

UTA MICROTRANSIT PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION

Monthly Report, April 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




In order 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.

Overall Health of Pilot Project

Pilot Objective	Key Performance Metric	FEB 2020	MAR 2020	APR 2020
Ridership	Avg. weekday ridership	392	275	105
	Utilization ¹	2.31	1.52	0.67
Customer Experience	Avg. wait time (minutes)	12	10	8
	Avg. customer rating ²	4.8	4.8	4.8
Overall Performance	Cost per rider	\$15.54	\$23.27	\$52.22
	Days of operation	20	22	22

April update: The pilot team is resetting expectations in this new COVID-19 operating environment. Average weekday ridership fell by 62% month over month due to COVID-19. The pilot continues to serve a steady, smaller number of customers taking essential trips.

Key:

	= On target		= Approaching 6-month target, on track		= Not on target, requires mitigation or change
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¹ Utilization – Average riders per hour per vehicle

² Avg. customer rating – Based on a scale of 1 to 5

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 impact on local hospitals.³ According to the Wasatch Front Regional Council, the pandemic has decreased traffic volumes to transit stations by 38%, reduced congestion and travel times, and limited transit use.⁴

IMPACT TO UTA⁵

As part of the ongoing effort to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus and ensure fiscal responsibility, UTA implemented temporary service reductions beginning April 5th until further notice. In addition, UTA has taken several 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:

- Encouraging passengers to wear a face mask
- Rear door bus boarding
- Asking passengers to maintain a 6-foot distance from bus operators (stay behind the yellow line)
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all vehicles



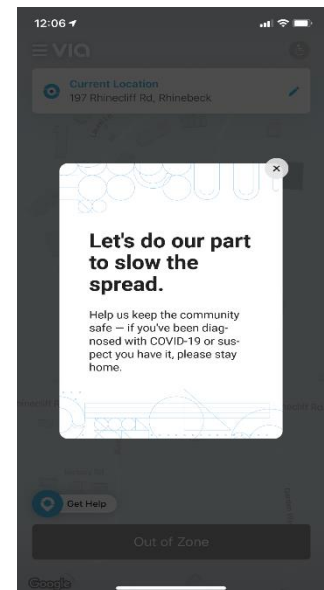
Like other transit agencies across the country, UTA has seen a significant decrease in ridership due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Average weekday ridership declined by -68% in April compared to last year. FrontRunner experienced the largest decline (-86%) of all modes.

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 back seat farthest from the driver
- Reduced maximum passengers allowed from 6 to 3
- Providing UTA-supplied face masks to Via drivers
- Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all vehicles

Like other UTA services, microtransit pilot ridership declined significantly due to COVID-19. Average weekday ridership fell by -30% in March and by -62% in April compared to the previous months.



³ Utah COVID-19 response website: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/cabf07b39a6046ee992f1630949a7c80>

⁴ WFRC report: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yfrLHwpmEERRzZXZd-3uATTIUv-ZBLd7vIODi8gmCi0/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	2,304	37
	Avg. weekday ridership at 6 months	350 – 450	105	2
	Avg. riders per hour per vehicle at 6 months (utilization)	2.5 - 4.5	0.7	N/A
	WAV request %	2.5% - 5.0%	N/A	1.6%
	First mile/last mile connections to transit	25%	39%	N/A
	Shared rides % at 6 months	25%	4%	N/A
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	Avg. customer rating	4.80 out of 5.00	4.80	4.79
	Average wait time	< 15 minutes	8	10
	On time pick up %	95%	96%	97%
	Avg. minutes per ride (trip duration)	N/A	9	10
	Avg. miles per ride (trip distance)	N/A	3.6	3.5
	Avg. travel time (trip speed v. driving)	< 3.0 minutes per mile	2.5	2.9
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	Operating cost budget	\$162,269	\$120,317	N/A
	Operating hours budget	4,407	3,456	N/A
	Operating miles	N/A	30,497	N/A
	Cost per hour ⁷ budget	\$36.82	\$34.81	N/A
	Cost per rider	< \$13.08	\$52.22	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	4%	0%
	Fares from credit cards ⁸	N/A	\$1,212.50	N/A

