Health Connector Procedures from Booking to Boarding

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency

January 24, 2024

Agenda

- ## Purpose of this Webinar
  - ☐ This webinar highlights the standard processes that will be used by HIRTA operations staff, drivers, travelers, and care facility employees when planning, booking, and providing Health Connector trips.

- ## Webinar Content
  - ☐ ITS4US Deployment Program Overview (*Mike Barry, FHWA*)
  - ☐ Health Connector Project Overview (*Brooke Ramsey, HIRTA*)
  - ☐ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for HIRTA Operations Staff *(Amber Falls, HIRTA)*
  - ☐ Differences in SOPs for Health Connector *(Rachel Birnbaum, Via)*
  - ☐ Traveler Process for using Health Connector *(Rachel Birnbaum, Via)*
  - ☐ SOPs for HIRTA Drivers *(Blake Hansen, HIRTA)*
  - ☐ SOPs for NEMT trips – now and later *(Brooke Ramsey, HIRTA)*
  - ☐ Using the Mobility on Demand (MOD)- Electronic Health Record (EHR) dashboard to track care facility trip needs *(Josh Albertson, Arcadis IBI Group)*
  - ☐ Q&A

- ## Webinar Protocol
  - ☐ Please mute your phone during the entire webinar.
  - ☐ You are welcome to ask questions via the chat box and Q&A section.
  - ☐ The webinar recording and the presentation material will be posted on the ITS4US website.

Source: Mike Barry

Mike Barry

Transportation Specialist, Site AOR

FHWA Office of Planning

U.S. Department of Transportation
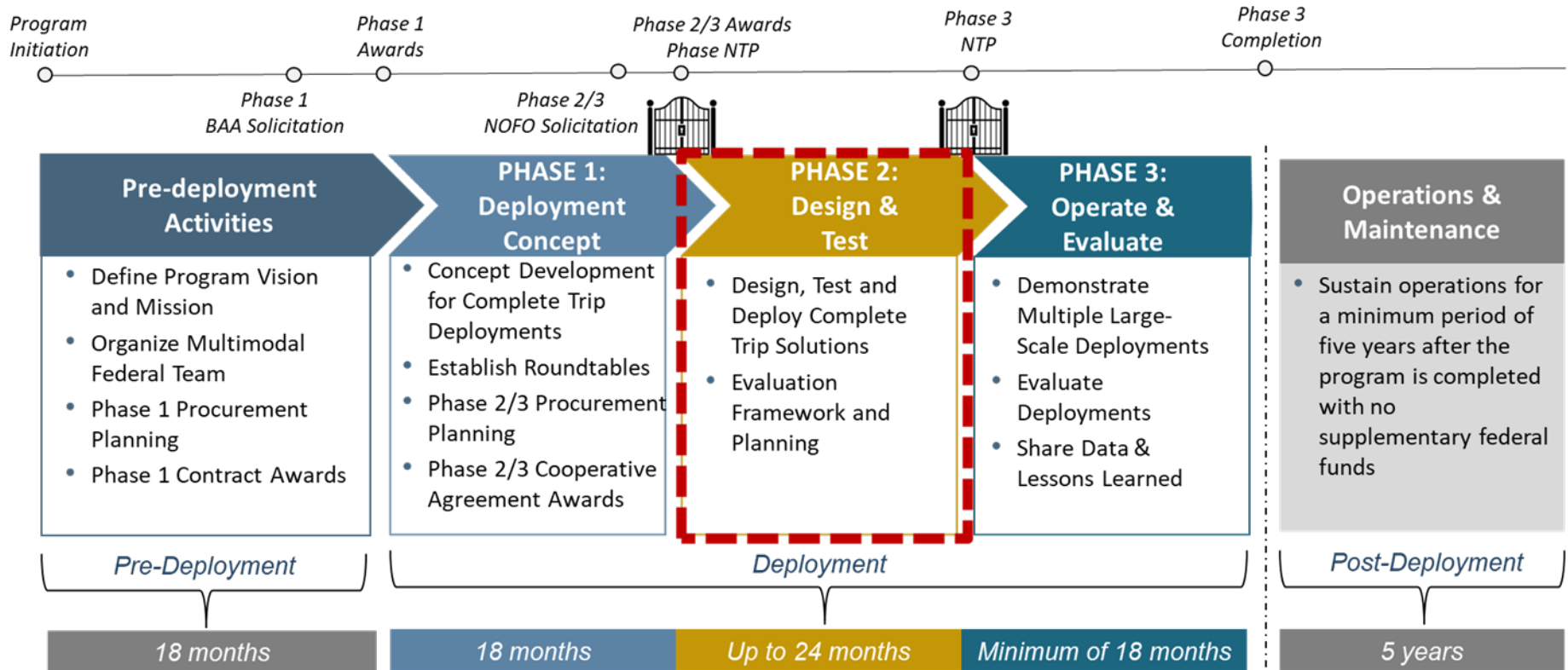ITS Joint Program Office

