



Department of
Motor Vehicles

Office of
Mental Health

Department of
Transportation

New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force



Final Report
&
Recommendations

2/15/2019

Transmittal Letter

February 15, 2019

In the fall of 2018, the New York State Transportation Network Company (TNC) Accessibility Task Force was convened, consisting of nine appointed members. The members represented community-based organizations, people with disabilities, and TNC Companies.

We were honored to have been chosen by Governor Cuomo to serve as co-chairs of this important task force, and excited by the opportunity to affect meaningful changes to how ride sharing services are utilized by members of the disabled community. Other members of the Task Force included: Brooke Ellison (Stony Brook University), Denise Figueroa (Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley), Denis O’Flynn O’Brien (Uber), Funsho Owolabi (Lyft), Meghan Parker (New York Association on Independent Living), Marilyn Tucci (Suffolk Independent Living Organization), and Todd Vaarwerk (Western New York Independent Living). We would like to make special mention of the great work of Andrew Karhan and Andy Sink of the NYS Office of Mental Health for their support and guidance throughout the process, as well as others too numerous to mention here.

In November of 2018, the task force began its listening tour to gather comments from the public in Buffalo. This initial session was followed by four additional stops across New York in Syracuse, Albany, Westchester and Long Island. Additionally, comments were accepted in writing and electronically by the Task Force.

Following the public listening sessions and review of all submitted comments, the work of the Task Force focused on the creation of the attached final report. Advocates for individuals with disabilities and the TNC company representatives came together as Task Force members in a good faith effort to improve accessible transportation within ride sharing services. Some of the discussions were robust, yet all members worked respectfully to form recommendations that will realistically address concerns that TNCs had not been held to ADA standards, while acknowledging the limitations of the TNC business model.

With this report, we hope the recommendations provided offer a pathway to truly improve accessible transportation throughout NYS, and we wish to express our appreciation for the extraordinary efforts and dedication of all Task Force members.

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Introduction

The Transportation Network Company (TNC) Accessibility Task Force was established in June of 2017 to explore the challenge of accessibility for individuals with disabilities in the current transportation network company market. Accessible, affordable, and reliable transportation is truly a key to independence for many individuals with disabilities, and has long been a challenge. It provides access to the social, entertainment, medical, and, perhaps most importantly, to employment opportunities that lead to greater financial self-sufficiency and personal independence.¹ However, the availability of transportation options varies widely depending upon the community in which an individual with a disability resides.

While the market has historically consisted of a blend of public transportation, para-transit, and private transportation businesses like cab companies, the evolution of ride-sharing TNCs such as Uber and Lyft have changed the landscape of the transportation market considerably.² TNCs have increased the availability of transportation for the general population. At the same time, there have been changes with respect to existing transportation options in some areas. This report discusses considerations for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities in New York State.

History

Identifying available, accessible, and affordable transportation has long been a challenging issue. In particular, for-hire transportation services have existed for centuries in the form of taxis, jitneys, and other services.³ A myriad of federal, state, and local regulations were established to monitor fares, among other things, fare regulation, service restrictions, and quality control.⁴ However, the Transportation Network Companies (TNC) quickly created a new dynamic in this market that brought rapid change.

In 2009 Uber was founded in its initial iteration as UberCab, and began providing transportation services to San Francisco in 2011.⁵ UberCab made it possible to hail a luxury car using a smartphone.⁶ In 2012 the service expanded to UberX, which, after allowing drivers to use their personal cars in 2013, has experienced massive global expansion.⁷ Lyft, Uber's primary competition in the TNC market, launched in 2012 with an initial focus on providing services to

¹ Loprest, P. and Maag, E. (2001). Barriers to and supports for work among adults with disabilities: Results from the NHIS-D. *The Urban Institute*. Retrieved from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/barriers-and-supports-work-among-adults-disabilities-results-nhis-d>

² Gavin, P. (2017). Regional regulation of transportation network companies. *Harvard Law & Policy Review*, 11(1): 337.

³ Dempsey, P. S. (1996). "Taxi, industry regulation, deregulation, and reregulation: The paradox of market failure. *Transportation Law Journal* 73: 76-77.

⁴ Gavin, P. (2017). Regional regulation of transportation network companies. *Harvard Law & Policy Review*, 11(1): 337.

⁵ Press Release (2010). Uber, Uber's founding, retrieved from <https://newsroom.uber.com/ubers-founding>

⁶ Uber.com (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.uber.com/newsroom/history/>

⁷ Uber.com (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.uber.com/newsroom/history/>

students on college campuses, and by 2014 Lyft launched in 24 new U.S. cities in 24 hours, bringing its total to 60 U.S. cities.⁸ In short, the market for TNCs in the U.S. continues to expand, and the necessary regulatory framework continues to be crafted in response to this growth.

In 2017, Patrick Gavin, a graduate of Harvard Law School in 2016, in an article entitled *Regional Regulation of Transportation Network Companies*, wrote that TNC services, which were not available a decade ago, “have changed the way transportation services work in American cities, and as a result, regulators and policymakers at all levels of American government must decide how to regulate TNCs so that these companies can effectively integrate into local private and public transportation systems.”⁹

Legislative History

While TNCs have improved access to direct transportation for the areas where they have launched, they have faced regulatory challenges, opposition from traditional transportation providers, and concerns from individuals with disabilities and the disability advocacy community.

For example, Uber has faced lawsuits and challenges from disability rights groups in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, facing allegations that the company violated the Americans with Disabilities act by failing to provide equal access for wheelchair users. Then in March of 2018, Lyft was sued by a coalition of disability advocates in the San Francisco Bay area claiming that vehicles on Lyft’s platform were not accessible to individuals with disabilities.

This series of legal actions, however, has led to some systemic changes in cities across the United States. For example, the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) in New York City issued a mandate requiring Uber, Lyft and Via to make wheelchair accessible service a growing part of their operations. While this particular mandate was not adopted, a settlement was reached in the New York State Supreme Court. The NYC TLC retained the mandate that would require a quarter of all trips provided by TNCs to occur in wheelchair-accessible vehicles, mid-2023, but also agreed to include an alternate option that requires TNCs to meet a wait-time requirement. The wait time requirement states that, by 2021, TNCs must either service at least 80 percent of requests for wheelchair-accessible vehicles in under 10 minutes and 90 percent in under 15 minutes, or associate with a company that has the capacity to meet those requirements.

