

# 1st Stop: Current State and a Look into the Future of Volunteer Drivers

November 18, 2020 | 9:00-10:00 AM

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA)

*Welcome! The forum will begin at 9:00.*

## Housekeeping:

- To submit a question for a speaker, use the “Q&A” feature at the bottom of your screen.
- If joining by phone and you have a question for a speaker, press \*9 to raise your hand.
- To turn on live captioning, click the “More” button at the bottom of your screen and select that option.
- ASL interpretation is being provided.
- If you have a tech question send a Chat to “all panelists.”

# Agenda

**Welcome + Opening** - Tom Gottfried, MnDOT and MCOTA Executive Director



**Minnesota's Current Commitment to Volunteer Drivers: Where are we now?** - Suzanne Sobotka, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor and MCOTA Council Member



**Transformation of Volunteer Drivers in the “Gig” Economy: A Future Vision** - John Doan, Chief Executive Officer, Mobility 4 All and MCOTA Council Member



**Audience Q&A**

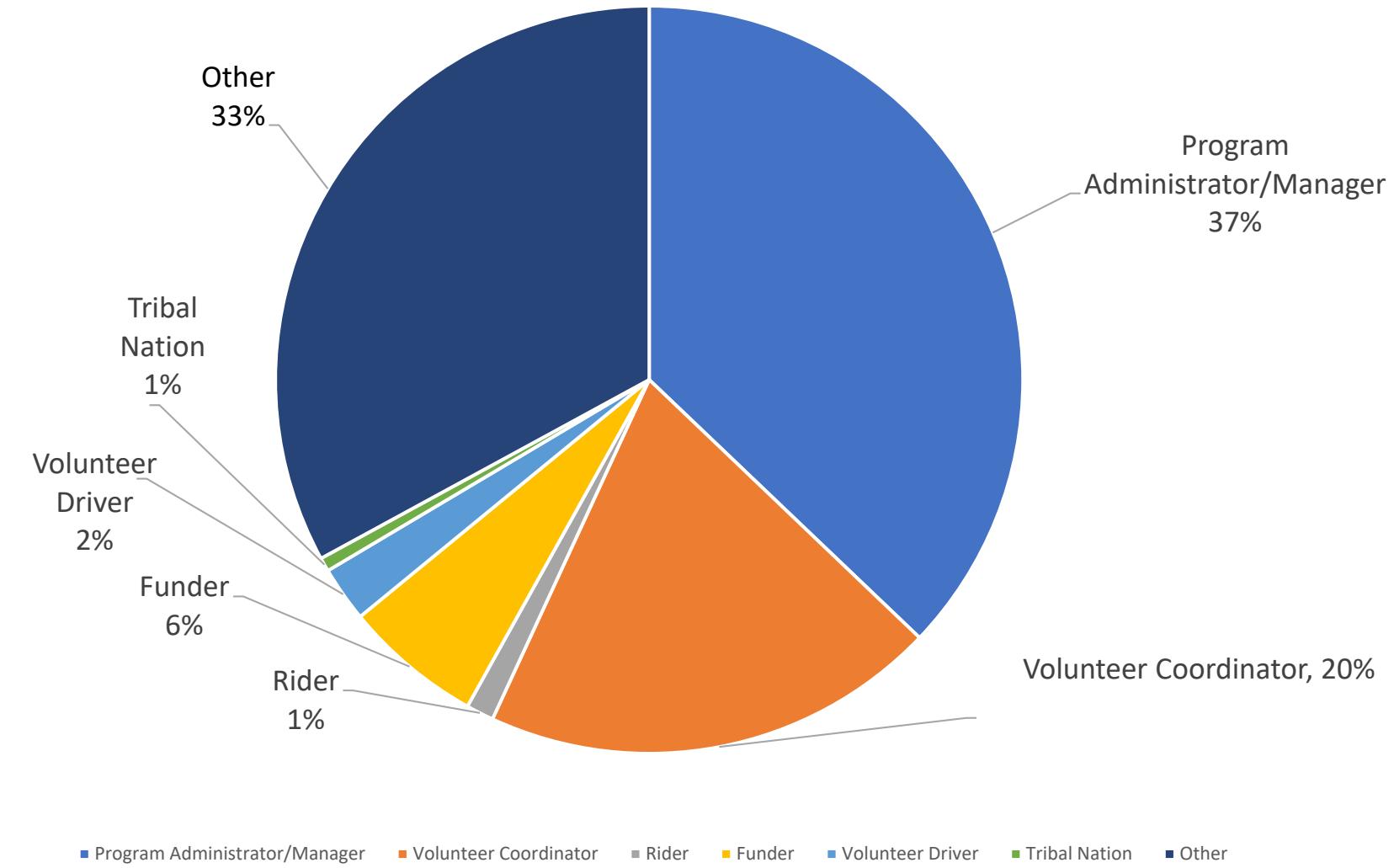
**Next Stops**

# Housekeeping

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- If you have a **tech question** send a Chat to “all panelists.”
- A **video-recording** of this forum will be posted to the web following the event.
- A **PDH form** (professional development hours) will be emailed to all attendees following the event.

# Who's in the room today?

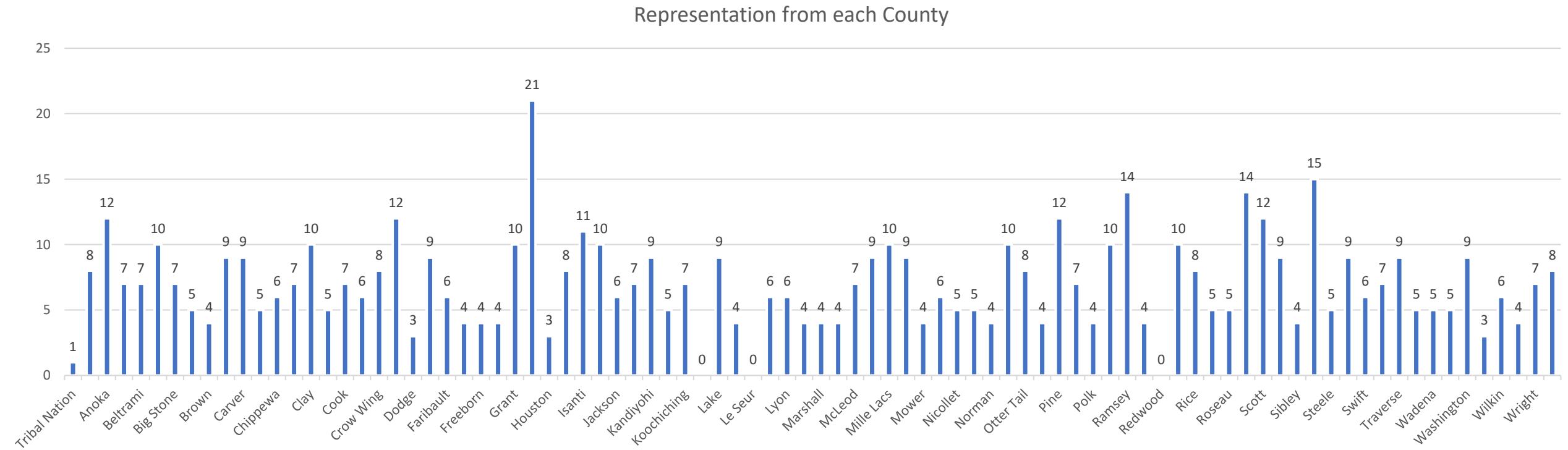
Primary Role in Volunteer Driver Programs



