City of Detroit
Office of Mobility Innovation

How Detroit is paving the way with AVs

December 2024

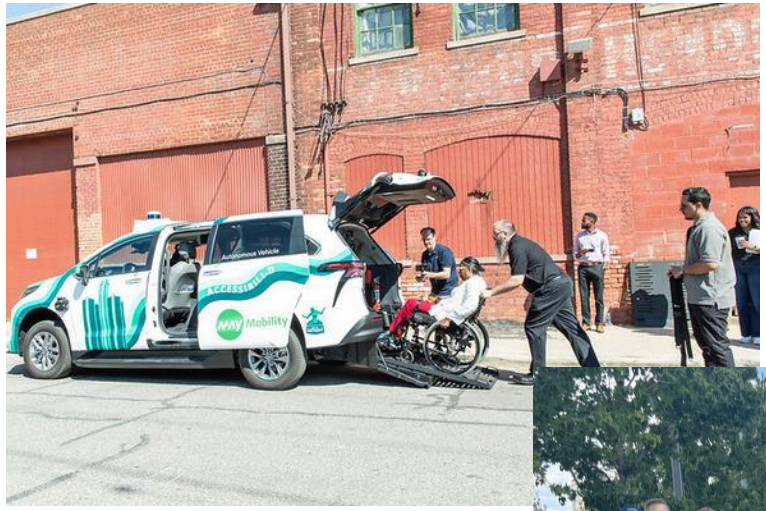
Current AV Programs in Detroit

Accessibili-D

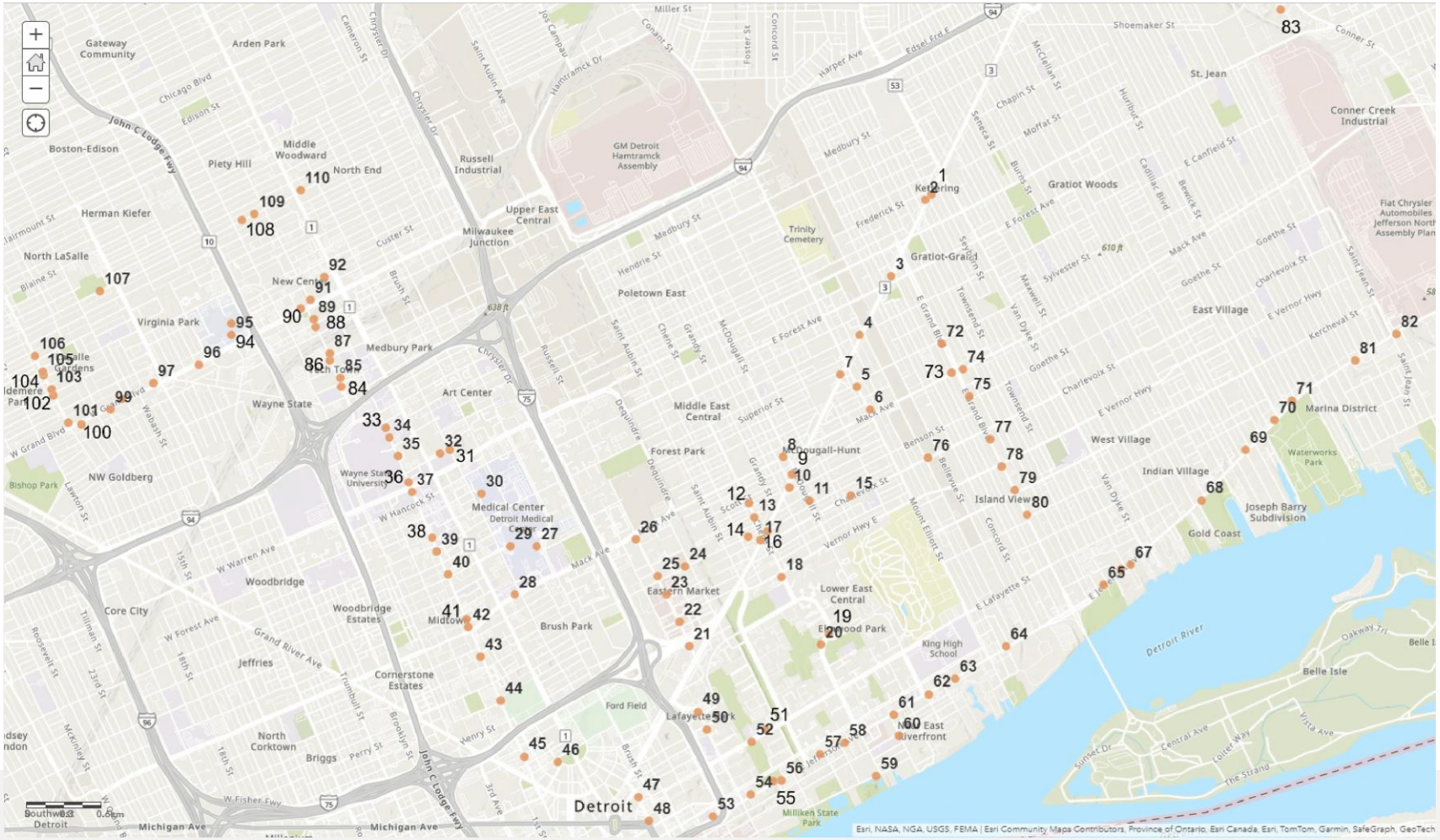
The Connect

Current AV Programs in Detroit

Accessibili-D	The Connect
62+ and Persons w/Disabilities	Open to Everyone
1 Year Pilot	2+ Year Pilot
Up to 35 mph	Up to 35 mph
Mapped Route of ~40 linear miles	Mapped Route of ~11 linear miles
Point-to-point Service	Fixed Route
110 Stops	12 Stops
Hybrid Powertrain	Battery Electric Powertrain
Free to Ride	Free to Ride



Accessibili-D Service Map – 110 Stops



The Connect Service Map – 12 Stops

What Makes Detroit's Approach Different

- Intentionally focused on safety operator roles
  - Transit applications require someone onboard to help with wheelchairs
  - Having an operator on board allows us to pilot, reliably, across all four seasons
  - Proving the technology in transit applications enables us to quickly adopt other applications when the technology is ready
- No low-speed vehicles
  - Mandatory 35 mph capability
- City teams get to learn
  - These pilots allow our staff to gain experience with traffic operations, emergency response, safety protocols, and much more

What Makes Detroit's Approach Different (cont.)

- Longer routes
  - Accessibili-D operates on one of the largest routes the provider has ever done, with more than 110 stops in that service territory
  - The Connect is one of the largest dedicated route AV shuttle programs ever deployed
- Longer pilot durations
  - Accessibili-D operating for at least 1 year
  - The Connect operating for at least 2 years
- Funding
  - Accessibili-D is 50% federal and 50% match (City, partner, and philanthropic)
  - The Connect launched as 66% private and 33% State, with additional funding secured from MDOT after launch