ITS4US Program Overview

- A USDOT Multimodal Deployment effort, led by ITS JPO and supported by OST, FHWA and FTA
- Supports multiple large-scale replicable deployments to address the challenges of planning and executing all segments of a complete trip
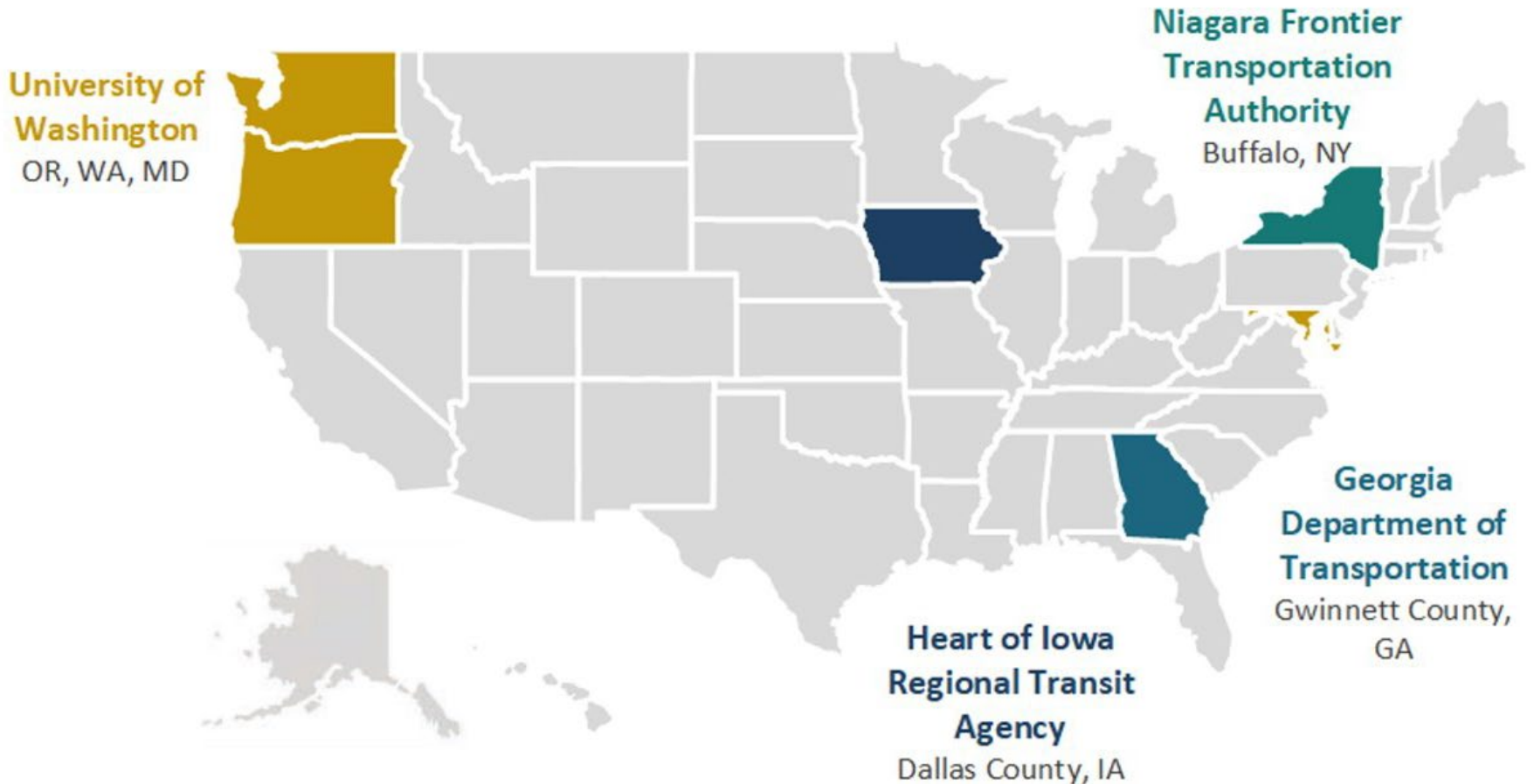
Vision: Innovative and integrated complete trip deployments to support seamless travel for all users across all modes, regardless of location, income, or disability

Deployment Phases

Source: USDOT

ITS4US Deployment Sites

University of Washington
OR, WA, MD

Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
Buffalo, NY

Georgia Department of Transportation
Gwinnett County, GA

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency
Dallas County, IA

Source: USDOT

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ITS4US Team Photo Collage

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Source: Brooke Ramsey

Brooke Ramsey

Project Management Lead

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency

Health Connector for the Most Vulnerable

- Deployment area: Dallas County, Iowa

- Implement a scalable and replicable solution enabling transportation access to healthcare for all underserved populations and their caregivers

  - Use advanced technologies to resolve barriers

- Include information and wayfinding services to guide each step of user's trip

- Provide enhanced access to healthcare options for all travelers in Dallas County, a mostly rural county

HIRTA and Dallas County Overview

- HIRTA provides demand response services to population in 7 county areas, including Dallas County

- Dallas County grew 36% in the last decade

- Coordination of medical transportation services for underserved is a major challenge

