



**Department for  
the Aging**

The City of New York  
Department for the Aging  
2 Lafayette Street  
New York, New York 10007

**Car Service with App and Dispatch Options Program  
Concept Paper  
June 15, 2016**

**A. Purpose**

This concept paper is a precursor to the New York City Department for the Aging's (DFTA) forthcoming Car Service with App and Dispatch Options Program (the "Program") Request for Proposals (RFP). Though subject to change, DFTA's expectation is to issue an RFP in summer 2016 for contracts to commence on November 1, 2016 (FY 2017).

The goal of the Program is to improve access to transportation for New York City's seniors and persons with disabilities by subsidizing car service rides and providing convenient ways to obtain these rides. DFTA recognizes the increasing desire of consumers to request and pay for car services using Internet-enabled software that is reliable, secure and easy to use. DFTA also recognizes the large portion of elderly and disabled passengers who do not have access to smartphones or the internet, or who do not have the ability or desire to use them. Therefore the Program will provide equivalent service through a telephone dispatch system.

This concept paper summarizes the evolving parameters and expectations of the Car Service App and Dispatch Program. DFTA plans to take into strong consideration the feedback, suggestions and comments offered by the community when crafting the Program RFP. This is an opportunity for the public to comment on program elements and structures that will best enable DFTA and its partner organizations to play a role in addressing the transportation needs of older adults and persons with disabilities in New York City.

**B. Background and Target Population**

DFTA was awarded a three-year grant under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Public Transportation grant program (49 USC, Section 5310). This program provides funding to improve accessibility and mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities. In New York State, the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is the agency designated by the

Governor to administer this federally funded program with oversight from the FTA. The New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) is the direct recipient of the funds, which are passed through to DFTA. NYCDOT will monitor compliance with FTA requirements, communicate with the FTA, and submit required reports. The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) is DFTA's program partner.

The geographic service areas under the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Public Transportation grants program are Queens Community Districts (CDs) 6, 7, 10, 12, and 14; Bronx CDs 4, 5, 8 and 10; and Brooklyn CDs 5, 13, 15, 16 and 17. These areas have a high density of older adults and people with disabilities, are marked by a high poverty rate, and have limited DFTA-funded transportation services.

### **C. Program Details**

An RFP will be issued for one entity to conduct outreach and enrollment of seniors and people with disabilities into the program. This entity will subcontract with one or more commercial transportation service (car service) to provide point-to-point trips. The commercial car service will provide app-based, on-demand rides for seniors and people with disabilities 24 hours per day/7 days a week. Users will have an account with the commercial transportation service and will have the option to request and receive accessible vehicles. The program will guarantee round-trip availability, and users will have four options to summon a ride from any location in the target area to any other point in New York City: a) prearrange a ride directly through a web app; b) request a ride in real time through a web app without prearrangement; c) prearrange a ride by calling a dispatch number; or d) call the dispatch number for a ride without prearrangement.

Through this pilot, DFTA will gather data concerning from/to where rides are taken, demographics of those making use of the program, and the views held by consumers concerning improvements to transportation access made possible by the program compared to alternative transportation modes they have used. Data will also be analyzed to determine the cost of this service versus alternatives.

The following are some of DFTA's requirements that must be met under the contract:

- The program will provide services to eligible persons residing in the CDs listed under Target Population.
- Services will be available for older adults and younger persons with disabilities.
  - The older adults and younger persons with disabilities will not be charged for the trip/s.
  - Contract awardee will work with MOPD and other relevant organizations to reach and serve younger persons with disabilities.
- The program will develop and implement outreach, eligibility and enrollment activities that meet with DFTA's specifications.
- The program app will allow a passenger to request car services through a smart phone or similar mobile device.
  - The app will provide real-time dispatch.

- The app will accept advance reservations as well as requests for immediate service.
- For participating consumers who prefer to use telephone dispatch rather than app services, the Program will provide this alternative 24 hours per day/7 days per week. The waiting time for telephone dispatch rides will not exceed the waiting time for rides requested via the app.

