

Micro-Transit for Improving Access for Behavioral Health in Tucson's Low-Income Neighborhoods

December 2023

Prepared for:



Prepared by:

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
AND WELLNESS ALLIANCE



CATES



A Critical Health Challenge

Transportation is a social determinant of health

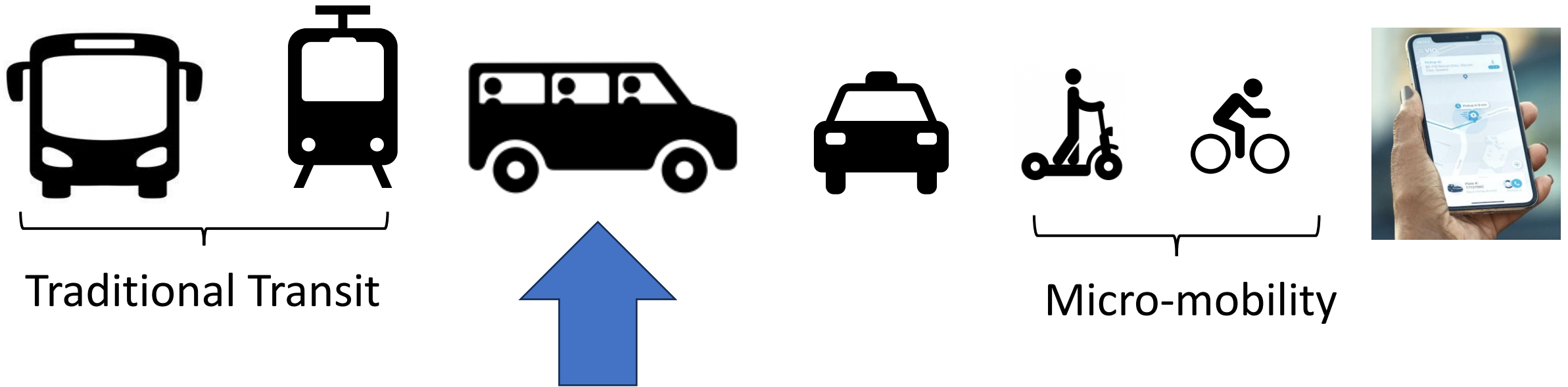
**Employment
Healthcare
Education & Training
Job Interviews
Food & Nutrition**

**Childcare
Social Connection
Recreation
Spiritual
Wellness Services**

The Problem We Want to Solve

- **Low-income, older adults, youth, mobility-constrained, low-density neighborhoods** don't have **good transportation access**.
- 10% of households in Tucson **do not have access to a car**.
- **Public transportation has limitations:** Fixed route buses and streetcars are options but may be difficult to navigate and not time efficient.
- Taxis, Uber, and Lyft are **expensive** for people with low incomes.

The Transportation Spectrum



“Micro-transit” can provide reliable, on-demand, all-electric, point-to-point rides to destinations at no or minimal cost to eligible residents.