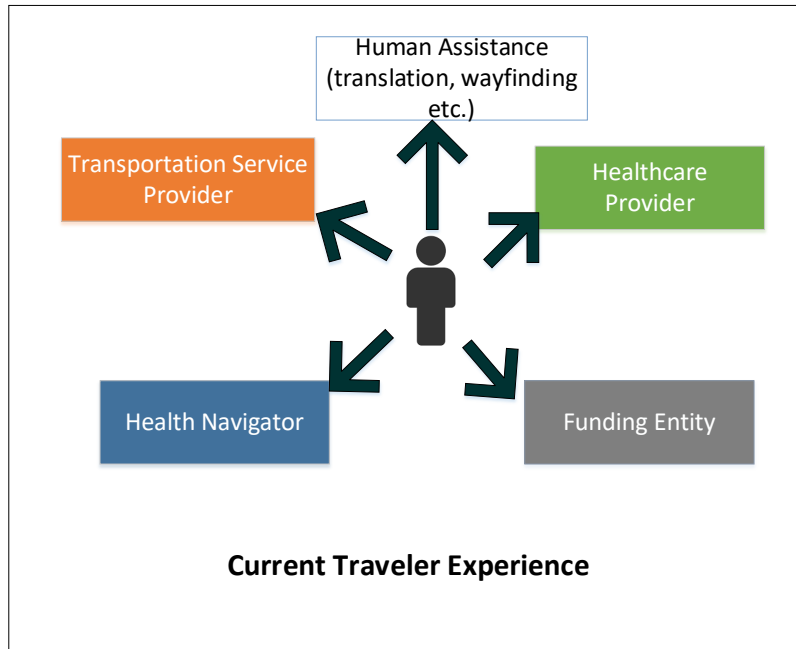# Dallas County Underserved Population
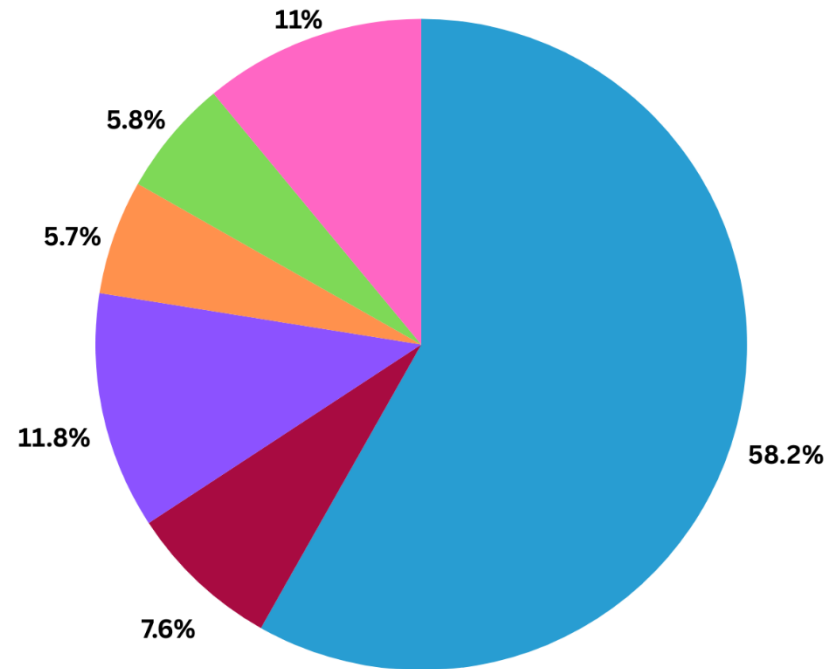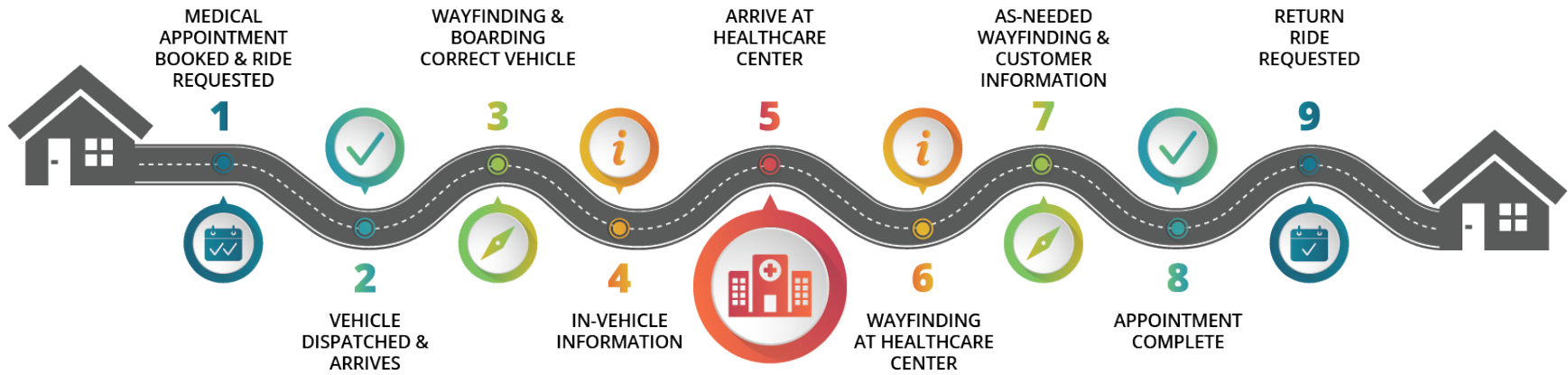

Source: HIRTA

High-Level Findings from Stakeholders

- Lack of awareness on transportation options

- Lack of integrated booking and trip management experience

- Limited capabilities in current modes to meet the needs of underserved

- Limited wayfinding capabilities

- Service management challenges with return trips

- Same-day and after-hours service issues

- Limited data sharing and reporting to measure the performance of healthcare transportation

System Vision

Source: HIRTA

Current Traveler Experience

Human Assistance (translation, wayfinding etc.)

Transportation Service Provider

Healthcare Provider

Health Navigator

Funding Entity

Future Traveler Experience

Translation, wayfinding, etc.

Transportation Service Provider

Healthcare Provider

Health Connector

Health Navigator

Funding Entity

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Concept Overview

1 — MEDICAL APPOINTMENT BOOKED & RIDE REQUESTED

2 — VEHICLE DISPATCHED & ARRIVES

3 — WAYFINDING & BOARDING CORRECT VEHICLE

4 — IN-VEHICLE INFORMATION

5 — ARRIVE AT HEALTHCARE CENTER

6 — WAYFINDING AT HEALTHCARE CENTER

7 — AS-NEEDED WAYFINDING & CUSTOMER INFORMATION

8 — APPOINTMENT COMPLETE

9 — RETURN RIDE REQUESTED

Source: HIRTA

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Source: Amber Falls

Amber Falls

Communications Manager

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency

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Call Center Management

Status	IDLE	Status	ONCALL	Status	BUSY	Status	IDLE
Busy Reason		Busy Reason		Busy Reason	Call On Hold	Busy Reason	
Calls Missed	0	Calls Missed	2	Calls Missed	0	Calls Missed	1
Time In Status	00:07:42	Time In Status	00:07:57	Time In Status	00:01:17	Time In Status	00:01:46
Occupancy	5%	Occupancy	7%	Occupancy	9%	Occupancy	13%
Length Of Call	00:00:00	Length Of Call	00:07:57	Length Of Call	00:00:00	Length Of Call	00:00:00
Avg. Time to Answer	00:00:18	Avg. Time to Answer	00:00:08	Avg. Time to Answer	00:00:05	Avg. Time to Answer	00:00:05
Calls Serviced	12	Calls Serviced	18	Calls Serviced	17	Calls Serviced	11

