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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Offers First Ever Real-Time, On-Demand Service for Access-A-Ride Users

E-Hail App Pilot Launching This Month for 200 Riders, MTA Accelerates Development of Paratransit Unified Mobile App

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is advancing a number of technological initiatives to improve the experience for Paratransit customers, including the launch of a pilot program to provide the first ever on-demand e-hail trip bookings, GPS-based vehicle tracking and the accelerated development of a unified app for all Access-A-Ride services.

The e-hail app pilot, which launches this month, will allow Paratransit customers to electronically hail yellow or green taxicabs on demand, similar to popular on-demand ride services such as Uber, Lyft and others. Paratransit, which is a division of MTA New York City Transit's Department of Buses, has contracted Verifone to support the technological services required to disseminate trip requests to approximately 13,500 Taxi & Limousine Commission-licensed cabs throughout New York City. The New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission has also been a partner in developing and launching this program. The pilot will test the app with 200 Access-A-Ride (AAR) customers to gather feedback, with plans to expand the pool of users and ultimately to increase significantly the number of on-demand e-hail trips.

"We've been working hard to improve the quality of service and convenience for Paratransit riders, using advanced technologies from the private sector and incorporating feedback from our customers," said Patrick Foye, President of the MTA. "Real-time, on-demand, GPS-based trip booking and tracking will bring significant improvements to the Paratransit experience."

During the first phase of the pilot, half of the initial group of 200 customers will use a customized smartphone app to hail their rides either on-demand or to reserve a trip up to 24 hours in advance. The other volunteers will book their trips by calling a dedicated line at the Paratransit call center specifically for on-demand and same-day rides. Paratransit will collect customer feedback through surveys and focus groups.

In addition to testing the e-hail smartphone app, Paratransit is also accelerating the development of a single unified Paratransit app for release by mid-2018. The app would incorporate all aspects of customer service, from trip management such as scheduling rides and tracking vehicles to customer service such as giving feedback or updating account information. While Paratransit continues to develop this smartphone app, the existing Paratransit web portal is being updated to incorporate new customer service functions such as trip management and vehicle tracking with real-time Google Maps locators and continuous updates for estimated arrival times.

The e-hail on-demand pilot will launch to the initial group of 200 customers on Nov. 29. Access-a-Ride customers interested in participating in the next phase of the pilot program can contact Paratransit Customer Relations by writing or emailing to Paratransit through <https://mta-nyc.custhelp.com/app/ask> or calling 877-337-2017, option 8.

Paratransit began offering e-hail services in 2016, with passengers booking their trips one to two days in advance by phone or through the Paratransit website. Since that program launched, Access-A-Ride customers have made more than 122,500 e-hail trips and provided positive feedback ranging from the desire for increased travel options to real-time rescheduling and improved accountability through GPS tracking. By offering the new ability to book on-demand trips electronically via a smartphone app, Paratransit will be able to offer additional travel options and flexible scheduling to customers without making phone calls or accessing a web browser. The e-hail program also offers additional ease and convenience by only requiring transit fare as part of the ride, which is a significant improvement from the taxi authorization program, in which customers are authorized for a taxi trip and later reimbursed.

MTA New York City Transit's Paratransit Division provides around-the-clock origin to destination transportation for customers who cannot use fixed-route services such as buses or subways due to a medical condition. Personal care attendants accompanying Paratransit customers do not pay an additional fare.