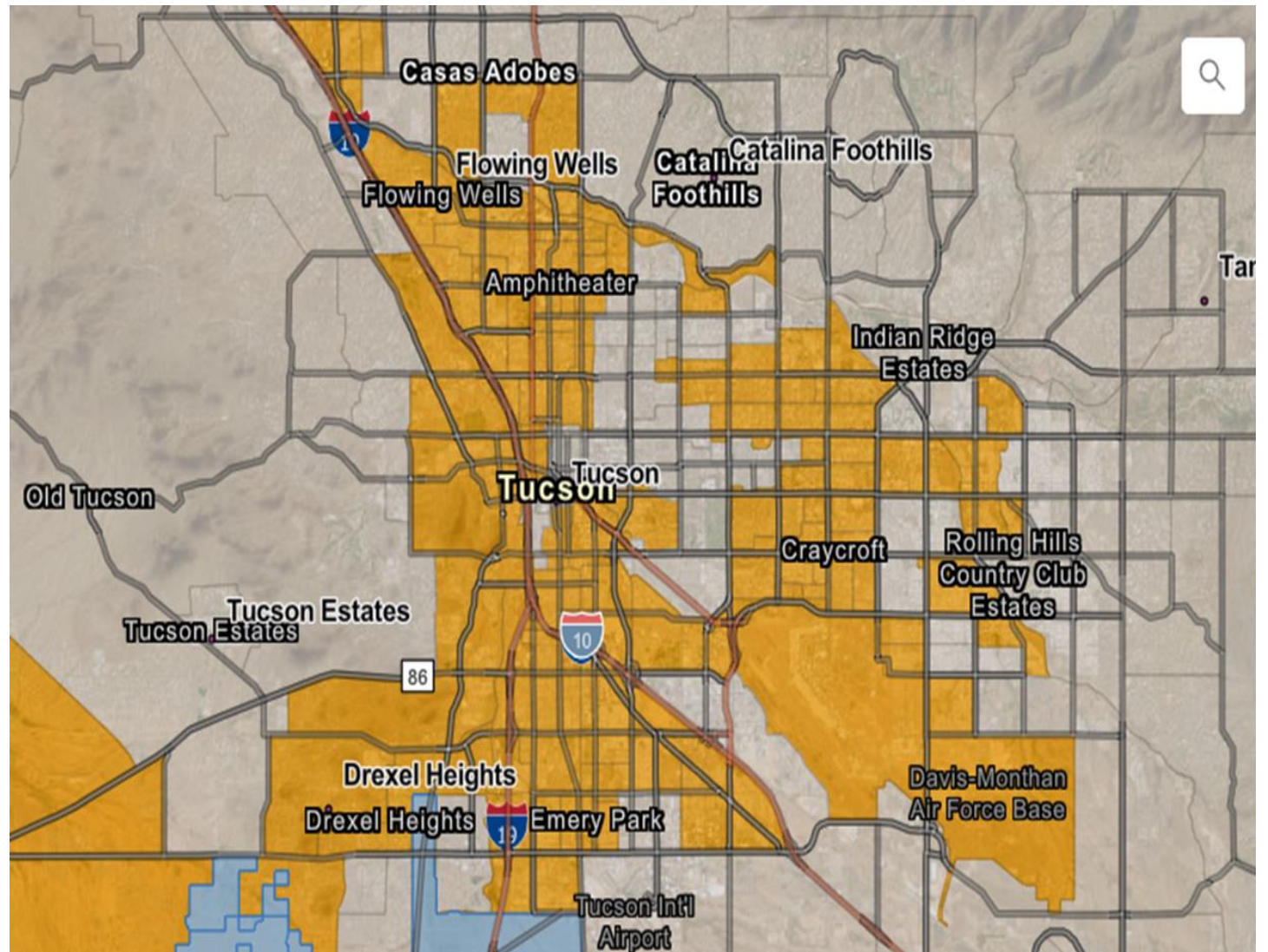
Transportation Disadvantaged

Tucson poverty rate is 54.69% higher than the Arizona average.

Estimated 19.8% of 514,386 people live in poverty or 101,765 people.

Low-income neighborhoods in Tucson include:

- Amphi
- South Tucson
- Barrio Hollywood
- Flowing Wells
- Alvernon/Grant Area
- Pascua Yaqui Reservation
- South Park Avenue
- El Rio Acres

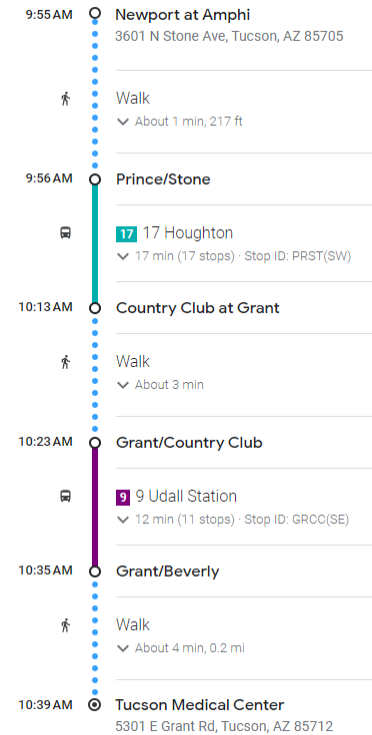


Many low-income neighborhoods have limited public transportation coverage.