DFTA welcomes ideas and invites comment on how to best:

- Reach the target community districts as well as thoughts on any barriers to implementation that need to be addressed.
- Provide dispatch services based on the needs of the seniors and persons with disabilities residing in the grant program target areas regardless of whether those clients attend other DFTA-funded programs, e.g., senior centers.
  - Engage and enroll participants through a structured referral process, coupled with coordination and linkages, from other community resources.
- Promote the identification of frail and/or isolated individuals who, without a low cost/subsidized transportation service, would be homebound.
- Meet the needs of non-English speaking seniors and people with disabilities.
- Formally connect with car service providers who can provide app-based dispatch services.
- Meet the app training needs of program participants.
- Provide sensitivity training to drivers and other workers concerning the challenges encountered by older people and people with disabilities as they make use of transportation services.
- Manage the relationship between service participants and car service provider/s.
- Provide participants the opportunity to comment on each trip experience and driver's performances for each ride.
- Ensure that the contracted entity has the capacity to successfully implement and manage the program, including providing dedicated personnel and data to DFTA.
- Establish internal controls and fraud prevention for a program that balances the dual aims of providing clients maximum flexibility on accessing services while ensuring that only authorized clients are using the service.
- Set up fiscal mechanisms that would allow program participants to access services 24/7 through their phones and for the program to pay on participants' behalf.

DFTA is also interested in knowing what the community believes should be the functionalities of the car dispatch system as they relate to:

- Usability
- 24/7 accessibility
- Accessibility to customers who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, mentally and/or physically impaired
- Payment security and financial controls
- Passenger information security

- Communication between drivers and passengers
- Itinerary and cost information recordkeeping for reporting purposes
- Transparency of fare/fare quotes/fees
- Quality control/checks
- Response/wait time
- Complaint/rating system

**D. Service Levels**

The service level established under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Public Transportation grant program is outlined in the table below.

Cumulative rides = 17,935	June 30, 2017
Cumulative rides = 42,935	Dec. 31,2017
Cumulative rides = 67,935	June 18,2018
Cumulative rides = 92,935	Dec. 31,2018
Cumulative rides = 110,870	June 30,2019

**E. Planned Method of Evaluating Proposals**

DFTA’s Evaluation Committee will review, evaluate and rate all responsive proposals. DFTA will evaluate proposals based on the proposers’ experience, capability of delivering the proposed services, and proposed program design. Proposers will be asked to provide evidence of their ability to serve the areas proposed.

**F. Proposed Contract Term**

It is anticipated that the term of the contract(s) awarded from this RFP will be from November 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019. The Agency reserves the right, prior to contract award, to determine the length of the initial contract term.

**G. Anticipated Procurement Timeline**

DFTA is currently planning to release an RFP in the summer of 2016. The anticipated contract start date is November 1, 2016.

**H. Anticipated Funding**

Current anticipated funding for the Car Service App and Dispatch Program is \$ 3,210,000.

**I. Contractor Reporting Requirements**

The Contractor will follow the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Public Transportation grants program (49 USC, Section 5310) requirements as they relate to record keeping and reporting and as defined by DFTA.

**J. Use of HHS Accelerator**

To respond to the forthcoming RFP and all other client and community services Requests for Proposals, vendors must first complete and submit an electronic pre-qualifications application using the City’s Health and Human Services (HHS) Accelerator system. The HHS Accelerator system is a web-based system maintained by the City of New York for use by its human services agencies to manage procurement of services.

The forthcoming RFP will be released through the HHS Accelerator system. Only organizations with approved HHS Accelerator Business Application and Services Applications for one or more of the following service areas will be able to propose:

- Transportation
- Case Management

Providers who are approved in HHS Accelerator to provide any of these services will be able to submit proposals for the Transportation Services Program procurement.

In addition to the Department for the Aging, the following City agencies that administer client and community services will be users of the HHS Accelerator System: Administration for Children’s Services, Department of Probation, Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, Department of Correction, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Human Resources Administration, Department of Homeless Services, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Department of Youth and Community Development, and Small Business Services.

Once vendors prequalify in a service area, they will then be prequalified to submit proposals for procurement opportunities in that service area from the client and community services agencies listed above. HHS Accelerator will also allow providers to manage client and community services budgeting and invoicing through this common user interface. To submit a Business and Services application to become eligible to apply for this and other client and community services RFPs, please visit: <http://www.nyc.gov/hhsaccelerator>.

**K. Contact Information and Deadline for Questions/Comments**

Comments are invited by no later than 5:00 p.m. on (45 days from release date). Please email [Conceptpaper@aging.nyc.gov](mailto:Conceptpaper@aging.nyc.gov) and write “Car Service with App and Dispatch Options Program Concept Paper.” in the subject line. Alternatively, written comments may be sent to the following address:

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