

Subject: DES- Planning initiatives utilizing ride-sharing platforms

**FY 2018 Proposed Budget
Budget Work Session Follow-up**

4/10/2017

The following information is provided in response to a request made by Mr. John Vihstadt for the work session on 3/28/2017: Please describe current planning initiatives and exploration with respect to utilization of Uber, Lyft or other ride-sharing platforms to connect individuals in transit-poor neighborhoods with transit--whether bus or rail, as well as the potential for similar service to assist the elderly and disabled in a more cost-effective manner than Metro Access and STAR (while also ensuring safety and reliability).

Arlington's efforts are guided by the County Board adopted-Master Transportation Plan Transit Element as well as the 10-year Transit Development Plan (TDP). The most recently adopted TDP (July 2016) includes the potential introduction of flexible on-demand services (which could include partnerships with transportation network companies) as part of the County's transit network in the out years of the plan (FY 2026). The immediate focus for transit staff as outlined in the County Board approved plan is to secure the necessary facilities and fleet to allow ART to expand and to work with Metro over the next several years to restructure regional services with a particular focus on Columbia Pike, Pentagon City, and Crystal City/Potomac Yard. In addition, Arlington, along with other jurisdictions in the region, must focus on assisting Metro on rebuilding customer confidence and ridership in the aftermath of Safe Track. Arlington's Metrorail ridership is currently down 25% from the 2009 peak. With the current work program and Metro challenges, any substantive work on transportation network companies (TNCs) will occur in a future budget year.

It should also be noted that the Federal Department of Justice Office (DOJ) of Civil Rights has raised issues concerning the use of TNCs in public transit service provision with regard to customer accessibility and equity. Arlington staff met with DOJ representatives in February of this year at their request to discuss this topic.

Currently, STAR (Specialized Transit for Arlington Residents) is the paratransit component of Arlington Transit – ART. STAR serves Arlington residents who have difficulty using public fixed route transit due to the effects of age or disability. STAR is a shared ride paratransit service intended to provide a comparable level of transportation as provided by ART, Metrobus and Metrorail. STAR riders share trips if they are generally traveling in the same direction at the same time. Trips are scheduled, with a few exceptions, without regard to the purpose of the trip. All rides are arranged in advance through the STAR Call Center, or through STAR on the Web. STAR riders must preplan activities and schedule STAR trips in advance as same day service is generally not available.