In addition, a California lawsuit was filed to ensure that blind people have reliable and equal access to Uber transportation.¹⁰ The settlement of this lawsuit requires Uber drivers “to provide equal service to people with disabilities who travel with service animals; permanently remove drivers if they knowingly denied service to someone with a service animal, or if they have allegedly denied service more than once; notify new drivers and existing drivers of their obligations to serve people with service animals when they sign up, through the app, and via

⁸ Bercovici, J. (2014). Lyft pips Uber by launching 24 Cities in one day. *Forbes*. Retrieved from

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2014/04/24/lyft-pips-uber-by-launching-24-cities-in-one-day/#2314b170527b>

⁹ Gavin, P. (2017). Regional regulation of transportation network companies. *Harvard Law & Policy Review*, 11(1): 337.

¹⁰ Disability Rights Advocates (2018). National Federation of the Blind of California, et al. v. Uber Technologies, Inc., et al. Retrieved from: <https://dralegal.org/case/national-federation-of-the-blind-of-california-et-al-v-uber-technologies-inc-et-al/#settlement>

email reminders; require all drivers to read and correctly answer questions about service animal obligations in an interactive pop-up in the app; and respond to customer complaints about service animal discrimination in a timely manner.¹¹

New York State's Response

As the presence of TNCs increased nationally, New York State began work to identify the most effective ways for the TNCs to operate across the State. In June of 2017, Governor Andrew Cuomo approved legislation, the Transportation Network Company Act, that created the regulatory framework for TNCs to operate across New York State. The law took effect on June 29, 2017, and a critical component of the law was to establish the TNC Accessibility Task Force. The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force was charged with the responsibility to analyze and advise on how to maximize effective and integrated transportation services for persons with disabilities in the transportation network company market.¹² Through this process, the TNC Task Force sought to study the demand responsive transportation marketplace by: (a) conducting a state-wide needs assessment concerning the demand for demand responsive accessible transportation; (b) conducting a resource assessment concerning the availability of accessible demand responsive transportation services for persons with disabilities; (c) identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, increasing accessible demand responsive transportation service for persons with mobility disabilities; (d) proposing strategies for increasing accessible demand responsive transportation service for persons with disabilities; and (e) addressing any other issues determined important to the Task Force in establishing recommendations pursuant to subdivision five of the legislation.¹³

Current Accessibility

UBER AND ACCESSIBILITY

Uber has taken a variety of steps to increase the accessibility of services for riders with disabilities. For example, "Uber's technology is helping increase the mobility and independence of transportation for riders with disabilities, with features and capabilities like: Cashless Payments, On-Demand transportation, Upfront pricing, anti-discrimination policies, and share your ETA and location."¹⁴ Uber states that the "use of voiceover technology for both iPhone and Android platforms, as well as braille display capability, make the app more accessible to individuals who are blind or who are low vision."¹⁵ For riders who are deaf or hard of hearing, Uber states that the app is accessible due to visible and vibrating functions that allow full operation of the app and communication with drivers.¹⁶ Additional functions can be turned on in

¹¹ Disability Rights Advocates (2018). National Federation of the Blind of California, et al. v. Uber Technologies, Inc., et al. Retrieved from: <https://dralegal.org/case/national-federation-of-the-blind-of-california-et-al-v-uber-technologies-inc-et-al/#settlement>

¹² 2017 S2009C (Part AAA).

¹³ 2017 S2009C (Part AAA).

¹⁴ Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber. Retrieved from: <https://accessibility.uber.com/>

¹⁵ Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber.

¹⁶ Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber.

the app for individuals with hearing impairments.¹⁷ Uber states that, in accordance with the ADA, they do not discriminate against individuals using service animals. Their Service Animal Policy details that, “A driver-partner CANNOT lawfully deny service to riders with service animals because of allergies, religious obligations, or generalized fear of animals.”¹⁸ Drivers who fail to adhere to this policy can be prevented from using the app. Riders are not subject to cleaning fees unless an animal has repeatedly soiled a car and the incidents have been reviewed by Customer Support.¹⁹ For riders with mobility disabilities who utilize wheelchairs, UberWAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle) is being piloted in various cities around the world, including New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., Chicago, London, Bangalore, and Toronto.²⁰ Uber states that fares are comparable to UberX, and that all WAV drivers are certified to assist wheelchair users.²¹ For those who require assistance entering or exiting an Uber vehicle, such as those with physical barriers or the elderly, UberASSIST is available in approximately 40 cities worldwide to connect riders to a driver who has been trained by a third party to provide physical assistance.²² For a complete overview of accessibility at Uber, go to <https://accessibility.uber.com/>.

LYFT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Lyft has also made positive adjustments to their policies and procedures to better serve individuals with disabilities. “Discrimination against passengers or drivers on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender identity, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, or sexual orientation is not allowed, and can result in deactivation from the program.”²³ The Lyft app has voiceover options for both iPhone and Android platforms for individuals who are blind or low vision.²⁴ Guidance on the Lyft website encourages drivers to ask how they can help individuals with visual challenges and be prepared.²⁵ Similar advice is offered regarding individuals with hearing impairments. Lyft, according to the Service Animal Policy, cannot refuse rides to an individual using a service animal.²⁶ Lyft's service animal policy also prohibits refusals based on allergies, fear, or religious reasons. Lyft drivers are advised that riders with manual wheelchairs should be provided with aid to fold and find a place for the wheelchair in the vehicle in the case that they cannot fold the chair themselves.²⁷ If a passenger is refused a ride and was not reasonably accommodated, drivers may be removed from the Lyft platform.²⁸ If a wheelchair does not fit, drivers are advised to cancel the ride and contact the Lyft Safety Team, who will reach out to the rider.²⁹ Accessible vehicles can be requested by turning on a wheelchair access option within the app.³⁰ If an accessible ride is

¹⁷ Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber.

¹⁸ Uber.com (2017). Accessibility at Uber. Retrieved from: <https://accessibility.uber.com/service-animal-policy/>

¹⁹ Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber. Retrieved from: <https://accessibility.uber.com/>

²⁰ Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber.

²¹ Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber.

²² Ibid, Uber.com (2018). Accessibility at Uber

²³ Lyft.com (2018). Anti-Discrimination Policies. Retrieved from: <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/115012923767>

²⁴ AFB.org (2016). Access to Transportation. Retrieved from: <https://www.afb.org/afbpress/pubnew.asp?DocID=aw171107>

²⁵ Ibid, Lyft.com (2018). Anti-Discrimination Policies.

²⁶ Lyft.com (2018). Service Animal Policy. Retrieved from <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/115013080048>

²⁷ Lyft.com (2018). Wheelchair Policy. Retrieved from: <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/115012926827>

²⁸ Ibid, Lyft.com (2018). Wheelchair Policy.

