UTA MICROTRANSIT PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION

Monthly Report, August 2020
Prepared by UTA Innovative Mobility Solutions
Under the Office of Communications and Marketing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Utah Transit Authority's Innovative Mobility Solutions Team has partnered with Via to deploy a Microtransit Pilot (Pilot) for one year beginning on November 20, 2019. This on-demand, shared-ride Pilot is designed to expand access to UTA services throughout the zone, to improve mobility for all users, and to provide a quality customer experience. In general, the project team is interested in understanding whether Microtransit provides a valuable and cost-effective service to meet the needs of customers in the region as well as future deployment potential for Microtransit Services in UTA's Five Year Mobility Plan.

Evaluation Process

To evaluate the Pilot, performance metrics as identified in the Microtransit Evaluation Plan will be collected and reported out monthly. Comprehensive quarterly reports will take place at three-month intervals throughout the project. A final evaluation report will be prepared upon Pilot completion.

August Update

Ridership continues to edge up, but COVID-19 still has a significant impact on the pilot's performance. Total ridership increased by 14% over July, which for UTA is traditionally a lower ridership month. Costs per rider decreased by 27% as driver hours were reduced to help optimize the service's efficiency.

Overall Health of Pilot Project

Pilot Objective	Key Performance Metric	JUN 2020	JUL 2020	AUG 2020
Ridership	Total ridership	3,556	3,557	**4,063**
	Avg. weekday ridership	162	155	**193**
	Utilization[1]	1.05	1.06	**1.50**
Customer Experience	Avg. wait time (minutes)	9	9	**12**
	Avg. customer rating[2]	4.9	4.8	**4.8**
Overall Performance	Cost per rider	$33.55	$34.06	**$25.01**
	Days of operation	22	23	**21**

Key:

🟩	=	On target	🟨	=	Approaching target	🟥	=	Not on original, pre-COVID-19 target

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[1] Utilization – Average riders per hour per vehicle
[2] Avg. customer rating – Based on a scale of 1 to 5

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HOW COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED UTA AND THE MICROTRANSIT PILOT

UTAH DIRECTIVES, PUBLIC HEALTH AND TRANSPORTATION

These are extraordinary times here in Utah and throughout the world. On March 11th the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. On March 27th Utah Governor Herbert issued a "Stay Safe, Stay Home" directive to all Utahns to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission and minimize the impact on hospitals.[3] According to the Wasatch Front Regional Council, the pandemic decreased traffic volumes to transit stations by 38%, reduced congestion and travel times, and limited transit use.[4]

IMPACT TO UTA [5]

As part of the ongoing effort to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus and ensure fiscal responsibility, UTA implemented temporary service reductions from April through August. In addition, UTA has taken measures to promote social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect riders and employees. UTA advised people to limit their transit use to the essential trips outlined by local and state leadership. Changes included:

- Requiring passengers to wear a face mask
- Partitions between drivers and passengers
- Rear door bus boarding
- Asking passengers to stay 6-feet back from bus operators
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all vehicles

Like other transit agencies across the country, UTA has seen a significant decrease in ridership due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Average weekday ridership declined by 60% in August compared to last year.

IMPACT TO MICROTRANSIT PILOT

The microtransit pilot adopted social distancing and right-sizing of services similar to UTA's adjustments in response to the pandemic. Changes included:

- Encouraging passengers to sit in the seat farthest from the driver
- Reduced maximum passengers allowed from 6 to 3
- Reduced vehicle supply to meet demand and achieve cost savings
- Providing face masks to drivers and riders
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all vehicles
- Installation of plexiglass partitions between driver and riders
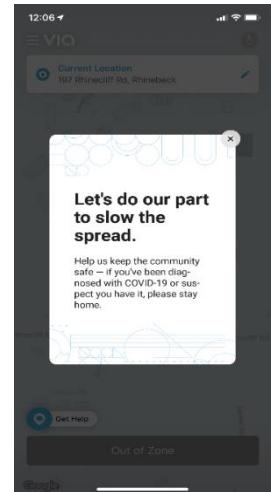
Like other UTA services, the microtransit pilot ridership declined significantly due to COVID-19. This has made it difficult to achieve the original ridership and ridership-related metrics.