## Some of the "Other" Roles:

- Area Agency on Aging (x2)
- CMCOA Employees
- Board of Directors
- State Agency
- MCO
- Consultant
- RTCC
- RTC Program Manager
- Shared Mobility Coordinator
- Supervisor
- Technical Assistant
- Future Driver
- Senior Coordinator
- Transit Staff
- Educational
- Age Friendly
- Legal Assistance Develop
- Healthcare Organization
- County Social Services
- City Government
- MnDOT Sr. Management
- Consultant

# Who's in the room today? (continued)



# Welcome

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

1st Stop: Current State and a Look into the Future of Volunteer Drivers

Tom Gottfried, MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation,  
Program Director

And Minnesota Council on Transportation Access,  
Executive Director



Minnesota's Road to Volunteer Drivers Virtual Forum Series

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# Greetings

This Monthly Forum Series from today through next May will cover:

- Where we were with Volunteer Driver Programs, to
- Where we are, to
- Where we will be going,
  - This Seven Stop Series will travel through our current policy questions, to
  - The Impact that Volunteer Drivers have on the client they (we) serve, to
  - How to recruit and retain Volunteer Drivers, to
  - How to train our Drivers, and what we learn from our clients, and
  - Much more, please join us on this Journey

# Current state of Volunteer Driver Programs

- Pre – COVID 19:
  - Volunteer Drivers were critical link in the transportation delivery system in Minnesota
  - However in the last twenty years the demand for their services has increased significantly, yet the pool of Volunteer Drivers available to do services has decreased by over 50%
    - The reasons vary from retirees staying in the work force
    - The cost of insurance
    - The tax disincentive
    - Mileage reimbursement rate

# Current state of Volunteer Driver Programs (continued)

- COVID 19:
  - Volunteer Drivers programs were nearly 100% shutdown the first 3 months of the Pandemic, and/or were shifting to mostly food access delivery systems
    - With average age of a Volunteer Driver at 74 years, the drivers' themselves were the population at most risk to COVID 19
    - The shift to mostly food access, with no people trips has raised the access question to a new level
    - We have been creative and will continue to be

# Future of Volunteer Driver Programs

- Post COVID-19:
  - We are projecting Volunteer Drivers programs were nearly 100% shutdown the first 3 months (March through May) of the pandemic
    - With average age of a volunteer driver at 74 years, the drivers' themselves were the population at most risk
    - The shift to mostly food access, with no people has raised the “access” question to a new level
    - What is role of the Volunteer Driver Programs moving forward?

# Please welcome

## **Suzanne Sobotka**

**Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor and MCOTA Council Member**

Suzanne Sobotka is a policy advisor for in the Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. In this role, she serves as a primary connection for the Governor's Office to legislators and advocacy groups on transportation and environment issues. Prior to joining the Walz-Flanagan administration, she worked for six years at the Minnesota Senate, serving in multiple roles pertaining to the Transportation Committee. She has also worked as a health writer on cardiovascular health issues at Mayo Clinic. Suzanne holds a Master of Public Health degree in epidemiology, and a Master of Arts degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota.

# Greetings from Governor Walz

- Thank you for attending today's Kick Off Session for this Virtual Forum Series on Volunteer Drivers and the Organizations that our key partners in providing access to:
  - Our Seniors, to
  - Our Disability Communities, to
  - Our Young, to
  - Our most transportation challenged communities, due to low income, language barriers, and any population that is “transit” dependent

# Volunteer Drivers: The Critical Link

- Volunteer Drivers do the critical link:
  - taking a Veteran to the VA, or
  - taking your elderly neighbor to the Doctor, or
  - taking children in the foster care system to see their parents, or
  - delivering meals to COVID 19 quarantined patients at home, or
  - taking a Medical Assistance client to cancer treatments,
  - All this and much more



# Volunteer Drivers are a priority

- Volunteer Drivers are a critical link in our transportation system, it is now more than ever our priority that Volunteer Driver Programs are successful and supported
  - As our population is aging and becoming ever more transportation challenged
  - As our various communities struggle for more access to services
  - As our economy will begin the process to recovery, many will need transportation services to facilitate that progress