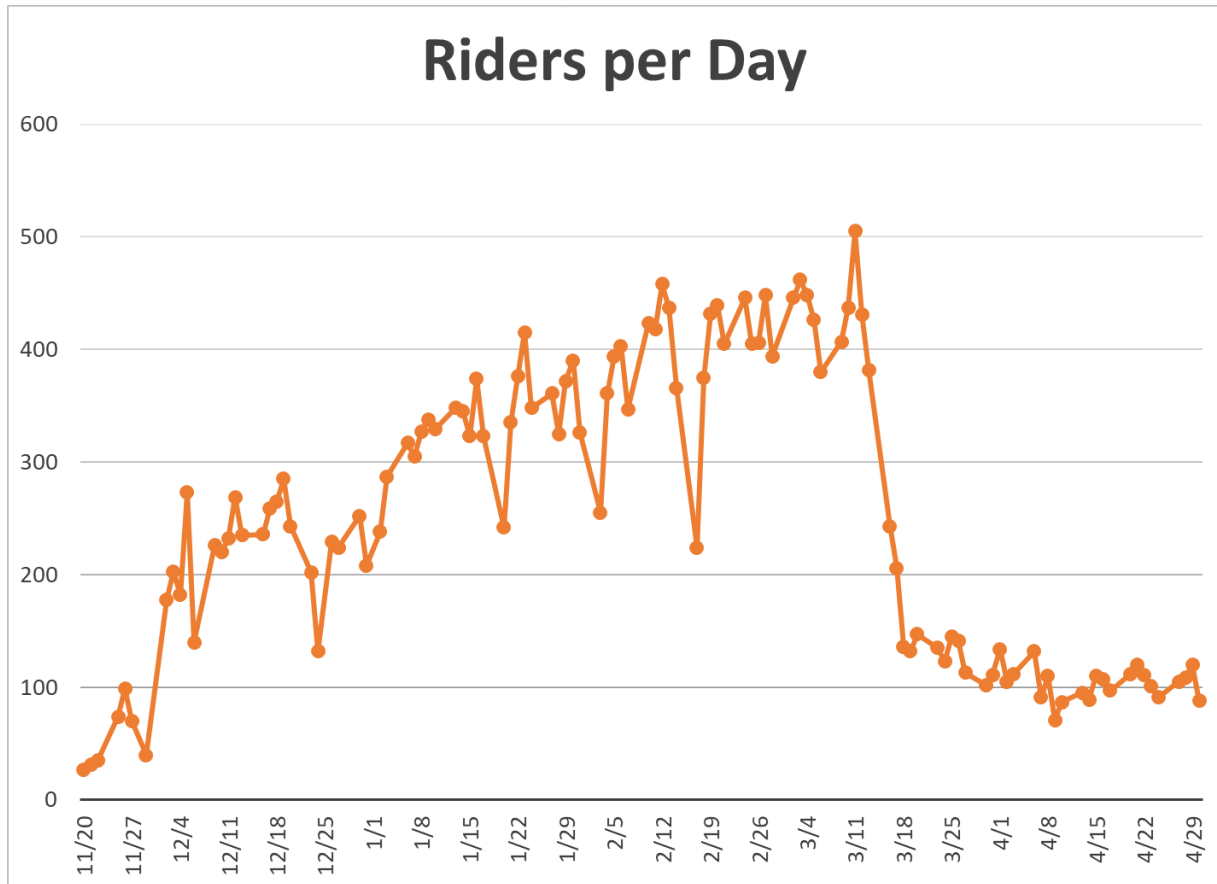
⁶ WAV – Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle. Three of the 17 Via vehicles are WAVs.

⁷ Cost per hour – Fully allocated; includes operating and capital costs. Excludes marketing expenses.

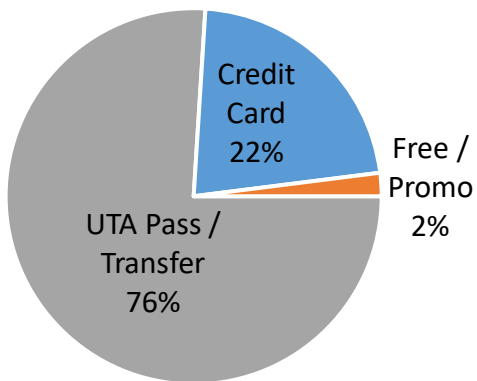
⁸ Fares from credit cards – Includes credit card, debit card, Apple Pay and Google Pay.

