Questions	Answers
Is the data, related to pickups or users available for NCDOT to use in project development? As far as satisfying pedestrian needs in an area where sidewalks may be closed due to construction etc., especially to meet ADA needs.	Data from the service is made readily available to the City of Wilson. This data includes information on pickup and destination locations, as well as passenger requests for WAVs. If helpful to the NCDOT, we would be happy to collaborate on efforts that could drive safety and accessibility for transit users. It should also be noted that all "virtual bus stops" are vetted for accessibility and safety before being included as possible pickup and drop-off points. They can be changed as necessary due to factors like construction, etc.
How many vehicles are on the road during an average day?	We launched with a fleet of 8 6-passenger vans. It will soon be expanding to 10 vans.
I see you have 3+ Saturday routes, are these for your Dialysis clients?	We no longer run fixed routes, even on Saturdays. All service is 100% dynamic throughout the week. None of the previous fixed routes were specifically for dialysis patients.
What is your staff capacity, number of dispatchers and drivers?	Gronna is the only current Transit Employee with Wilson. Via provides tech support, contracted drivers and other support and operations. No dispatchers are required, as services are automatically scheduled, dispatched, and routed through the software.
Outside of Canada, were there other successful microtransit programs in other countries?	Certainly. Via has powered successful microtransit services throughout the world. A few examples include: **Berlkonig**: the largest on-demand public transit service in the world. This is operated on behalf of the BVG in Berlin. 50% of vehicles are EVs, and the on-demand service is integrated with BVG's Journey Planner and multimodal app "Jelbi" **Cooee Busways:** this joint partnership between Transport for NSW, Via, and Busways provides on-demand trips to train stations for riders throughout Sydney. It's been touted as the fastest growing on-demand response service in Australia. Since launch, it has doubled rides per day, doubled utilization, and cut cost per ride in half. **CityBus 2.0:** HP Transportes launched this microtransit service in Goiania, Brazil as a response to declining fixed route ridership. Since launch, they have added 50 vehicles and have more than doubled the service area.
Is Wilson county still operating their paratransit service themselves?	The County provides human services transportation through a contracted private transit operator.

Will this session be submitted for possible AICP CM credits? Thanks!	We have not registered this Webinar. There is a way to use it as an elective credit I'm told, but I am not aware of the process.
For visitors to town, would you steer them to the web-based approach (so they don't have to install an app). Can you pay through the web-based interface?	Visitors could use the web-based platform, make a phone call, or download the Via app. The Via app can also be used to request rides in other cities in which Via operates on behalf of partners. These locations include (among many others) NYC, DC, Birmingham, St. Louis, Newton (MA), Worcester (MA), Jersey City, Arlington (TX), and Salt Lake City. Yes, you can pay through the web-based interface.
Olivia's email address does not match her last name, FYI.	Should be olivia.blahut@ridewithvia.com.
How is this different from a taxi service?	RIDE is public transit, funded by the City of Wilson. It differs from a private taxi service in several key ways: • Because this is funded by the City, rides are subsidized (as would any other form of public transit). Fares are a flat $1.50, with discounts available for seniors, children, etc. • Rides are shared. The default in the RIDE service is that riders are assigned to share vehicles with other passengers – this reduces VMTs, congestion, and emissions. • This service includes accessibility features that would not be found in a taxi service. For example, the app has features to accommodate riders with hearing/visual impairments, WAVs are included in the fleet and automatically dispatched to riders who need them, and we have included mobility aids in the vehicles to help riders with limited mobility. • The City has immense control over the service. The branding reflects the city's identity and logo. Further, the City has the ability to adjust service hours, zones of service, fares, and parameters (e.g., maximum wait time) by working with the Via team.
How many vehicles in Wilson before and after Microtransit?	To run the fixed route service daily, it took 3 30' transit coaches with a seating capacity of 26 and one 25' LTV with 15 seats, 2 wheelchair stations and 1 double foldaway bench. RIDE launched with 8 vehicles and will soon be expanding to 10 vehicles.
Does the service aggregate rides/riders together? Or is it one person per ride service?	The service certainly aggregates riders together. The algorithm efficiently identifies riders travelling in the same direction, matches them to a suitable vehicle,