Queue History: CustServ — Total Calls Received, Total Calls Serviced

Multi-Agent History: Total Calls Serviced

Queue History: CustServ — Avg. Wait Time, Max. Wait Time

Multi-Agent History: Avg. Time Serviced
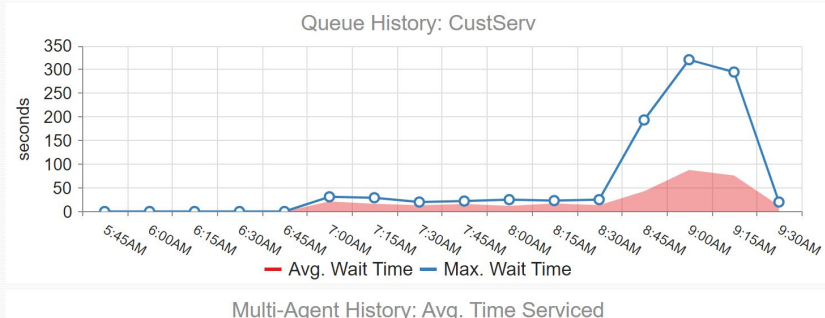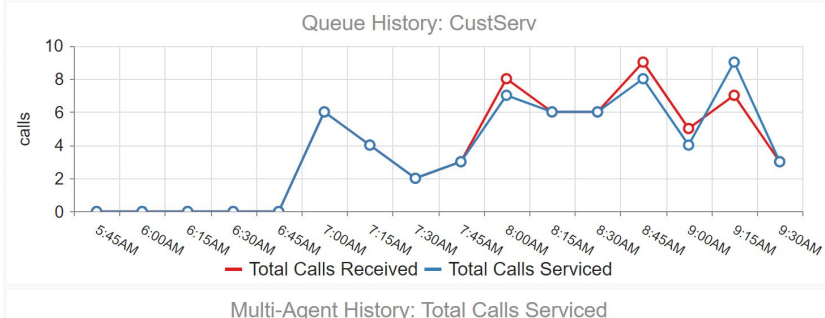
Source: HIRTA's phone system

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - □ Communications Manager
- **Procedure**
  - □ Ensure lines of communication are open and in-service during business hours
  - □ Ensure office equipment is in working order at each workstation
  - □ Ensure call center is staffed to effectively handle all general daily operations
  - □ Provide oversight and assistance to call center staff as needed
  - □ Monitor, review, & maintain logs of call center productivity

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Customer Service

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - Scheduling/dispatching staff
- **Procedure**
  - Call/email processing
    - Toll-free customer service line and emails answered first come, first served.
  - Language barrier
    - Spanish speaking callers may be forwarded to internal bi-lingual representative
      - Other languages may be received through Language Link Service
  - Complaints
    - Documentation of issues and steps to address them
  - Abusive/offensive language
    - Addressing inappropriate language with caller and requesting respectful communication

Registration & Eligibility Management

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - Scheduling/Dispatching staff
- **Procedure**
  - Creating a New Rider
    - Complete each account section as needed
      - Ex. Identify rider as NEMT, emergency contact, disabilities, Medicaid eligibility

Source: Via

Scheduling

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - Scheduling/Dispatching staff
- **Procedure**
  - TMS Login
  - Reservation Submission
  - Booking
  - Pending Reservations

Photo: 'Book a Ride' Screen on the MOD TMS Platform

Reservations

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - Scheduling/Dispatching staff
- **Procedure**
  - Reservations Management
    - Review and manage past/upcoming reservations within the rider management module
    - Changes or cancellations for upcoming reservations are made here

Source: HIRTA On-Demand

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Dispatching

- **Responsible Person(s)**
  - Scheduling/Dispatching staff
  - Driver staff
- **Procedure**
  - Real-Time Monitoring
    - Ride Plan is monitored throughout day and delays or conflicts are addressed as needed
  - Manual Trip Status Updates
    - In the event a driver is not able to process a trip as needed from tablet, staff can change ride status
  - Shift Adjustments
    - To adjust any driver's shift
  - Dispatch/Driver Communications
    - Using radio to communicate general updates or concerns during daily operations

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Source: Rachel Birnbaum

Rachel Birnbaum

Mobility on Demand Lead

Via

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What's Changing for Health Connector

Expanded Access to the Transportation Management System for Health Care Providers and Health Navigators

Affected SOPs: Reservation, Customer Service, Scheduling, Reservations

Third-Party Drivers

Affected SOPs: Scheduling, Dispatching

TMS Functions for Health Navigators

Same Functionality

- Ability to book/modify trips and return trips
- Confirm trip status

New Functionality

- Can book trips without involvement of HIRTA staff
- Access to medical appointment data and transportation services as relevant to travelers

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Third-Party Drivers

Same Functionality

- Driver application functions
- Trip assignment

New Functionality

- Expanded pool of eligible drivers
- Ability to assign trips outside of normal operating hours

Traveler Process for Using Health Connector

Traveler Application Process

- Both Via web and phone application will prompt account registration
  - Traveler can input accessibility preferences as needed

Source: HIRTA On-Demand

Traveler Process for Using Health Connector (cont.)