Examples of Travel Times to Essential Destinations

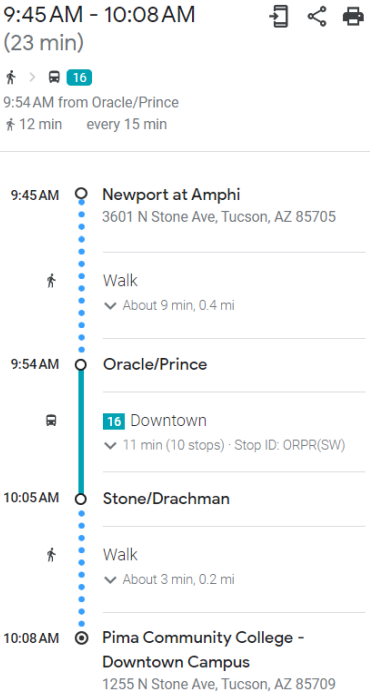
Medical

- Drive—17 min
- Transit—44 min



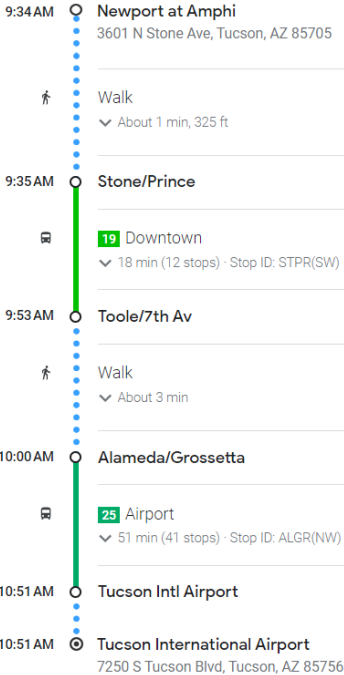
Education

- Drive—6 min
- Transit—23 min



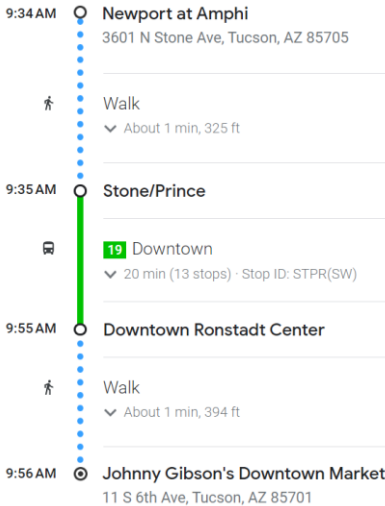
Work

- Drive—21 min
- Transit—1-hour 17 min



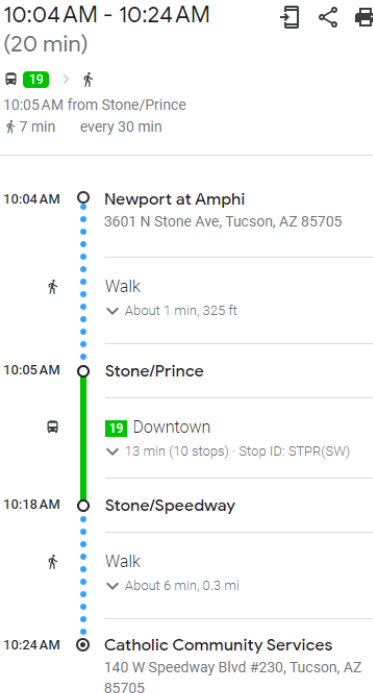
Grocery

- Drive—11 min
- Transit—22 min



Church

- Drive—6 min
- Transit—20 min









Proposed Solution: All Electric Micro-Transit



On-demand transit where routing algorithms use real-time, on-the-ground information to group passengers into shared rides.