²⁹ Ibid, Lyft.com (2018). Wheelchair Policy.

³⁰ Lyft.com (2018). Accessible Vehicle Dispatch. Retrieved from: <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/115013081668>

requested in an area where no accessible Lyft vehicles are available, information about local accessibility options will be texted to the rider.³¹

TNC Innovation in Other Areas

TNCs continue to innovate, and their efforts have undoubtedly enhanced transportation opportunities for individuals with disabilities. One writer states, “These are often touted as a win-win for both parties, since, on the surface, they seem to make a lot of sense. Uber and Lyft get more riders and public transportation authorities save money and connect more riders to transit hubs solving the vaunted first-last mile problem.”³² In general, the cost of para-transit is high for many communities. For instance, “The average cost of operating a single paratransit trip is about \$23 in the U.S., compared with less than \$4 for the average trip on bus or light rail. In Boston, the average cost per ride is about \$45, in Washington, about \$50, and in New York, nearly \$57.”³³

On the other hand, when solid partnerships are created, benefits can be widespread. For example, in Philadelphia, riders receive a 40% discount on Uber fares when taking a ride to/from a public rail station.³⁴ Perhaps more significantly, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, serving the greater Boston area, instituted a policy whereby individuals with disabilities can have their rides subsidized with riders only paying the first \$2, and MBTA covering the next \$13.³⁵ This is not only a significant benefit for riders with disabilities, it is also a benefit to MBTA. Boston’s door-to-door service for riders with disabilities and elderly (the Ride) has an annual budget of over \$100 million a year.³⁶ Under “The Ride” program each ride costs \$31, but with the partnership with Uber and Lyft, these rides will cost the agency \$13 – a 70% savings.

In Washington D.C., Metro launched the Abilities Ride program in partnership with Uber and Lyft.³⁷ In this program, the individual pays the first \$5, Metro pays the next \$15, and then the individual is responsible for any amount over \$20.³⁸ This allows riders to take up to 4 rides per day, get same day services, and be accompanied by one personal care assistant at no extra cost.³⁹ However, WMATA was criticized: “The rideshare option is expected to be popular among customers who don’t need wheelchair-accessible vehicles to travel; Still, some people with disabilities and advocates have been critical of Metro’s intent to partner with the

³¹ Ibid, Lyft.com (2018). Accessible Vehicle Dispatch.

³² New York Public Transit Association (2018). Transit and TNC’s. Retrieved from <https://nytransit.org/resources/transit-tncs/205-transit-tncs>

³³ Salsberg, B. (2016). Transit systems eye Uber, Lyft for savings on the disabled. *San Diego Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-transit-systems-eye-uber-lyft-for-savings-on-the-2016apr10-story.html>

³⁴ New York Public Transit Association (2018). Transit and TNC’s. Retrieved from <https://nytransit.org/resources/transit-tncs/205-transit-tncs>

³⁵ New York Public Transit Association (2018). Transit and TNC’s. Retrieved from <https://nytransit.org/resources/transit-tncs/205-transit-tncs>

³⁶ Lazo, L. (2016). Uber, Lyft partner with transportation authority to offer paratransit customers service in Boston. *The Washington Post* retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/dr-gridlock/wp/2016/09/16/uber-lyft-partner-with-city-to-offer-paratransit-customers-on-demand-service-in-boston/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.4b89919a026b

³⁷ Lazo, L. (2016). Metro eyes up to \$6M a year in savings from partnership with Uber, Lyft for MetroAccess. *The Washington Post* retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/dr-gridlock/wp/2016/09/06/metro-eyes-up-to-6m-a-year-in-savings-from-partnership-with-uber-lyft-for-metroaccess/?utm_term=.418b9e303508

³⁸ WMATA (2018). Abilities-Ride retrieved from <https://www.wmata.com/service/accessibility/metro-access/Abilities-Ride.cfm>

³⁹ WMATA (2018).

companies, saying they lack wheelchair-accessible vehicles and training in dealing with special-needs populations.”⁴⁰

In other communities, like Chicago, the presence of UberWAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles) appears to be expanding the accessibility of TNCs to individuals who utilize a wheelchair. In fact, the Chicago Tribune reported in late 2017 that Uber had “65 wheelchair-accessible vehicles on the road available through the app.”⁴¹ There was clearly more work to be done, and Uber’s Chicago General Manager acknowledges that, “developing and implementing new solutions to the mobility challenge faced by the disability community is an issue we take very seriously.”⁴²

Other innovations that are on the horizon related to accessibility of TNCs have involved partnerships of a different nature. For instance, in August of 2018, Toyota announced an unprecedented partnership with Uber by “advancing and bringing to market autonomous ride-sharing as a mobility service at scale.”⁴³ In addition, Uber has partnered with other companies like MV Transportation to ensure greater accessibility for individuals with disabilities. In short, “the move to partner with MV brings a much-needed supply of WAV vehicles into the Uber platform,” and to provide the necessary capacity within Uber to meet the growing demands of riders with disabilities.⁴⁴

Public Comment and Forum Summaries

In the fall of 2018, the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force was formed, per the direction of the Legislature. The TNC Task Force consisted of 9 appointed members, including individuals from community-based organizations, people with disabilities, and TNC Companies. The two co-chairs were Betty DeFazio (ARISE) and Frank Krotschinsky (Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities). Other members of the Task Force included: Brooke Ellison (Stony Brook University), Denise Figueroa (Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley), Denis O’Flynn O’Brien (Uber), Funsho Owolabi (Lyft), Meghan Parker (New York Association on Independent Living), Marilyn Tucci (Suffolk Independent Living Organization), and Todd Vaarwerk (Western New York Independent Living).