Traveler Application Process
- Traveler inputs trip origin, destination, and number of passengers
- Application provides traveler with route, estimated pickup time, and cost of trip
- To confirm booking, click "Book a Ride"
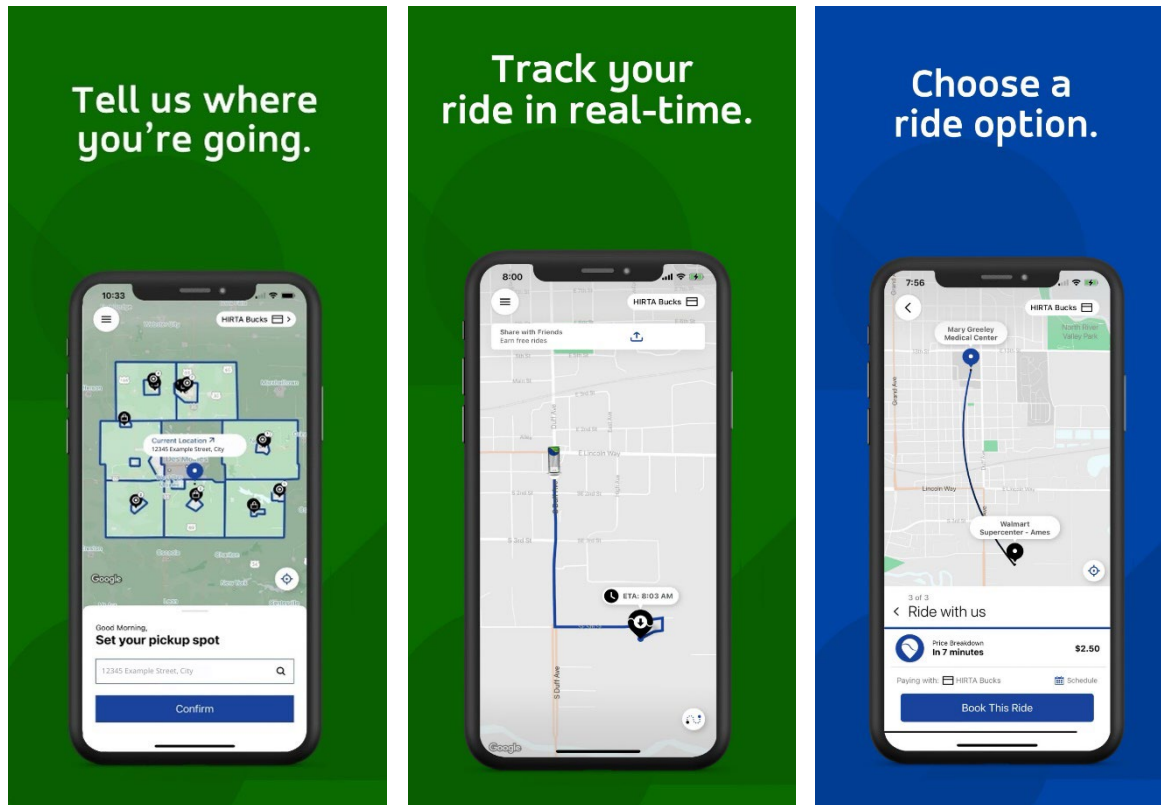
Source: HIRTA On-Demand

Health Connector vs. Regular Service for Travelers

Health Connector Highlights
- Gives travelers a more streamlined experience for mobility and healthcare needs
- Complete trip emphasis
- Added flexibility when booking

Regular Service

- Trips booked by calling HIRTA (1-14 days in advance)

Health Connector Service

- Ability to book trips on demand
- Healthcare resources directly linked in Traveler app
- Coordinate with Health Navigators to book trips

Source: Blake Hansen

Blake Hansen

Operations Manager

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency

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Logging On/Starting Shift
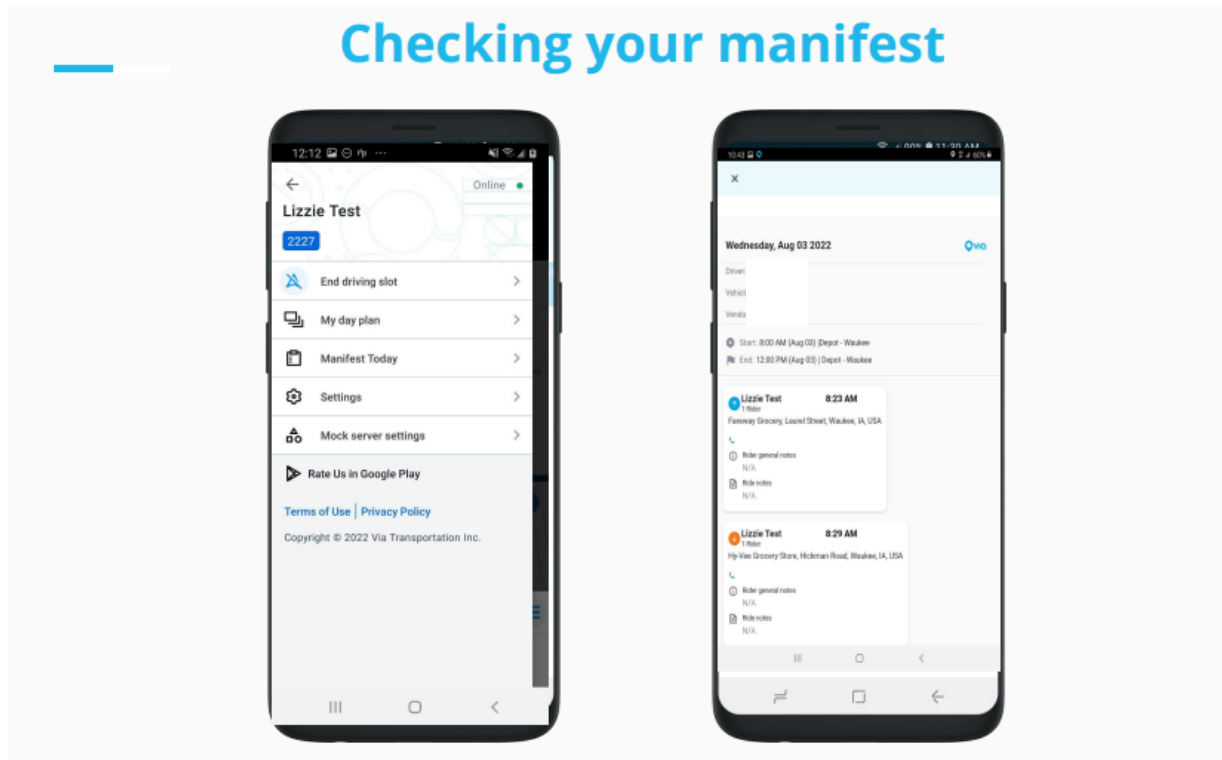
- **Procedures**
  - Complete vehicle pre- and post-trip inspections as required
  - Prepare and submit vehicle inspection report
  - Operate transit vehicle while in strict compliance with HIRTA policies