Graphic 1. Daily Ridership

From the Pilot launch in November 2019 through March 2020

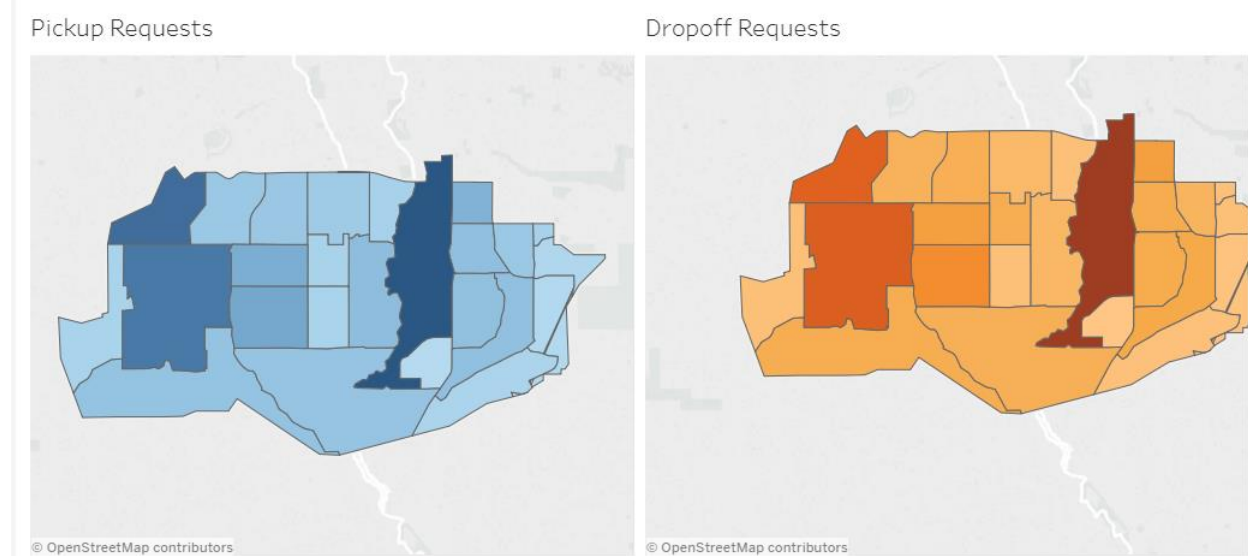


Graphic 2. Fare Payment by Type



Graphic 3. Usage Maps by Census Block

Darker blocks = more requests



Top Pick Up Locations	Requests	Top Drop Off Locations	Requests
Daybreak TRAX	126	Crescent View TRAX	108
Business, South Jordan	115	Business, South Jordan	97
Business, Riverton	114	Draper FrontRunner	95
Crescent View TRAX	109	Business, Riverton	92
Draper FrontRunner	92	Daybreak TRAX	74

April travel patterns: Rider origins and destinations started to shift in March due to COVID-19 as riders changed their travel habits. These patterns became more obvious in April. Moreover, the most requested train stations have shifted noticeably over the last three months.