In November of 2018, a press release was issued to invite the NYS community to provide public comment via one of five listening sessions held across upstate New York and Long Island, or in writing via [TNCTask Force@dmv.ny.gov](mailto:TNCTaskForce@dmv.ny.gov). The public forums were held at the following times and locations:

⁴⁰ Lazo, L. (2016). Metro eyes up to \$6M a year in savings from partnership with Uber, Lyft for MetroAccess. *The Washington Post* retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/dr-gridlock/wp/2016/09/06/metro-eyes-up-to-6m-a-year-in-savings-from-partnership-with-uber-lyft-for-metroaccess/?utm_term=.418b9e303508

⁴¹ Winsnieski, M. (2017). Uber app now allows wheelchair users to summon rides. *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-uber-handicapped-accessibility-0720-20170719-story.html>

⁴² Winsnieski, M. (2017). Uber app now allows wheelchair users to summon rides. *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-uber-handicapped-accessibility-0720-20170719-story.html>

⁴³ Toyota Newsroom (2018). Toyota and Uber extend collaboration to automated vehicle technologies. Retrieved from <https://corporatenews.pressroom.toyota.com/releases/toyota+uber+extend+collaboration+automated+vehicle+technologies.htm>

⁴⁴ McBride, S. (2018). Uber’s new partnership aimed to increase accessibility. *New Mobility: Life Beyond Wheels*. Retrieved from <http://www.newmobility.com/2018/11/uber-increase-wheelchair-accessible-vehicle-service/>

November 27, 2018 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Knights of Columbus 261 S. Legion Drive Buffalo, NY 14220	November 28, 2018 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. NYS Fairgrounds-Martha Eddy Room 581 State Fair Boulevard Syracuse, NY 13209	November 30, 2018 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Westchester County Center 198 Central Ave. White Plains, NY 10606	December 11, 2018 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Empire State Plaza Convention Center Meeting Rooms 2-3 Albany, NY 12242	December 18, 2018 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Moose Lodge 631 Pulaski Road Greenlawn, NY 11740
28 Attendees	25 Attendees	33 Attendees	33 Attendees	37 Attendees

Public feedback received during the information gathering process resulted in common concerns throughout the state. Approximately 50 individuals took the opportunity to provide a statement at the five forums. The most popular option for respondents to comment on the accessibility of TNCs was in writing to the TNC Task Force e-mail address, where approximately 60 individuals or groups provided written comments. Respondents included individuals living with various disabilities, disability advocates, direct service providers, parents of individuals with disabilities, policy analysts, researchers and municipal employees. Responses were examined and categorized, resulting in over 150 concerns about current TNC operations. All concerns were tallied and grouped into categories, as seen in Chart 1. For further detail as to the make-up of each category, please see Table 1.

CHART 1: THIS CHART GRAPHICALLY DISPLAYS PERCENTAGES OF THE MOST COMMON CONCERN TYPES PER CONSOLIDATED CATEGORY. FOR A TEXTUAL REPRESENTATION, SEE TABLE 1.

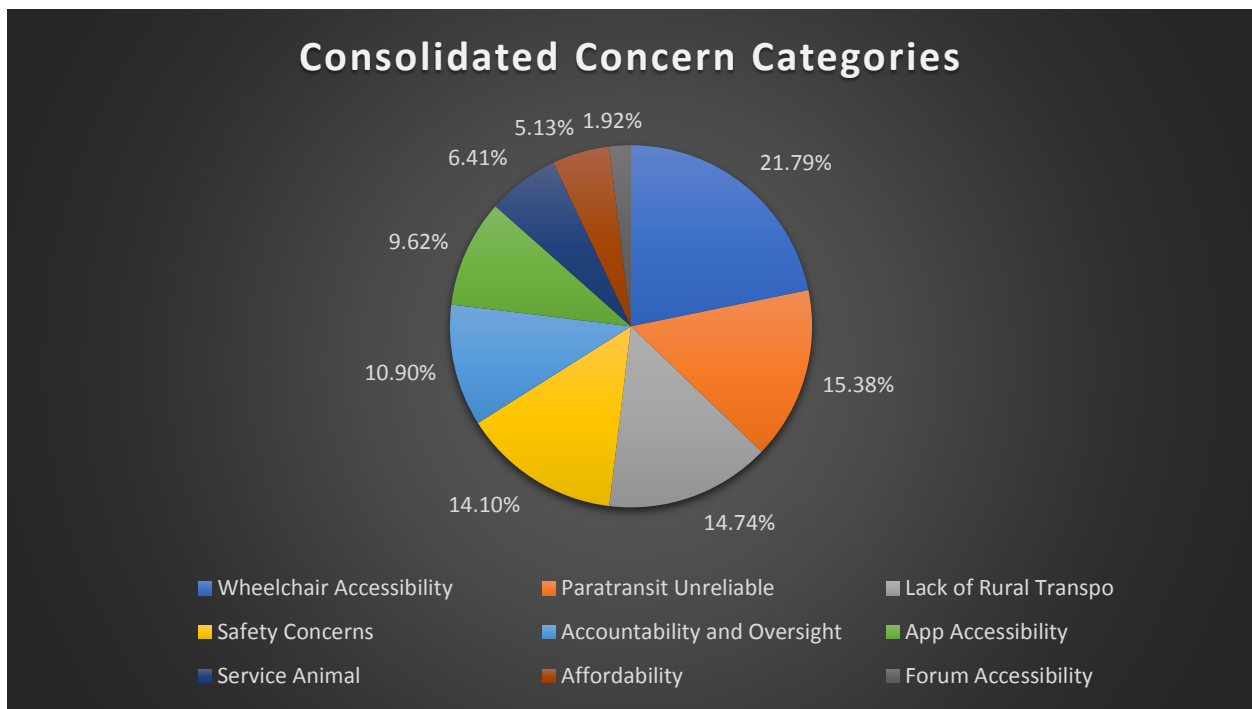


TABLE 1: THIS TABLE DESCRIBES A SUMMARY OF CONCERNS GROUPED BY CATEGORY AS VOICED BY NYS CONSTITUENTS.