Source: Via

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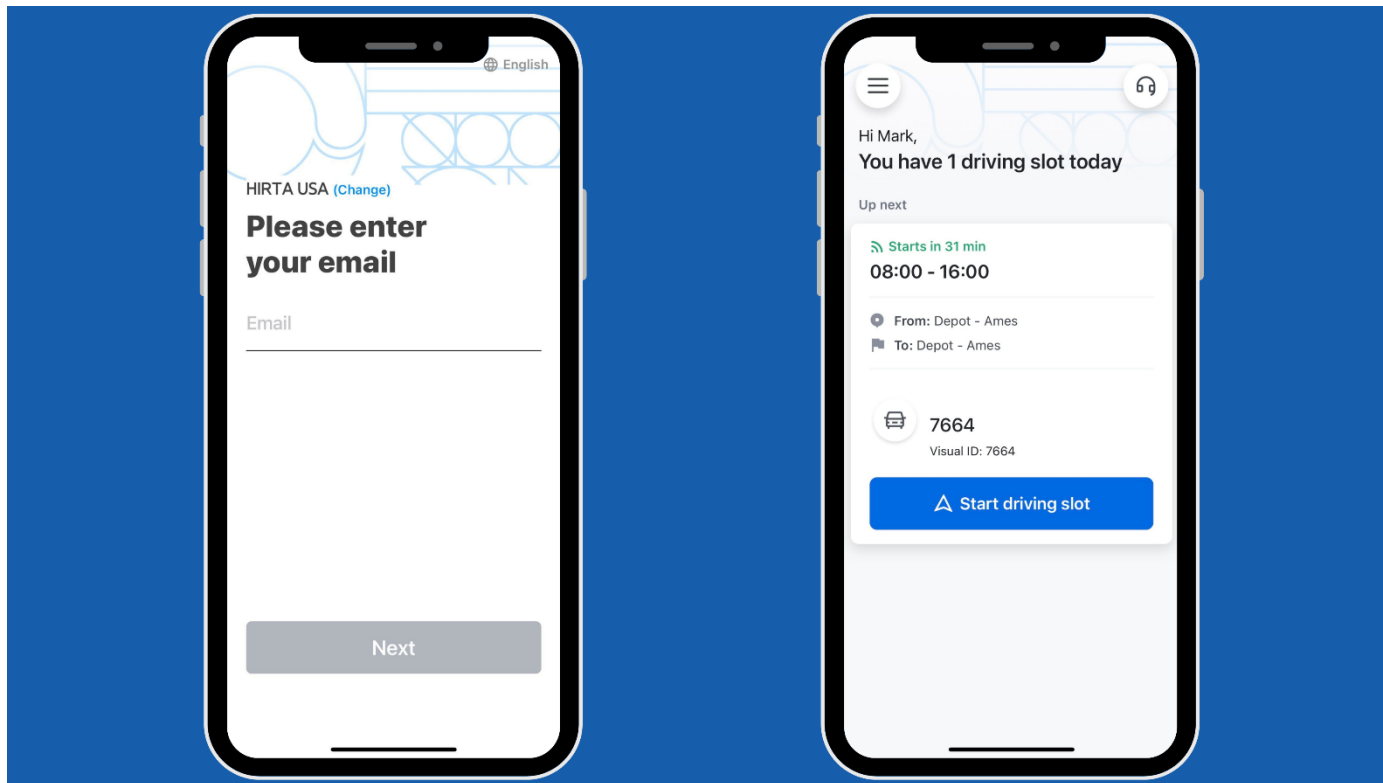
Manifest Management

