SouthWest Transit’s Microtransit Service
Who We Are

- Public Transportation serving southwestern suburbs of Minneapolis: Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, Carver, and Victoria
- Over 1,000,000 rides annually
  - 80% Fixed Route
  - 10% Microtransit
  - 10% Special Events
- Large majority of ridership is park and ride express trips to/from downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota
- Multiple Real Estate holdings
  - First suburban TOD in the region
- State and National award winner
- Motto - “Expect the Best”
WHAT IS SW PRIME?

First of its kind shared ride microtransit service in Minnesota. Service began operating in 2015.

The general public can request a ride **on demand** only. No advanced scheduling.

Curb-to-curb service.

Serving Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Chaska, Victoria and Carver (Southdale Transit Center on Saturdays).

Scheduling software (Spare) used to book and route the rides.
WHY PRIME?

Need for a lower cost local service option.

Prior attempts at traditional circulators/demand-response services were cost prohibitive.

Increase in demand for first mile/last mile services.

Need for local service with minimal support staff.

Technology evolution.

Tech-savvy service area population.

Long track record of service innovation.

Willingness to take a risk (Political Champions).
How do I book a PRIME ride?

1. By Phone
2. Using your app
   - Rides booked within 20 seconds.
   - Rides are confirmed automatically via SMS message.
   - Track vehicle location live using the app.
   - Notifications sent automatically upon vehicle arrival.
Prime Performance
September 2019

- Average Ride Time: 9.43 minutes
- Average Wait Time: 17.14 minutes
- Average Daily Riders: 409
- Passengers Per In-Service Hour: 2.93
- Peak Buses Used: 14
- Avg Subsidy Per Passenger: $8.63
- Ride Booking Method
  - 65% Online
  - 35% Phone
Lessons Learned

- The Algorithm Is Important
  - Suburban vs. Urban
  - One size does not fit all
- Service Area - Don’t Be Too Restrictive
- Operating On-Demand and Scheduled Rides Together Can Be Problematic
- Administration
  - Increased negative customer interactions has led to increased admin staff time
  - Less staff required compared to traditional Dial-a-Ride
  - Ensure proper fraud protections are in place
- Ridership Demographics Are Similar to Dial-a-Ride
- Don’t let First Mile-Last Mile Be the Only Consideration
- Microtransit Can Be the Public Transit Form of TNCs (Depending On Service Area)
- Be Willing To Take Risks
  - Trial and error
  - Make changes on the fly