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[3] Utah COVID-19 response website: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/cabf07b39a6046ee992f1630949a7c80
[4] WFRC report: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yfrLHwpmEERRZzXZd-3uATTlUv-ZBLd7vlODi8gmCi0/edit
[5] UTA COVID-19 update website: https://www.rideuta.com/Rider-Info/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Updates

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Monthly Data Table

| MICROTRANSIT PILOT OBJECTIVE	METRIC	GOAL	ACTUAL: TOTAL	ACTUAL: WAV [6] ONLY
RIDERSHIP	Total ridership	N/A	4,063	98
	Avg. weekday ridership	350 – 450	193	5
	Avg. riders per hour per vehicle (utilization)	2.5 - 4.5	1.50	N/A
	WAV request %	2.5% - 5.0%	N/A	2.4%
	First mile/last mile connections to transit	25%	31%	N/A
	Shared rides %	25%	15.8%	N/A
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	Avg. customer rating	4.80 out of 5.00	4.80	4.80
	Average wait time	< 15 minutes	12	12
	On time pick up %	95%	91%	88%
	Avg. minutes per ride (trip duration)	N/A	11	11
	Avg. miles per ride (trip distance)	N/A	3.9	3.1
	Avg. travel time (trip speed v. driving)	< 3.0 minutes per mile	2.8	3.5
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	Operating cost budget	$154,893	$101,628	N/A
	Operating hours budget	4,207	2,719	N/A
	Operating miles	N/A	39,928	N/A
	Cost per hour[7] budget	$36.82	$37.38	N/A
	Cost per rider	< $13.08	$25.01	N/A
	Cost per mile	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Safe operations	Avoidable accidents < 1 per 100,000 miles	0	N/A
	Trips booked through Via's call center	N/A	3%	37%
	Fares from credit cards[8]	N/A	$2,426	N/A

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[6] WAV – Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle. Three of the 17 Via vehicles are WAVs.
[7] Cost per hour – Fully allocated; includes operating and capital costs. Excludes marketing expenses.
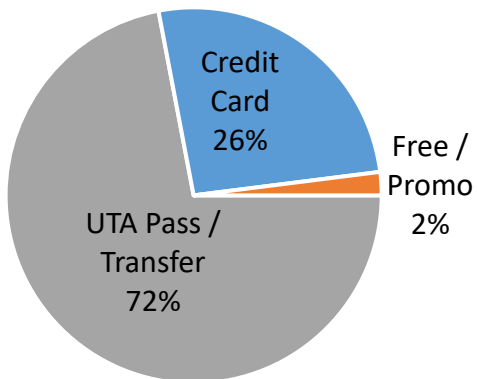[8] Fares from credit cards – Includes credit card, debit card, Apple Pay and Google Pay.

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Graphic 1. Daily Ridership

From the Pilot launch in November 2019 through August 2020
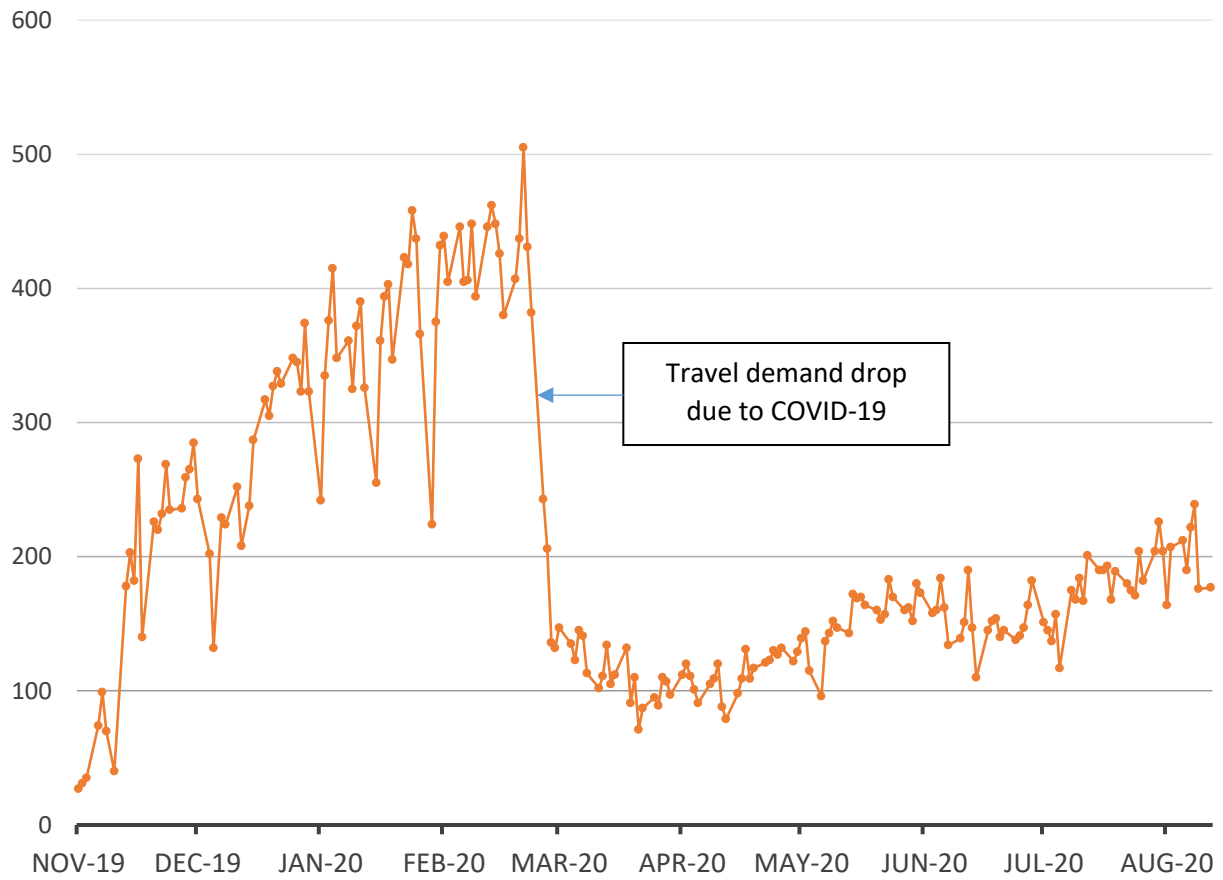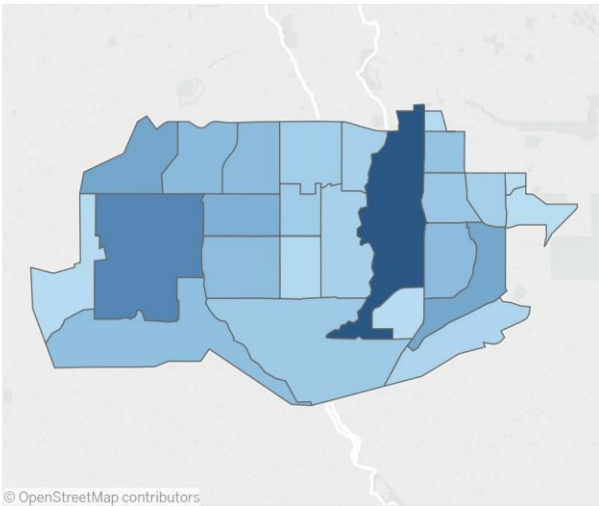

