



# Put Technology TO WORK

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*Sharing data externally improves our transparency and also opens up opportunities for collaboration with the private sector – people who might take our data and do something useful or interesting with it or create businesses out of it.*

*Jennifer Wichmann*



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*#PutTechnologytoWork*



## Is Today Trash Day? Developer Taps Arlington’s Open Data for Web App

In a modern twist to an old idiom, one city’s trash data is a web app developer’s treasure.

On a whim, Matthew Taylor decided earlier this year to create [www.istodaytrashday.com](http://www.istodaytrashday.com) using open data on the City of Arlington’s website. Arlington residents who enter their home address into the search bar on Taylor’s simple web app are given a Yes or No based on the day of the week and their location within the City’s five trash pickup zones. Taylor said he created

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## Wetlands Help Arlington Provide Safe, High-Quality Drinking Water

About 90 miles from Arlington, nature is helping ensure the city's more than 380,000 residents have safe, high-quality drinking water. The George W. Shannon Wetlands near Corsicana was built by the Tarrant Regional Water District, Arlington's raw water supplier, to help meet the growing demands for water in Tarrant County and 10 other counties.

It is located along the banks of the Trinity River adjacent to Richland Chambers Reservoir, within the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Richland Creek Wildlife Management Area. The project was completed in 2013. Recently, water utilities staff from Arlington, Fort Worth, and Mansfield, as well as Tarrant County Master Gardeners, toured the site.

"Incorporating a water recycling project into TRWD's water supply system reduces our dependence on reservoirs during times of drought. During the most recent drought in 2014, the wetland system accounted for 20 percent of the District's overall water supply," said Chris Zachry, Wetland Projects Manager for TRWD. "With the success of the Shannon Wetlands, the District plans to construct additional treatment wetlands near Cedar Creek Reservoir in the future."

# Updates

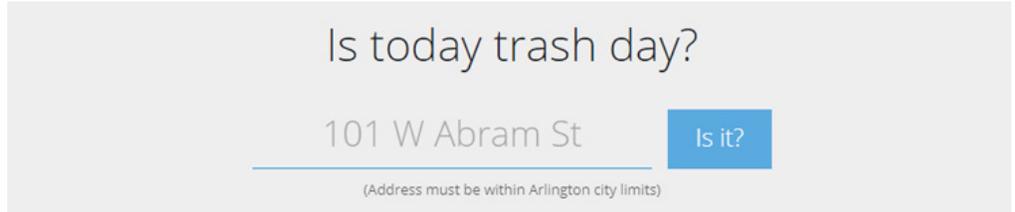
the app not only to provide a useful tool for residents but to encourage others to explore Arlington's open data for possible applications with even bigger potential.

"It's hard for people who aren't already in tech to get interested in something like this. But seeing how something like this was simple to do and that it solved a problem some people have – it's a good way to make other people to say, I have an idea, too," Taylor said. "Once people sit down and start thinking about ideas, it becomes contagious. It only takes a couple people to sit down and say, 'OK, let's build this.'"

Arlington is one of nearly 100 cities partnering with the What Works Cities

University, Arlington drafted an Open Data policy in August to govern the release and accessibility of city data, ranging from code violations to construction permits. After gathering public input from a wide range of stakeholders, Arlington formally adopted its Open Data Policy in October. A variety of searchable data is available to the public through the Open Arlington portal.

Taylor, who has been a front-end developer for a decade, applauds Arlington's Open Data initiative. "I'm 100 percent in favor of every city doing this. It could change how people live. If someone can find that one application that really does



initiative, which aims to improve the effectiveness of local governments by enhancing their use of data to help determine priorities, allocate resources and tackle challenges facing the community and to increase public transparency.

"Arlington realizes data is a strategic asset. Sharing data between city departments makes us more productive and efficient and can give us valuable insights," said Jennifer Wichmann, acting Deputy City Manager. "Sharing data externally improves our transparency and also opens up opportunities for collaboration with the private sector – people who might take our data and do something useful or interesting with it or create businesses out of it." Working with the Sunlight Foundation and Johns Hopkins

improve someone's life, that can make a difference. And Arlington is supporting that," Taylor said. With his trash day app up and running, Taylor said he's considering using Arlington's open data to create a web app designed to let users check the inspection scores of nearby restaurants alongside online reviews. And he's looking forward to seeing what innovative applications others in the community may create. "You don't have to be a computer science guy to do something with this data. You can build something really simply," Taylor said. "It doesn't take a government agency or a huge company to make something impactful. It can be one guy over a couple of nights who can make something useful for an entire city."