Empowers bus and rail transit with flexible solutions.

Features of Service Model

| All Electric Fleet | Essential Destinations | Low Cost or Free Rides | Neighborhood Launch Pad | Job Creation |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  |  |  <p>Integrated Payment Platform</p> |  <p>Neighborhood Park & Charge</p> |  <p>Driver & Technician Training</p>  |

Electric Micro-Transit: Current Success Stories

Porterville, California



Richmond, California



Jersey City, NJ

Failures have also happened in the past, and causes are understood

- Inappropriate vehicles, too large or too small
- Dispatching and fleet management did not work well
- Lack of customer awareness/low demand
- Cost per customer ride was too high

A Sustainable Business Model

Revenue Generation

- **Discounted farecard or app** based on income, disability status, and age
- **Subsidies** from transit, health, and social service agencies
- **Financial incentives** from employers
- **Sponsorships** from destinations
- **Advertising** on vehicles and web portal
- **Grants** from government and foundations

Expense Categories

- **Labor**
- **Training**
- **Capital**
- **Marketing**
- **Software**
- **Electric**
- **Fundraising**
- **Other**



Strong and Growing Arizona Partnerships



City of Chandler - Turnkey

- Limited fixed route network with declining ridership created barriers for public access to transit options
- Implemented an on-demand service to provide transit access for students and to increase ridership through a first mile-last mile solution



City of Glendale - Software

- Legacy dial-a-ride system saw declining ridership and quality of service as it was managing services across multiple providers
- Transitioned Glendale's existing transit options into one commingled service under Via's software



Sun City - AV

- Leveraging AVs to expand access to safe, reliable and equitable on-demand transportation to Sun City, a community designed for adults 55 and older
- First on-demand public transit service using AVs in Arizona.

Summary

- **Improve behavioral health** by providing access to essential destinations and improvement in life opportunities.
- **100% coverage** to eligible residents for free point-to-point rides.
- **Increase equity** by closing mobility gaps for low-income populations.
- **Multi financing channels** from destination payments, insurance reimbursements, public subsidies, sponsorships, and social programs.
- **Electric vans** that reduce emissions and the need for cars and parking.
- **Job creation**—EV charging, training, drivers and maintenance personnel based in low-income neighborhoods.

Deeply Experienced Project Team

Conrad Plimpton & Egils Milbergs

Healthy Communities and Wellness Alliance

www.azflourishing.org

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
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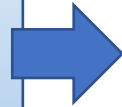
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Questions?

Next Steps

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

- Customers Defined
- Transportation Needs
- Destinations Identified
- Rider Eligibility & App
- Accessibility Features
- Linguistic Needs



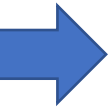
LAUNCH PLAN

- Neighborhood Basing
- Financial Plan
- Start-up Funding
- Destination Sponsors
- Community Support
- Regulatory Compliance



TECHNOLOGY SOURCING

- EV Acquisition
- EV Chargers
- Integrated Payments System
- Ordering/Dispatching
- Technical Support
- Customer Call Center



OPERATIONS PHASE

- Branding/Marketing
- Driver Training/On-Boarding
- Vehicle Maintenance
- Software Support
- Customer Support 24/7
- Data Reporting



GROWTH PHASE

- Performance Metrics
- Revenue Generation
- Subsidies & Grants
- Sponsors
- Scaling up Service Area
- Transition to AVs



A key partner for this service with extensive planning and operational experience deploying micro-transit solutions in multiple jurisdictions.