- **Procedures**
  - Effectively utilize tablet to follow schedule and ensure on-time performance
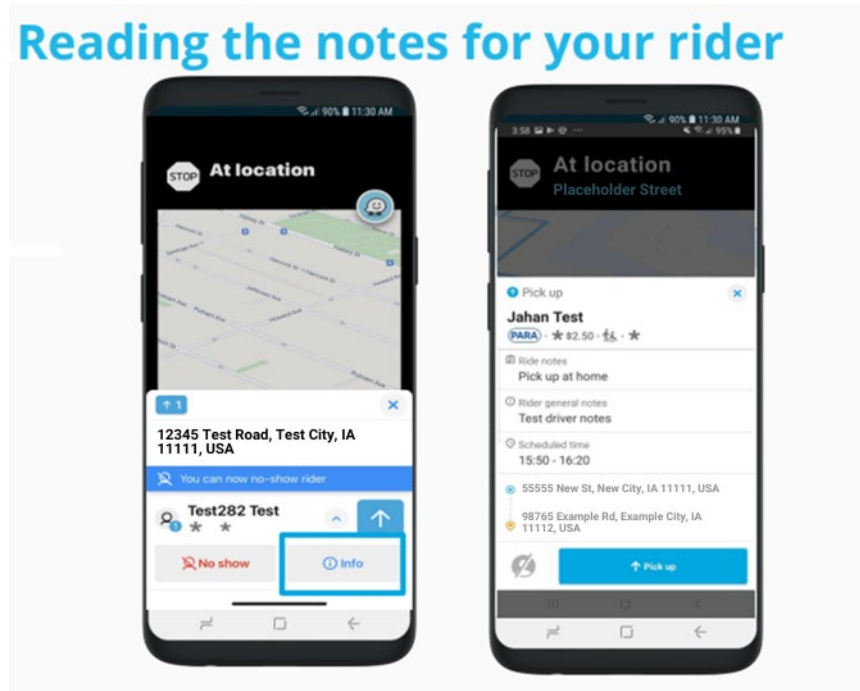 - Maintain and record accurate passenger counts and fare collections

Source: Via

Communications with Riders and Dispatch

- **Procedures**
  - Promote good passenger relations by providing positive, courteous interactions with passengers
  - Maintain communication with the dispatch and/or operations manager as instructed for reporting unusual conditions
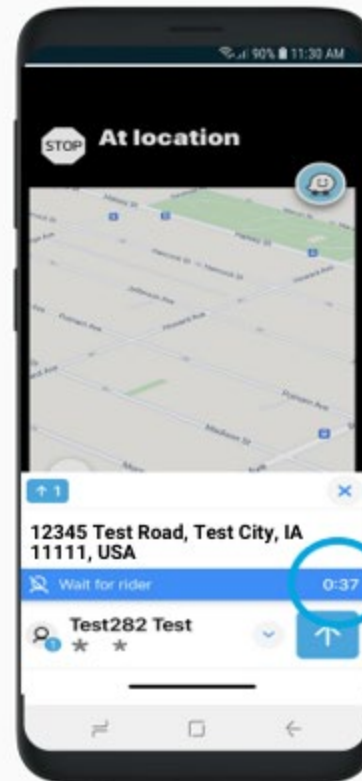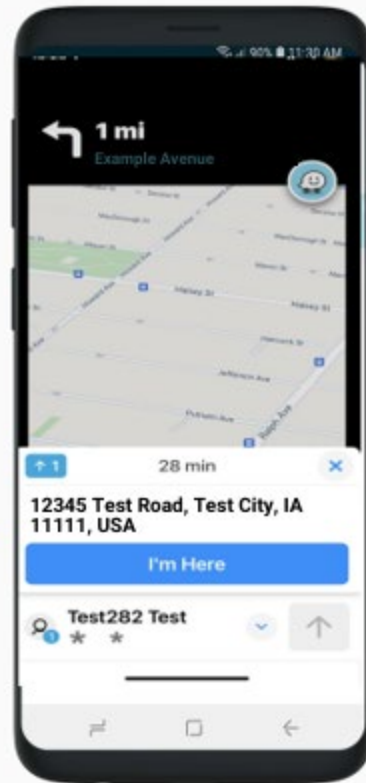

Source: Via

Traveler Pickup

Source: Via

Collecting Payment

- **Procedures**
  - If rider is paying with a ticket or electronic card, drivers will be prompted to visually validate payment method
  - If no pop-up is received, the rider has already paid
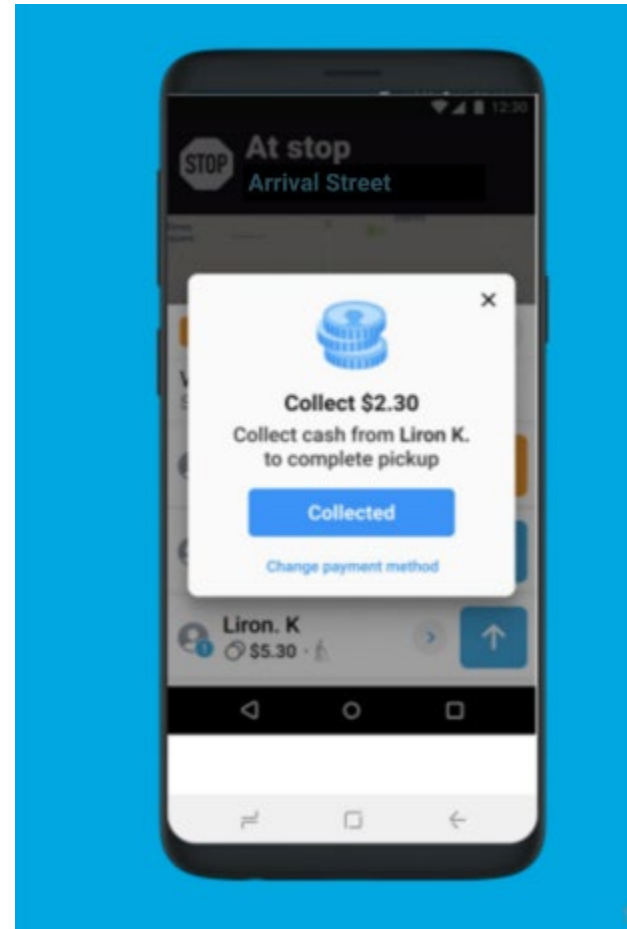
Source: Via