Feedback So Far

What we expected to hear:

- I don't want to share the road with AVs
- I don't feel comfortable riding in an AV

What we actually heard:

- I feel uncomfortable riding with most human drivers, I love the idea of an AV
- Access to a service like this can give me my independence back, and allow me not to burden my family for transportation
- I want this type of service everywhere!
- How can I tell my customers about this service so they can use it?

Feedback So Far (cont.)

The Good

- Detroiters are being employed by both pilots
- Everyone has been very positive on the AV functionality so far
- Lots of positive feedback on how these services are filling transportation gaps
- Interest from businesses and events to have these services support them
- Lots of repeat customers and recurring usage

The Room to Improve

- Some difficulty with the smartphone apps
- Had some downtime with some of the EV shuttles
- Need better coordination on upcoming road closures or construction

How We Define Success

1. Get people interacting with the AVs
2. Learn more about how to deploy AVs at scale in Detroit
3. Learn how to engage the community
4. Learn what pitfalls to avoid
5. Put Detroit at the forefront of AV opportunity!

Next Steps

1. Create a pathway for Detroit to contract AV transportation services annually
    - Paratransit? Maybe a new type of service?
2. Further develop private funding opportunities for public transportation
    - More private partners are needed to realize our vision for the future
3. Identify opportunities to expand these types of AV services across Detroit
    - More routes can lead to more interest from residents and AV leaders
4. Attract more AV companies to deploy and test in Detroit
    - More jobs for Detroiters

Thank you!

Questions?