	and directs riders and drivers to the best possible pickup location – i.e., a virtual bus stop. Aggregating riders and rides together reduces VMTs, emissions, and congestion. Currently, we are limiting vehicle capacity to 3 "unlinked passengers" due to COVID, but the total passenger capacity is 6.
How do you handle COVID safety concerns?	We are limiting vehicle capacity to 3 riders currently. Drivers are given cleaning materials to keep the vehicle sanitized. We have installed partitions in the vehicles to separate drivers and riders. Drivers are required to wear masks; riders are requested to do so.
What is your cost per trip?	This data will be more useful once the service has more fully matured.
How many square miles are you covering?	31 square miles
What did the City of Wilson do to ensure they meet FTA's ADA compliance while operating an all-day microtransit service?	We are providing an equal level of service for riders with and without disabilities. Riders with disabilities can request a WAV for their rides. Furthermore, riders with mobility issues can request "curb to curb" service rather than "corner to corner".
Has Via done any work with assisting in contact tracing efforts for both drivers and riders?	The data from Via-powered services can certainly be used to assist in contact tracing if it would be useful to our city/agency partners!
VIA immediately replaced the fixed route, or were both overlapping in operations for a time?	In this case, Wilson had already switched to a demand response service (manually scheduled) due to COVID. So, the transition to entirely on-demand happened immediately. In other cases, Via has launched services with concurrent operations of fixed route and on-demand for a short period to aid in a smooth transition.
How is safety mitigated?	In addition to the rigorous driver onboarding and monitoring, Via takes extensive precautions to ensure passenger safety. **Driver Distraction:** Drivers' in-app tasks are intentionally limited in order to minimize distractions and allow them to concentrate on driving safely. During training, drivers are instructed to interact with the app or with Via support only when stopped safely. **Passenger Verification:** To ensure Via knows which passengers are in the vehicle, drivers are instructed to ensure they are picking up the correct passenger. At the top of their screens, drivers will see a task list with actionable instructions. When making a pickup, the driver will confirm the passenger's first name and mark them as picked-up in the app. **Driver/Vehicle Verification:** Before a rider is picked up, they are able to track their vehicle and its real-

	time progress on the map. Additionally, riders are provided: • Walking directions to their virtual bus stop • Vehicle information, including license plate, driver name, driver photo, and vehicle ID number Riders receive an SMS alert when their Via is two minutes away and another when the driver has arrived at the assigned pickup corner. They can respond to this SMS at any time to reach a live service support representative. Via trains all service support staff to assist passengers and drivers with any issue that may arise, including emergencies.
Can you talk about the transition process? What about the old buses, shelters, drivers, etc.?	The old buses are still in Wilson and could be used if the City were ever to re-instate fixed route. The shelters are also still installed and could be re-purposed to provide shelter at commonly used virtual bus stops.
Will you speak to the project timeline, from issuance of the RFP to implementation?	RFP was released in March, procurement and contracting through June. Launch team worked through July and August for a September 1st launch date.
Age profile of riders?	We do not capture information on riders' ages.
I see that the pick-ups are done at a centralized "bus stop" type place - are drop offs done the same way, or are passengers dropped off exactly where they requested to go?	Yes, pick-ups and drop-offs both occur at "virtual bus stops". We ask the rider to walk a short distance to a VBS to maximize the system's efficiency and limit detours. Instead of relying on a limited number of traditional bus stops, Via's system generates thousands of VBS locations — corners, businesses, etc. where vehicles can safely stop for pickups and drop-offs. Under this service model, riders choose their selected origin and destination, and Via's system will select the best-suited VBS.
Are the miles traveled by the on-demand vehicles reported to NTD as revenue miles?	Yes.
Did this completely replace the fixed route system in Wilson? Or do fixed routes still operate in some areas of town?	In Wilson, microtransit completely replaced the fixed route system. In other transit networks, this would not be the right decision. Other agencies have deployed microtransit as a complement to their fixed route networks, most often by using it to: • Provide first/last mile connections to fixed route • Supplement coverage in areas where it's not efficient to run fixed route • Provide late night or weekend service during off-peak hours • Provide accessible service for seniors or people with disabilities

Are the operator's employees of the City or employees of Via?	Independent contractor drivers are contracted with Via directly.
Have you done any tracking of how people have heard about the service to see what advertising methods are most effective?	Across most Via-powered services, we find word of mouth to be a very powerful marketing tool. Though it's early, we've seen in Wilson that our pre-launch efforts, partner presentations with local community orgs, and referral programs have been successful. We will continue to analyze marketing/advertising campaign results to optimize our efforts.
How has working with VIA affected the trip cost? Are you able to parse this from trip costs associated with the pandemic?	Not enough info yet, given recency of service launch.