CATEGORY	DETAILED CONCERNS
I. WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY: 21.79%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. LACK OF ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES b. LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY SPECIFIC DRIVER TRAINING c. RIDE CANCELATIONS d. LONG WAIT TIMES FOR ACCESSIBLE TNC VEHICLES e. TNC CLAIMS OF ACCESSIBILITY DO NOT MATCH RIDER EXPERIENCE f. NOT ENOUGH ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES WITH LIFTS TO ACCOMMODATE MOTORIZED CHAIRS
II. PARATRANSIT UNRELIABLE: 15.38%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. DIFFICULT TO SCHEDULE b. COSTLY c. LONG WAIT TIMES d. SOMETIMES DON'T SHOW UP AT ALL e. LACK OF VEHICLE STANDARDS f. CAN LEAD TO MISSED APPOINTMENTS DUE TO LATE PICKUPS g. AVAILABLE TIMES DON'T MATCH REAL-LIFE NEEDS h. MEDICAID/INSURANCE WON'T FUND PARATRANSIT FOR RECREATION OR SOCIALIZING
III. LACK OF RURAL TRANSPORTATION: 14.74%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. NO TNC AVAILABLE b. EVEN IF TECHNICALLY ACTIVE IN AREA NO AVAILABLE DRIVERS c. NO TRANSPORTATION d. UNREASONABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION e. UNAFFORDABLE f. INCREASED ISOLATION
IV. SAFETY CONCERNS: 14.10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. LACK OF DRIVER TRAINING ON THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES b. VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS MAY NOT KNOW IF THEY'RE WAITING AT THE CORRECT LOCATION c. VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS MAY NOT KNOW A DRIVER HAS ARRIVED d. FEARS OF BEING TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF e. FEARS OF BEING MISTREATED f. INDIVIDUALS WITH COMMUNICATION BARRIERS OF ALL KINDS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO DRIVERS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. MEMBERS OF THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY CAN BE VERY VULNERABLE h. THERE ARE STORIES OF TNC DRIVERS SEXUALLY ASSAULTING RIDERS i. TNC NAVIGATION MAY EXACERBATE MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS FOR SOME RIDERS j. TNC MAY BE DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE FOR INDIVIDUALS IN RECOVERY k. PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ARE CONCERNED ABOUT VULNERABILITY
<p>V. ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT: 10.90%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. TNCs HAVE RESISTED ACCESSIBILITY b. ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS WERE RAISED PRIOR TO TNC IMPLEMENTATION BUT WERE NOT ADDRESSED c. NYS HAS FAILED THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY BY NOT HOLDING TNCs ACCOUNTABLE d. TNC INTRODUCTION HAS LED TO A REDUCTION IN OVERALL ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS IN SOME AREAS e. COMMUNICATING WITH AN ACTUAL PERSON AT TNCs SHOULD BE EASIER
<p>VI. APP ACCESSIBILITY: 9.62%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. VOICEOVER TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE IMPROVED b. CREDIT CARD REQUIREMENT REDUCES ACCESSIBILITY c. SMARTPHONE REQUIREMENT REDUCES ACCESSIBILITY d. IMPROVE ALERTS AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS e. APPS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH OPTIONS TO ALERT DRIVERS ABOUT POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATION NEEDS
<p>VII. SERVICE ANIMAL: 6.41%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. LACK OF DRIVER DISABILITY TRAINING b. ADA NON-COMPLIANCE c. RIDE REFUSALS d. CLEANING FEES e. RIDE SWITCHING
<p>VIII. AFFORDABILITY: 5.13%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. HARD TO PROJECT SURGE PRICING b. TNC MAY BE COST PROHIBITIVE TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES c. NO OPTION TO USE MEDICAID OR OTHER INSURANCE OPTIONS

	<p>d. ONLY ONE OPTION FOR TNC RIDE PAYMENTS</p>
<p>IX. FORUM ACCESSIBILITY: 1.92%</p>	<p>a. LOCATIONS WERE NOT EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION</p> <p>b. SOME FORUM PARTICIPANTS HAD TO TRAVEL LONG DISTANCES</p> <p>c. LACK OF ACCESSIBLE PARKING OPTIONS FOR FORUMS</p>

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY

Concerns about the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles were common throughout the state. In general, commenters feel there is a lack of TNC wheelchair accessible vehicles. This was identified as particularly concerning for those using motorized wheelchairs as they cannot be folded and stored in a non-modified vehicle. Respondents shared stories of rides being canceled, refused, long wait times, or simply being unavailable. There were concerns discussed about TNC driver training to ensure that wheelchairs are stored properly, and that drivers have the ability to communicate with riders in a positive way about accommodations that may be required. Concerns about TNC accessibility were often combined with comments pertaining to local paratransit services being unreliable, overly costly, and inconvenient to utilize. As an example, please see the full comment below, submitted by a wheelchair user from Mt. Vernon.

“I am submitting comments on TNC's lack of accessible options in New York State. I am a 34-year-old man with Muscular Dystrophy who uses a motorized wheelchair for mobility. I currently live in Mount Vernon, NY. On November 15th I went to the dentist for a dental cleaning, about a mile away from my house. As the weather seemed good, I decided to roll myself over, accompanied by my live-in aide; a journey which went without incident. I arrived at the dentist about 2 PM. The dentist is located at the Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Health Center, where my primary care physician is also located. I had to get a release from my doctor to see the dentist, which took about an hour and a half. At this point, it had started to snow and I was anxious to get home. The dental hygienist took about half an hour to clean my teeth, and by 4 PM I was ready to go home. The snow was pretty heavy at this point, but I managed to get to the bus stop, along with my aide, the bus being my only option to get home. However, as I waited for the bus, the snow piled up more and more and cars were beginning to skid on the road. Afraid for my safety, I returned back to the Health Center. As I knew that there are no accessible taxis in Mt. Vernon, nor accessible vehicles from TNCs, I felt that I had no choice but to call an ambulance. However, when I called 911 I was told that my situation wasn't an emergency. I had to tell them I was having a panic attack for them to come over. Once at the Health Center I was informed by the EMTs that they couldn't bring me straight home, but had to bring me to the ER first, even though I live about 2 blocks from the hospital. I also had to leave my wheelchair at the Health Center. I waited in the ER until about 4 in the morning, when another ambulance was finally available. Luckily, I have a backup wheelchair at home, so I was able to use it the next day, until my aide was able to go retrieve the wheelchair.

My ordeal underscores the need for on demand transportation for the disabled during an emergency. It was a waste of resources and time for the EMTs and hospital workers, when they were needed to deal with the emergency of the freak November snowstorm that paralyzed the

Tri-State Area. It is true that I could have used an ambulette to get back and forth from my appointment, but I cherish my independence, and do not want to rely on transportation which is often unreliable.”

ACCESSIBILITY FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired and their advocates acknowledge that TNCs have resulted in more direct point-to-point transportation options, but this increased availability has not come without difficulties. There was also concern expressed about the accessibility of the mobile apps used by TNCs. There were many comments focused on utilizing voiceover options which often results in navigation difficulties. Riders shared concerns about their safety, as they cannot see where they are being dropped off. This is a safety concern as they may be dropped off in the wrong place and not know it, or be dropped in an unsafe location. A similar concern for visually impaired riders is that they may not know when a TNC ride arrives. If the app or the driver does not alert the rider they have arrived, they have no way to know, and can often miss the ride, causing delays and inconvenience for both parties. See the personal story below we received from an individual with a visual impairment. (*Story has been lightly edited for clarity.*)

“Monday night around 6:20PM I had a pick up at the Jamaica train station. I had help from a person who worked for the station. When we got outside I used the Uber app to call for a car. Uber driver came and went around the block twice then called me on the phone and asked where I was. I said I am outside in front of the station building. He just canceled the ride and I got message. I requested another ride and the same guy came. He called and said, “I can't pick you up in front of building.” I had to go around the block with help to get into the Uber car. When I got home I got an email from Uber telling me that I was charged a \$5 cancellation fee and was charged \$32 dollars for the ride home. It took about 2 hours to figure out how to send a note to Uber to ask for a refund for the \$5. I did get a refund.