Traveler Dropoff
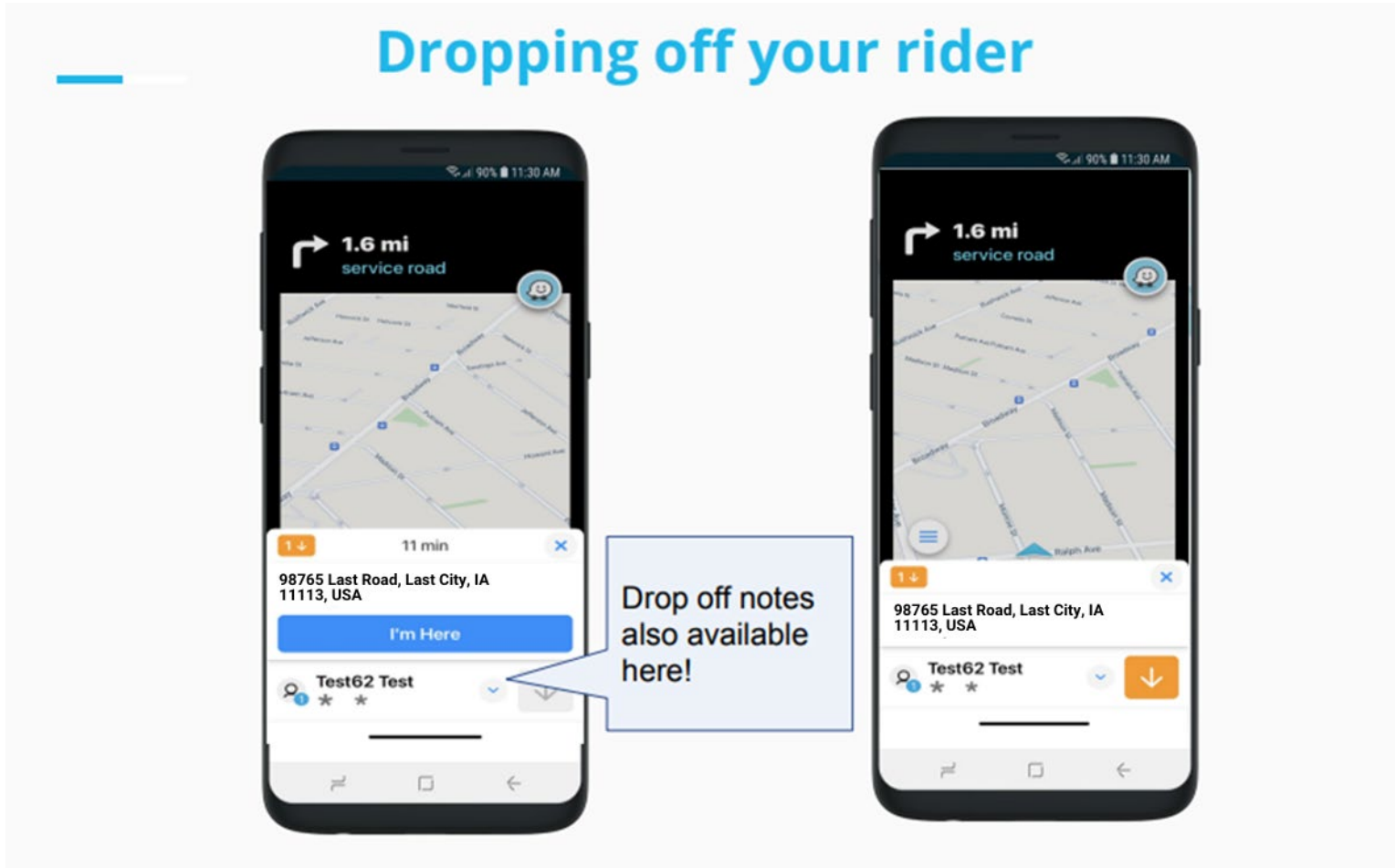
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Source: Brooke Ramsey

Brooke Ramsey

Project Management Lead

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency

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SOPs for NEMT Trips – Now and Later

Same Functionality

- Constant monitoring of Medicaid Broker portal for assigned trips
- Coordination with Medicaid Broker over phone and email

New Functionality

- Automatic ingestion of Medicaid trips into Via
- Automated trip confirmations
- Configurable trip tags (i.e., out of town trips, Health Connector trips)

Josh Albertson

Technical Lead

Arcadis IBI Group

Source: Josh Albertson

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Using the MOD-EHR Middleware Dashboard

- A webpage available to HIRTA and care facility staff to monitor trip/appointment alignment in real time.

Customer	Med Appointment		Transportation Status			
	Time	Location	Status	Drop Off Time	Drop Off Spot	Driver/Vehicle
John T.	10:00 Am	123 Main St	Scheduled	9:50 AM	DCH A2	TBD
Meg. A.	2:15 PM	123 MLK Blvd	Confirmed	9:55 AM	UPH A1	Driver 3/ 1751
Paul. T.	4:15 PM	123 MLK Blvd	Not Requested	TBD	TBD	TBD

Source: Arcadis IBI Group

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Stakeholder Q&A

- Please keep your phone muted.

- Please use chat box to ask questions.

- Questions will be answered in the order in which they were received.

Stay Connected

For more information, please contact:

Elina Zlotchenko, ITS JPO

ITS4US Program Manager

Elina.Zlotchenko@dot.gov

Mike Barry, FHWA Office of Planning

Site AOR

Michael.Barry@dot.gov

Brooke Ramsey, HIRTA

Project Management Lead

BRamsey@ridehirta.com

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https://its.dot.gov/its4us/

ITS4US Deployment Program Video

https://youtu.be/pztl1IRyXAc

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