Graphic 2. Fare Payment by Type, August 2020
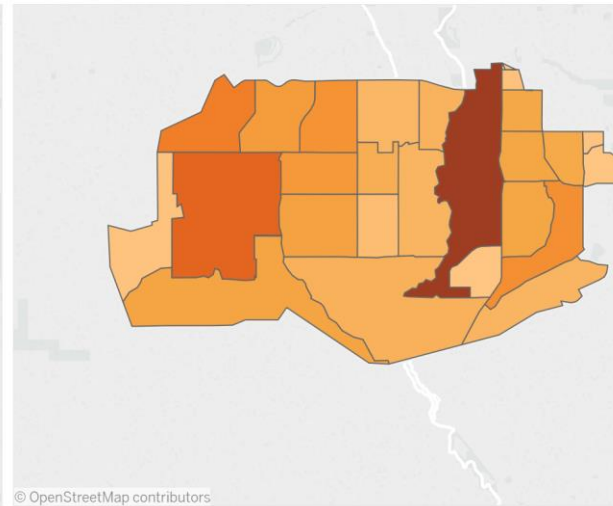
Graphic 3. Usage Maps by Census Block

Darker blocks = more requests

Pickup Requests   Dropoff Requests

Top Pick Up Locations	Requests	Top Drop Off Locations	Requests
FrontRunner, Draper	191	FrontRunner, Draper	184
TRAX, Draper Town Center	155	Business	130
Business	153	TRAX, Crescent View	114
TRAX, Daybreak	123	TRAX, Draper Town Center	114
TRAX, Crescent View	122	TRAX, Daybreak Duckhorn Dr.	98

August travel patterns: Draper FrontRunner was the most used transit station. As UTA restored some train trips in August, riders may be returning to more typical trip patterns. These changes – happening in real time – illustrate the customer-centric nature of microtransit's dynamic routing.

First Mile / Last Mile Rides by Station	*JAN*	*FEB*	*MAR*	*APR*	*MAY*	*JUN*	*JUL*	*AUG*
TRAX, Daybreak	22%	26%	29%	**33%**	**36%**	19%	**24%**	16%
FrontRunner, Draper	**42%**	**36%**	**33%**	21%	20%	26%	22%	**27%**
TRAX, Crescent View	13%	13%	14%	23%	19%	17%	15%	17%
TRAX, Draper Town Center	10%	9%	11%	11%	15%	**27%**	**24%**	23%
FrontRunner, South Jordan	11%	11%	9%	6%	8%	6%	9%	10%
TRAX, Kimball's Lane	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	5%	4%
TRAX, South Jordan Parkway	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%