Over past week I had problem when using UberCab where I am blind because I can't see the Uber car when they come and get charged a waiting fee. If you don't get into Uber before 1 minute then they start charging waiting time. It would be nice if Uber had a phone number to call for help. It is not easy using screen reader on some parts of Website.”

RIDERS WITH SERVICE ANIMALS

Comments pertaining to TNC usage and service animals came up in each forum, and were dually cited via the TNC mailbox. Stories of ride refusals, inappropriate cleaning fees, and a general lack of understanding among TNC drivers that it is illegal to refuse a ride to an individual with a service animal, were prevalent. One rider shared a story of standing in front of a TNC driver who attempted to refuse a ride, and informed the driver that it was illegal. See anecdotes from his story below.

“As a person who uses a guide dog, there is this fear of denial because of my well-behaved guide dog whenever booking a Lyft. Thankfully, I have been quite lucky, and only had one attempt from one driver to refuse us a ride to work. It took a couple of minutes of arguing back and forth, with my hand firmly placed on the hood of the vehicle; not letting go until we were going to be driven to work by this particular driver. Once we were in and on our way, this presented a nearly 20-minute opportunity to educate the driver who didn't know the laws, while also explaining that most service animals are in fact very well behaved. It was readily apparent this driver came from a part of the world where dogs are not welcomed and treated poorly.

Despite the bad beginning, all ended well. Just before we got out of the car, I encouraged the driver to reach back and pet my dog on the head, just to reassure service animals are very well behaved. To report, or not to report; that was the question. After explaining the situation to some objective co-workers, I decided to give him a 4-star rating in the hopes of this would be a learning opportunity, which should be used with other riders with service animals.”

ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

Accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments was not very common. The TNC app platforms make text communication with drivers relatively reliable, and the app functions do not require the use of audio responses.

GENERAL TNC CONCERNS

The Task Force received many comments and concerns that were not disability specific. There was general concern about the lack of disability training and education for drivers. While both Uber and Lyft have non-discrimination policies, the driver simply needs to attest to an understanding of anti-discrimination policy and practice, unless performing an accessibility specific role such as UberWAV, in which case disability training by a third party is mandatory.

The Task Force also received comments about vulnerable populations utilizing TNC ride services. People expressed concerns about a rider being mistreated or taken advantage of due to barriers related to disability. One example is that individuals facing communication barriers may find it difficult to advocate for themselves while utilizing a TNC. There were also stories shared of purported price gouging, and route manipulation to increase the total cost of the ride.

Moreover, to utilize TNC services, a general assumption is that rider is required to have a smart phone and a credit card. This is perceived as a barrier because not all individuals with disabilities have access to a smart phone, and many also do not have access to a credit card. However, see the TNC accessibility section for other payment options that people may not be aware of. These concerns are exacerbated by a general concern about TNC affordability and the inability to predict surge pricing.

Many individual responses indicated that TNCs have continuously fought against improving accessibility options for riders with disabilities, and were critical of New York State for not addressing accessibility concerns prior giving TNC's approval to operate in NYS. Respondents who have filed complaints or grievances through a TNC express that, while refunds have been processed and returned, attempts to communicate with a live person have been unsuccessful.

The Task Force received many comments and concerns that, while not TNC specific, are related to the larger transportation issues that challenge individuals with disabilities in New York State. The ongoing lack of rural transportation options involves paratransit, public transportation authorities, and TNC availability. Respondents expressed that, even if a TNC is technically permitted to operate in each area, there may not be enough drivers to make TNC usage a viable option.

Summary of Potential Solutions Offered by NYS Constituents

Responses were gathered during the public forums and gathered via e-mail. A total count of 80 proposed solutions have been consolidated into major categories, as outlined in Chart 2. For details and a verbal representation of the consolidated categories please see Table 2.

CHART 2: THIS CHART GRAPHICALLY DISPLAYS A PERCENTAGE OF THE MOST COMMON PROPOSED SOLUTION TYPES PER CONSOLIDATED CATEGORY. FOR TEXTUAL REPRESENTATION, SEE TABLE 2.

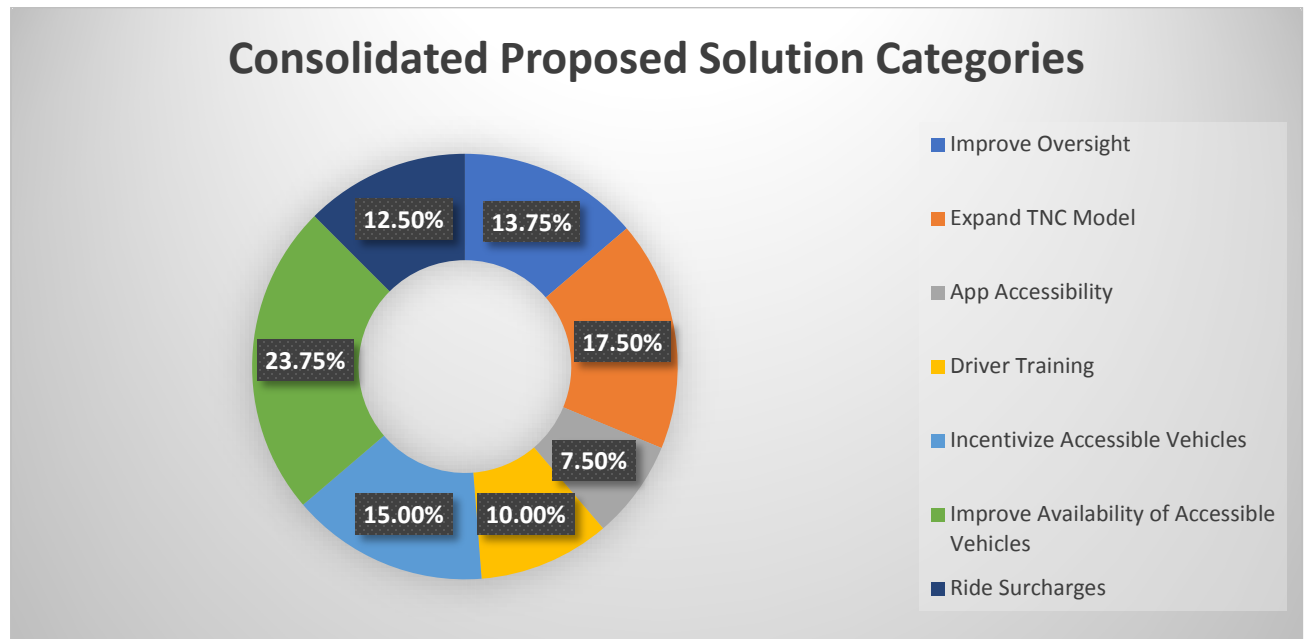


TABLE 2: THIS TABLE DESCRIBES A SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SOLUTIONS GROUPED BY CATEGORY AS VOICED BY NYS CONSTITUENTS. COLUMN ONE DESCRIBES THE CATEGORY AND ASSOCIATED PERCENTAGE, WHILE COLUMN TWO CONTAINS EXAMPLES OF MORE SPECIFIC COMMENTS PER CATEGORY.