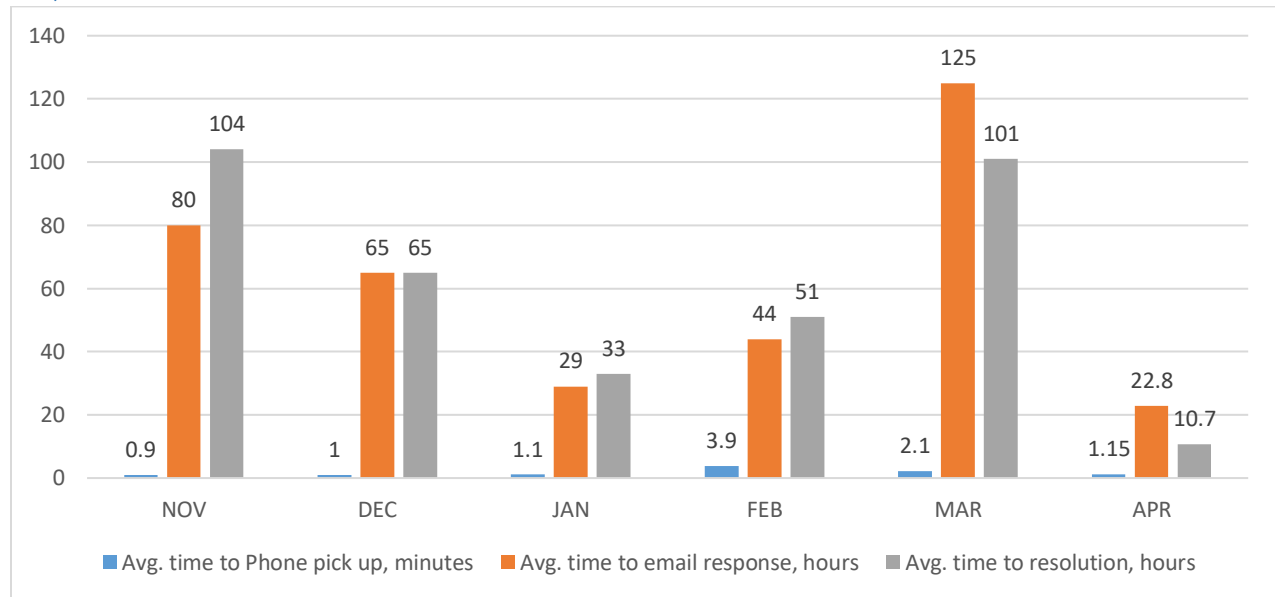
First Mile / Last Mile Rides by Station	FEB 2020	MAR 2020	APR 2020
Crescent View TRAX	13%	14%	23%
Daybreak TRAX	26%	29%	33%
Draper FrontRunner	36%	33%	21%
Draper Town Center	9%	11%	11%
Kimball's Lane TRAX	3%	3%	4%
South Jordan FrontRunner	11%	9%	6%
South Jordan Parkway TRAX	1%	2%	2%

Marketing, Communications, and Promotions Summary

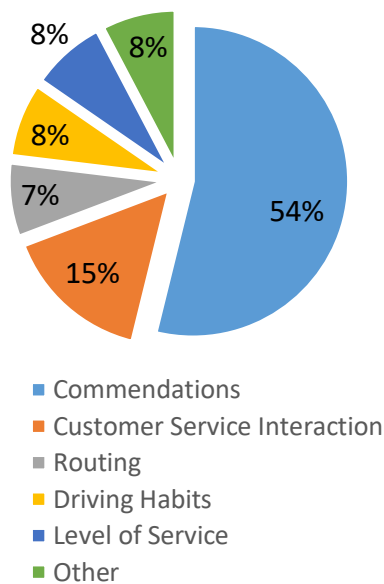
- ON HOLD. All advertising and marketing campaigns have been suspended since mid-March due to COVID-19.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT DATA

Graphic 4. Via Call Center Customer Service Statistics



Graphic 5. Comments by Category



Customer Comment Summary

There were 13 total comments logged. Via's app received 12 and UTA Customer Service received 1.

Category	Sample Comment
Commendations	<p><i>He went out of his way to keep us safe</i></p> <p><i>Very helpful thank you so much</i></p> <p><i>He's amazing</i></p> <p><i>Great and dependable employee.</i></p> <p><i>Really helpful and very professional he actually makes me look at UTA more positively</i></p>
Customer Service Interaction	<p><i>It was freezing outside, and he had the windows open and didn't feel like the heat was on.</i></p>
Routing	<p><i>He made me miss my bus he's slow</i></p>
Driving habits	<p><i>Driver of UTA van with Utah plate V52 9XG operating recklessly...</i></p>
Level of Service	<p><i>I love the VIA service. My greatest hope is that it will operate on weekends and be available earlier in the mornings.</i></p>
Other	<p><i>Email sent.</i></p>