# Volunteer Drivers are a priority (continued)

- In 2018 the Minnesota Volunteer Driver Coalition 85 members reported:
  - Over 168,000 rides
  - Serving 77,474 people
  - Driving over 9.5 million miles
  - And this only accounts for the members of Coalition, there are many more Volunteer Driver programs, many more rides, miles driven and people getting served and needing to be served



# Who are we that are sponsoring this Volunteer Driver Forum Series?

- We are,
  - Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA)
  - Minnesota Department of Transportation, Office of Transit and Active Transportation
  - Minnesota Volunteer Driver Coalition
  - Minnesota Public Transit Association
  - University of Minnesota, Center on Transportation Studies

# Who is MCOTA?

The Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2010 (Minn. Statute 2010 174.285) to "study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public."

# MCOTA

I am one of 14 state agency members, specifically representing the Governor's Office.

Since my tenure at the July 2020 MCOTA Commissioners annual meeting where the Council approved legislation to be included in the Governor's FY 2022-23 policy and budget proposal.

The Governor's Office is in the process of evaluating policy and budget proposals for inclusion in the final biennial budget, which will be released in late January.

Please join us at the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Forum on Volunteer Driver Policy where this will be discussed and reviewed.

Thank you, and now I turn you over to Tom Gottfried, MCOTA's Executive Director

# MCOTA

Thank you, as Suzanne noted the MCOTA's approval of legislative language to address the definition what is a Volunteer Driver, or specifically a volunteer driver is not "for Hire". This is important definition for Insurance and the tax implications.

Suzanne also noted the Policy discussion will be reviewed at our next in the Volunteer Driver Forum on December 9<sup>th</sup>, please join us then.

# Reminder if you have a question for the speakers:

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# The Future:

- The future of Transportation Access will need
  - to be flexible
  - to include all the tools in the toolbox
  - Volunteer Driver Programs will be critical link to Transportation Access
  - Us to be open to other service opportunities to improve and/or maintain Transportation Access
  - Our next speaker will outline one of the future opportunities that may help us address Transportation Access.

# Please now welcome:

- John Doan, P.E., is co-founder and CEO of Mobility 4 All, the personalized ride service for seniors and people with disabilities. As a public sector entrepreneur, John is dedicated to ensuring that autonomous vehicles, mobility as a service, and shared-use mobility are accessible, equitable, and affordable for all people. John honorably served as a Civil Engineer Corps officer in the US Navy, an engineer at MnDOT and Hennepin County, and vice president for a national consulting firm. He graduated from Harvard University Kennedy School of Government with a focus on housing, transportation, and urban development. John was an appointed member to the Metropolitan Council and currently serves on the Minnesota Board on Aging, which he represents as a council member with MCOTA.