CATEGORY	DETAILED COMMENTS
I. EXPAND TNC MODEL: 17.50%	<p>a. EXPAND PAYMENT OPTIONS TO INCLUDE MEDICAID/HEALTH INSURANCE</p> <p>b. EXPAND PAYMENT OPTIONS BEYOND CREDIT CARDS</p> <p>c. SUBSIDIZE TNC TRANSPORTATION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES</p> <p>d. ALLOW DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS/CARE MANAGERS TO SCHEDULE RIDES FOR RECIPIENTS</p>
II. IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT TO IMPROVE ADA COMPLIANCE: 13.75%	<p>a. ENSURE ADA COMPLIANCE</p> <p>b. FORMALIZE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES OVERSEEN BY AN EXTERNAL BODY</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. ESTABLISH PENALTIES FOR LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY d. ESTABLISH A TNC REVIEW BOARD e. ESTABLISH LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT BY COMMITTEE f. ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS FOR TNC ACCESSIBILITY g. UTILIZE NEW YORK DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO OVERSEE COMPLAINT PROCESS
<p>III. INCENTIVE ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES: 13.75%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. INCENTIVIZE TNC ACCESSIBILITY MODIFICATIONS b. CREATE FUNDING SOLUTIONS FOR ACCESSIBILITY MODIFICATIONS c. FREE OR LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR TNC DRIVERS TO PURCHASE OR MODIFY ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES d. TAX CREDITS FOR TNC DRIVERS WITH ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES e. PURSUE OTHER FUNDING OPTIONS FOR TNCs TO INVEST IN ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES
<p>IV. RIDE SURCHARGE: 12.50%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ADD A PER RIDE SURCHARGE TO CREATE FUNDING SOLUTIONS FOR TNC ACCESSIBILITY b. ADD A STATE TAX TO CREATE FUNDING SOLUTIONS FOR TNC ACCESSIBILITY
<p>V. IMPROVE AVAILABILITY OF ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES: 23.75%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ESTABLISH ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE PERCENTAGE TARGETS FOR TNC FLEETS b. LEGISLATE ACCESSIBLE PERCENTAGES FOR TNC FLEETS c. ESTABLISH WAIT-TIME TARGETS FOR TNC ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES d. TNCs COLLABORATE WITH EXISTING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS e. TNCs COLLABORATE WITH HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS f. RECRUIT QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO BE DRIVERS g. IMPROVE RURAL ACCESS
<p>VI. DRIVER TRAINING: 10.00%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. REQUIRE DISABILITY TRAINING FOR TNC DRIVERS b. IMPROVE DRIVER DISABILITY TRAINING FOR TNC DRIVERS c. ENSURE COMPREHENSIVE DRIVER DISABILITY TRAINING COVERS ALL

	<p>DISABILITY TYPES INCLUDING PHYSICAL DISABILITIES, VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS, HEARING IMPAIRMENTS, COMMUNICATION BARRIERS, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</p>
<p>VII. APP ACCESSIBILITY: 7.50%</p>	<p>a. ADD OPTION TO ALERT TNC DRIVER THAT A PERSON HAS A DISABILITY AND POTENTIAL ACCOMMODATION NEEDS</p> <p>b. ADD OPTION TO ALERT VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUAL THAT A RIDE HAS ARRIVED</p> <p>c. IMPROVE VOICEOVER TECHNOLOGY</p>

Final Taskforce Recommendations for TNCs

- I. Accountability and Oversight to Improve Accessibility of TNCs in New York
 - a. The New York State Division of Human Rights will continue to handle all complaints to ensure immediate concerns are addressed promptly.
 - b. TNCs should review their policies and procedures to ensure riders are aware of and have access to how they can offer comments or complaints to NYS DHR.
- II. Improve Availability of Accessible Vehicles
 - a. By April of 2019 TNCs will begin work with regional subject matter experts, including persons with disabilities, to develop a plan to establish average wait-times for accessible TNC vehicles, taking into account geographic characteristics related to the overall availability of transportation options. When setting wait times in regions, TNCs should seek to have wait times for accessible vehicles that are comparable to that of wait times for other passengers that should not exceed 2.5 times that of other riders. TNCs should seek to begin implementation of any such plan to begin by February of 2020, and will be fully operational by February of 2021.
 - b. During this planning process, TNCs are encouraged to expand the availability of TNC vehicles in rural areas throughout the state, which will include the availability of accessible vehicles, if possible.
- III. Incentivize Accessible Vehicles
 - a. TNCs are recommended to explore additional methods, including additional driver recruitment and compensation, to incentivize owners of accessible vehicles to become TNC drivers, including drivers who already own accessible vehicles in order to meet their own needs or the needs of family members
- IV. Driver Education
 - a. TNCs will make available to all drivers a disability education program that includes essential information about the nature of specific disability types, including, but not limited to, physical, cognitive, and mental health disabilities, as well as visual impairments, hearing impairments, and/or communication barriers. TNCs could accomplish this goal by partnering with New York State based disability advocacy groups through the regional planning process to develop a comprehensive curriculum.

Additionally, TNCs will educate drivers about their anti-discrimination policies as part of the onboarding process.

- V. Application Accessibility
 - a. TNCs will utilize their education components to ensure that current and future mobile and web-based application accessibility tools are made apparent to the disability community.
 - b. TNCs will explore how to increase the utilization of the messaging and calling functions that already exist within the apps to ensure individuals with disabilities have an option to communicate specific accommodation needs to drivers.
- VI. Expand TNC Model Payment Options
 - a. Both Uber and Lyft have web based portals through which organizations can create corporate accounts. Through these accounts rides can be scheduled in advance or be requested on demand. The accounts are managed through the web portal and do not require direct action from the rider. Riders who have access to a smartphone can receive notifications and ride details. Like app accessibility, TNCs will explore ways to better market the diverse payment options available to riders. Collaborating with statewide advocacy organizations is recommended in rolling out this marketing.
 - b. When accessibility of the TNC model is successfully implemented, there is value in expanding the service to other markets. For example, during the listening sessions, repeated concerns about the implementation of Medicaid Transportation services across NYS were presented. Vehicles are frequently late (sometimes to such a great extent that the appointment is missed entirely). It is recommended that TNCs work with state entities to identify ways in which TNC services can be implemented as part of the current medical transportation structure, including the modification of the Federal Medicaid plan or associated waivers, if necessary.