# Highlights

## Medical City Arlington Now Offers World's Smallest Pacemaker

Medical City Arlington is now offering the world's smallest pacemaker for cardiology patients. The Micra<sup>®</sup> pacemaker is a new type of heart device that provides patients with the most advanced pacing technology at one-tenth the size of a traditional pacemaker. Medical City Arlington is the first hospital in southeast Tarrant County, including Arlington, Mansfield and Grand Prairie, to perform the first Micra procedure.

The Micra pacemaker specifically treats bradycardia – a condition characterized by a slow or irregular heart rhythm, usually fewer than 60 beats per minute. At this rate,

the heart is unable to pump enough oxygen-rich blood to the body during normal activity or exercise, causing dizziness, fatigue, shortness of breath or fainting spells. Pacemakers are the most common way to treat bradycardia to help restore the heart's normal rhythm and relieve symptoms by sending electrical impulses to the heart to increase the heart rate.

Comparable in size to a large vitamin, physicians at Medical City Arlington are now using the Micra pacemaker because, unlike traditional pacemakers, the device does not require cardiac wires or a surgical "pocket" under the skin to deliver a pacing therapy. Instead, the device is small enough to be delivered through a catheter and implanted directly into the heart – all while being cosmetically invisible. The Micra pacemaker is also designed to automatically



adjust pacing therapy based on a patient's activity levels.

Aamir Amin, MD, electrophysiologist, became the first physician to perform the Micra procedure at Medical City Arlington.

"The Micra pacemaker redefines the patient's experience when compared to traditional pacemakers," said Dr. Amin. "Micra is more comfortable, does not leave a chest scar or bump, and does not interfere with the patient's ability to perform physical activities."



## UTA Launches Emotional Robotics Living Lab

The University of Texas at Arlington has launched a new Emotional Robotics Living Lab to investigate what our future will look like with robots and how they can be integrated into the home to provide physical and emotional support.

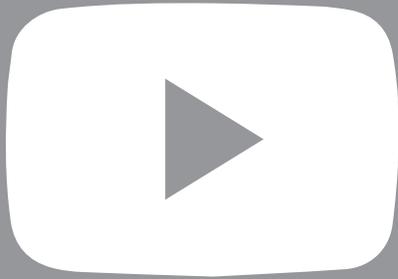
"The idea here is not to replace humans but to fill a gap," said Julienne Greer, UTA assistant professor of Theatre Arts and director of the lab. "We are using theatre arts to design ways for robots to create bonds of trust and emotion with humans of different ages and improve their quality of life."

Greer and colleagues Ling Xu and Noelle Fields, both assistant professors in UTA's School of Social Work, and Kris Doelling, research engineer at UTA Research Institute

(UTARI), recently carried out a study with older adults at an independent living facility in Texas where the robot and adults interacted using well-known sonnets from Shakespeare. This study, which was funded with a \$20,000 seed grant from UTA's Interdisciplinary Research Program, found that after three weeks of interactions, there was a significant drop in depression and increase in human-robot social engagement among those older adults.

The new lab will feature two robots from SoftBank Robotics, NAO<sup>®</sup> and Pepper<sup>®</sup>. Pepper is a 4-foot-tall humanoid robot with large, expressive eyes and lifelike gestures that can connect with people on an emotional level. NAO is a smaller humanoid robot, designed to be an interactive companion.

# VIA by the Numbers



**18,355**

YouTube views



**5000+**

Via Webpage Views



## City of Arlington Launches Rideshare Pilot Program to Provide Transportation Alternative

The City's Via rideshare service which officially launched December 11, 2017, provides affordable transportation to key areas of the Arlington, allowing riders to access entertainment, shopping and dining options, work or school, and even medical appointments. By this summer, the service area will include a large portion of the City between I-30 and I-20, which will allow customers to reach major

retail destinations such as the Parks Mall and Arlington Highlands.

Customers can book a seat in a six-passenger Mercedes-Benz van through the Via app, and Via's sophisticated technology will match them with others going their way. Rides are just \$3 per trip.

Via is available Monday through Saturday, with service hours now running from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays.

First launched in New York City in September 2013, Via currently operates in New York City, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., providing

more than 1.5 million rides per month, and is growing rapidly. Via also licenses its revolutionary on-demand transit technology to transportation operators globally.

"In the city of the future, everyone will be getting around in dynamically-routed shared vehicles," said Daniel Ramot, Co-founder and CEO of Via. "We are excited to partner with the City of Arlington to provide the first comprehensive on-demand public transit service to help residents and visitors get around the city in an affordable, convenient, and efficient way."