# Transforming Volunteer Drivers in the “Gig” Economy: Building a Sustainable Future Vision

John Doan, PE MPP  
CEO, Mobility 4 All  
November 18, 2020

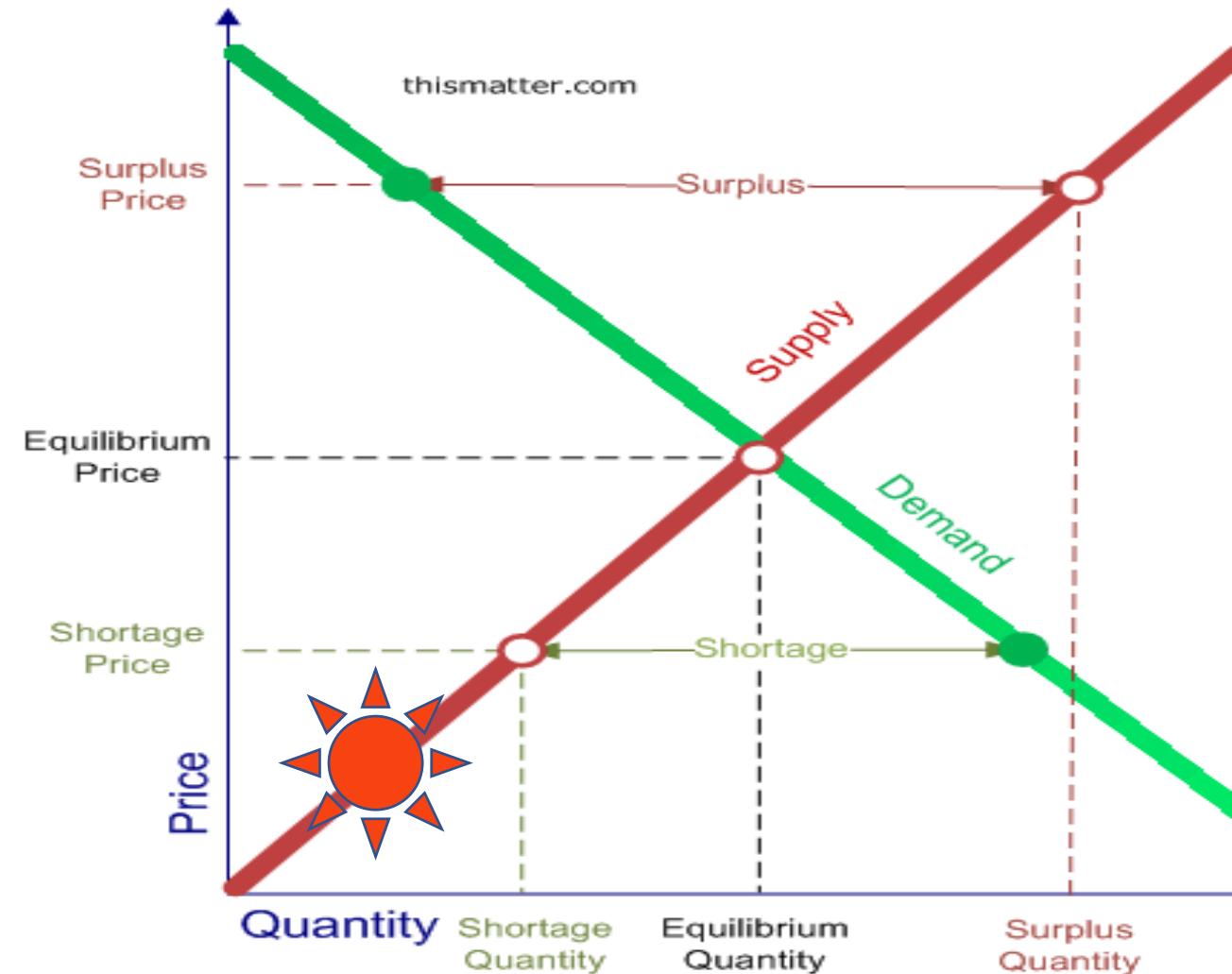


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# The Problem (Econ 101)

- **Demand** for ride services from older adults increasing dramatically
- **Supply** of volunteer drivers shrinking dramatically
- **Pricing** is hidden to users