Final Taskforce Recommendations for State Government

- I. The New York State Legislature should consider establishing an official governing entity to provide ongoing oversight of TNCs operating in New York state. This will ensure the highest level of accessibility compliance and will help address ongoing concerns related to the accessibility of TNCs. See *Table 2, Section II*, for the different types of recommendations grouped in this category.
- II. The New York State legislature should explore creative ways to provide incentives to increase the number of accessible TNC vehicles statewide. For example, potential TNC drivers could be incentivized through tax breaks or access to low interest loans for the purchase and/or modification of accessible vehicles. This type of proposed solution would also be grouped in *Table 2, Section III*.
- III. As part of the broader supports and services offered by New York State to individuals with disabilities, there are accessible vehicles already in use for other purposes in communities across the state. These vehicles could be incentivized to participate in the TNC model if permitted to do so within the current regulatory and legislative framework. Comments focused on the need to find creative ways to bring more of these existing accessible vehicles into the TNC fleets, which would increase the availability of accessible vehicles to the disabled community. In *Table 2*, this type of proposed solution could be categorized in *Section III, Incentivize Accessible Vehicles*.

Appendix A: PRESS RELEASE



**Department of
Motor Vehicles**

**Office of
Mental Health**

**Department of
Transportation**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Contact:

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**NEW YORK STATE ANNOUNCES PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS TO STUDY
ACCESSIBLE RIDE SHARING SERVICES FOR CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES**

***Listening Sessions to be Held in Capital Region, Central New York, Mid-Hudson,
Long Island, and Western New York Regions***

***Written Comments May Be Submitted to TNCTaskforce@dmv.ny.gov By
December 18, 2018***

Pre-Registration Available [here](#)

The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force today announced that five public listening sessions will be held across the state to examine the availability of accessible ride sharing services for people with disabilities. Through these listening sessions, the Task Force will analyze current service options, the need and demand for accessible services, and identify opportunities and barriers to increasing these options for customers with disabilities.

The Task Force was established through [legislation](#) passed last year to bring ride sharing services to Upstate New York and Long Island. Members of the Task Force include representatives from organizations that serve people with disabilities and representatives from transportation network companies such as Uber or Lyft.

“The law authorizing transportation network companies has provided an alternative, safe transportation option to people across this state,” **said Betty DeFazio, Task Force**

Co-Chair and Chief Development Officer at ARISE CNY. “This Task Force will help ensure that this vital ride sharing system is meeting the needs of every passenger, especially those who may need it most.”

“The focus of this Task Force is making sure that all New Yorkers, no matter what their needs may be, have adequate access to reliable transportation,” **said Frank Krotschinsky, Task Force Co-Chair and Director of Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities.** “I am proud to serve as Co-Chair of this group, and I look forward to leading meaningful discussions that will help us navigate this important area of the ride sharing industry.”

The public listening sessions are scheduled as follows:

November 27, 2018

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Knights of Columbus
261 S. Legion Drive
Buffalo, NY 14220

November 28, 2018

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
NYS Fairgrounds- Martha Eddy Room
581 State Fair Boulevard
Syracuse, NY 13209

November 30, 2018

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Westchester County Center
198 Central Ave.
White Plains, NY 10606

December 11, 2018

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Empire State Plaza Convention Center
Meeting Rooms 2-3
Albany, NY 12242

December 18, 2018

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Moose Lodge
631 Pulaski Road
Greenlawn, NY 11740

Each session will begin with a brief presentation from the members of the Task Force. Following the presentation, interested parties will be invited to provide their feedback on ride sharing services for people with disabilities.

To submit written comments, email TNCTaskforce@dmv.ny.gov by December 18, 2018. To register, visit <https://www.flexbooker.com/widget/2cdff9ef-c16f-47d1-887f-152c276de836>.

The law authorizing transportation network company (TNC) operation, which took effect June 29, 2017, extended ride sharing statewide. Previously, ride sharing services were only available to travelers in New York City. The law also resulted in protections for passengers and regulations for how TNCs may operate and be licensed. More information for passengers, applicants, drivers and local governments is available on the NYS DMV website at <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/rideshare-information>.

APPENDIX B: LEGISLATION

Section 21 of Part AAA of Chapter 59 of 2017 Created the TNC Accessibility Task Force:

§ 21. 1. For purposes of this section, transportation network company shall mean a transportation network company as defined by article forty-four-B of the vehicle and traffic law.

2. There is hereby established the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force to analyze and advise on how to maximize effective and integrated transportation services for persons with disabilities in the transportation network company market. The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall consist of eleven members. Two members of the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly. Two members of the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall be appointed by the temporary president of the senate. Seven members of the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall be appointed by the governor and shall include, but not be limited to, two representatives of groups who serve persons with disabilities and two representatives from a transportation network company. The governor shall designate two chairpersons to the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force.

3. The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall study the demand responsive transportation marketplace and shall, in addition to any responsibilities assigned by the governor: (a) conduct a needs assessment concerning the demand for demand responsive accessible transportation; (b) conduct a resource assessment concerning the availability of accessible demand responsive transportation services for persons with disabilities; (c) identify opportunities for, and barriers to, increasing accessible demand responsive transportation service for persons with mobility disabilities; (d) propose strategies for increasing accessible demand responsive transportation service for persons with disabilities; and (e) any other issues determined important to the task force in establishing a recommendation pursuant to subdivision five of this section.

4. The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall hold public hearings and provide an opportunity for public comment on the activities described in subdivision two of this section.

5. The New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall complete a report addressing the activities described in subdivision two of this section and make a recommendation, supported by such activities, recommending the amount of accessibility necessary for adequate transportation for disabled passengers in order to utilize such services and present such findings at a public meeting where its members shall accept such report, pursuant to majority vote of the task force, and present such report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate, and make such report publicly available for review on or before January first, two thousand nineteen.

6. Upon making the report described in subdivision five of this section, the New York State Transportation Network Company Accessibility Task Force shall be deemed dissolved.