offers customers their PASS solution to meet Mobility on Demand needs. Initially PASS was developed for paratransit, but now, with the need for smart solutions to support increased demand and expanding rider networks, PASS is also right for microtransit because it already knows how to optimize your routes, schedules, fleets, and people. All your agency needs to do is put together all the parts it needs, and none that it doesn't, and start offering the service.

You can tailor a solution that meets your needs with systems you already deploy. Off-the-shelf, prepackaged systems don't have the flexibility to meet what your community needs—and nothing it doesn't—and still give you room to grow. If you already rely on Trapeze PASS for paratransit, adding microtransit is like just flipping a switch.



Your team already knows how on-demand transit works. They already have experience booking people and managing a fleet of revenue vehicles. Microtransit just adds non-paratransit capability to the system. You can see when vehicles are needed and dynamically redirect them to the right locations. Most microtransit solutions work just like ordering a ride-share trip. Riders open your app, request a pickup, set a time, give a destination, and track their ride as it comes. The difference is the microtransit fare is integrated into your existing fare structure and your other service offerings for a seamless rider experience

You can create microtransit with a zone-based model or something system-wide. You can serve as a first mile/last mile solution from neighborhoods to transit hubs or offer curb-to-curb service anywhere in your community. What you offer is up to you and what your community needs.

Regardless of what you offer, PASS has all the tools you need to do it. From managing dispatch, to booking, apps, payments, and even handling overflow times with TNCs, PASS has the add-ons that support your specific requirements. You're not locked into a "you have to have all these modules, even if you don't use them" solution.

Linden Hop is a prime example of an agency taking PASS and creating an adjunct microtransit service for their entire community while not taking anything away from their paratransit service. In one short year, Whatcom County went from offering a few hundred rides a month to a few thousand while the software scaled right along with their growth.



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Whatcom County, WA leveraged PASS for their Linden Hop service, they started small, tested demand, and then grew. Their dispatchers were already familiar with the software, so they didn't need to train them on something entirely new. IT knew how to manage PASS internally, so IT integration wasn't a problem. **[Read more about Linden Hop and Whatcom County.](#)**



Connect with our mobility solutions experts

As leaders in Mobility on Demand, the team at Trapeze can answer all your questions and offer advice based on years of deployments across North America. Whether you need to work with an extended service area, more riders, or resource constraints, Trapeze and its Mobility on Demand solutions will offer your agency and your community a solution to support your microtransit needs.



Connect With Our Experts