# Gig Economy

## The Future of Work

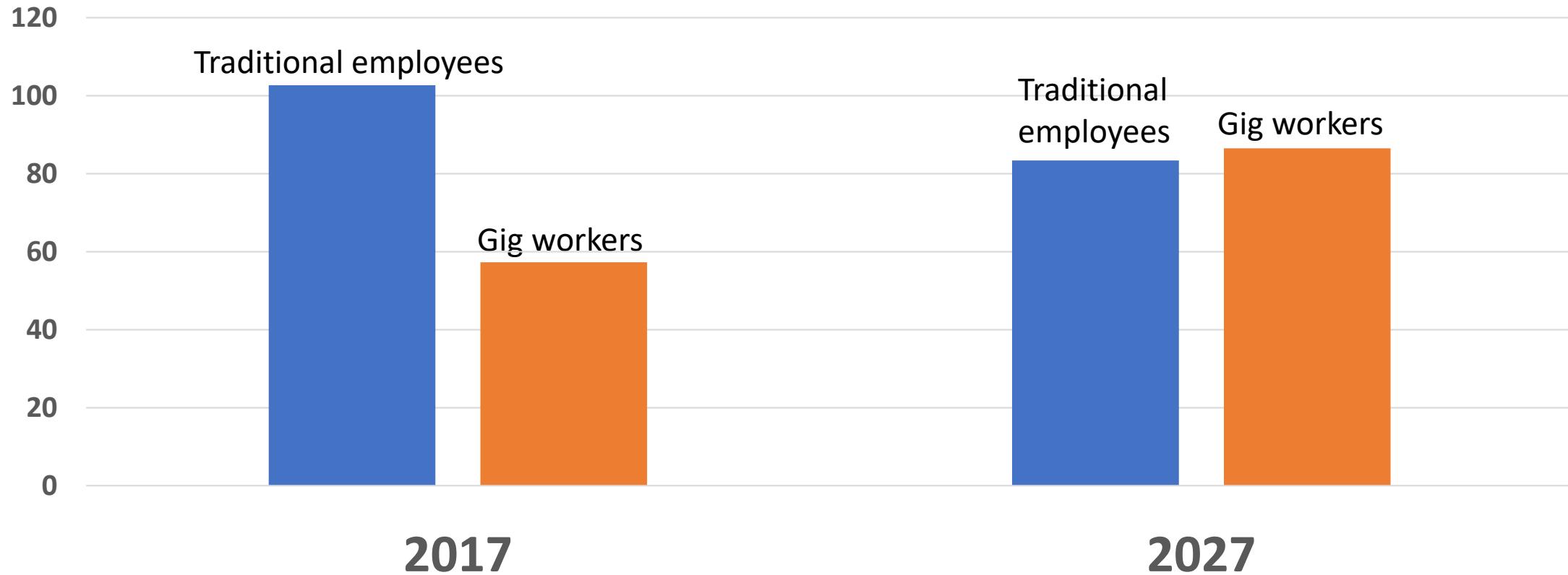


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# Gig workers estimated to surpass traditional employees by 2027

(source: Freelancing in America 2017)



Uber

lyft

**PROPOSITION 22**  
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS  
NOT EMPLOYEES



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Mobility 4 All, GBC is a sharing & caring platform for special transportation

*MO is the safer, kinder, personalized ride service for seniors and people with disabilities*



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# MO is the Family Ride

## Family & Friends



## Paratransit



## Uber - Lyft



## Mobility 4 All



**Door thru Door, Accessible Service**



**Fully Vetted & Trained Drivers**



**Caregiver Involvement**



**Driver Matching**



**Mobile App, Web & Call Center**



**Subscription & Cashless Payments**



# Innovating Senior Transportation Pilot Funded by DHS Live Well at Home Grant



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# Partnerships to Build a Sustainable Future



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# Scope of Collaboration

1. Focus on low-income seniors
2. Build joint online volunteer and paid driver recruitment and training portal
3. Shared services model for marketing, booking, dispatch and ride delivery
4. Develop code sharing system for rides
5. Test model in Rochester, Winona and surrounding communities



# Support Volunteer Drivers



**volunteer driver**  
COALITION

[volunteerdriverMN.org](http://volunteerdriverMN.org)

# Universal Design and Inclusive Business Models for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles



# Wrap Up

- Thank you: John and Suzanne

Questions: Chat function explained

Review of the upcoming Volunteer Driver Virtual Forum Series:

[http://www.coordinateumntransit.org/events/volunteerdriverforum/2020-21/documents/VolunteerDriverVirtualForumSeries\\_1pager.pdf](http://www.coordinateumntransit.org/events/volunteerdriverforum/2020-21/documents/VolunteerDriverVirtualForumSeries_1pager.pdf)

We thank you all for your time today, and please spread the word of this Forum Series, there will be a follow up survey out shortly for you complete.