*Marketing, Communications, and Promotions Summary*
- ON HOLD. All advertising and marketing campaigns have been suspended since mid-March due to COVID-19.
- Riders were invited to take an online survey in late July. The survey's purpose was to better understand rider demographics, mode switching, potential pilot enhancements, and COVID-19 related changes. Results were processed in August and will be published in a separate survey report.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT DATA

Graphic 4. Via Call Center Customer Service Statistics
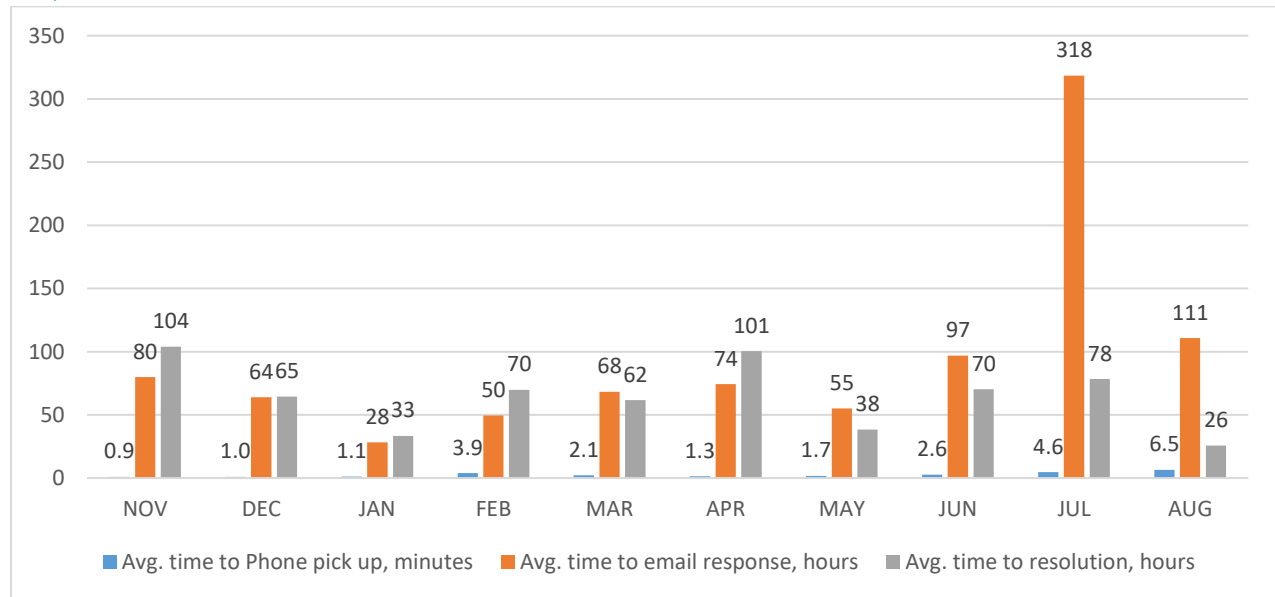
Graphic 5. Comments by Category

- Commendations
- Routing
- Driving Habits
- Customer Service Interaction
- Fares
- Level of Service
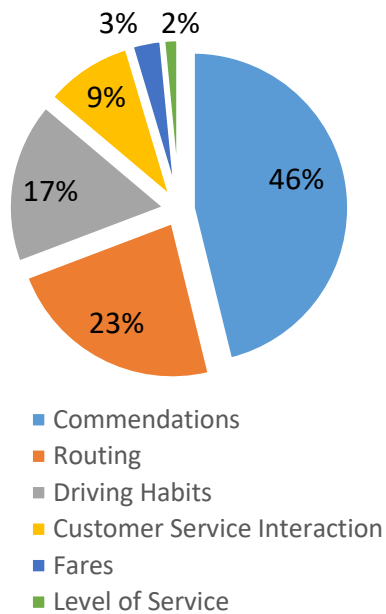
Customer Comment Summary

There were 65 total comments logged, 58 through Via's app and 7 through UTA Customer Service.

Category	Sample Comment
Commendations	*She was being helpful and kind.* *I love this app and I appreciate all of the drivers and everyone involved. This program is a life saver!!!* *Abraham is great. He responds quickly to the request for a pickup, which is getting more rare with the Via drivers. Thanks!* *Jose is such a nice guy, i am happy when i see he is my driver!*
Routing	*Late. Was over 10 mins before he even started to move.*
Driving habits	*Feel unsafe driving with this guy. Aggressive driving... extreme tailgating*
Customer Service Interaction	*Complained about how late I called. Didn't wear mask.*
Fares	*The customer is calling in for a new reduced fare code for VIA. Her daughter's old code stopped working.*
Level of Service	*...suggested having VIA expanded to service the ski resorts as an alternate option for customers.*

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