

Performance Evaluation

Advantage Ride Pilot Program

Presented by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

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Executive Summary

Transportation plays a critical role in an individual's ability to participate in and contribute to their community. Yet it is one of the most significant barriers for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) to live, learn, work and play in their community. Though programs exist to support community transportation for individuals with IDD, including the Agency for Persons with Disabilities Medicaid Waiver and Transportation Disadvantaged Program, these options may be limited to certain destinations or activities, such as day care programs or medical appointments.

The Florida Legislature directed the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged to administer the "Advantage Ride" pilot program to test new ways of improving the "transportation services experience" for this population. Beginning in January 2019, the Commission entered into a contract with UZURV, an adaptive transportation network company (TNC), to provide on-demand, door-to-door and scheduled transportation options for individuals with IDD in Hillsborough, Manatee and Pinellas Counties. The program has served approximately 483 individuals and provided over 20,000 trips in 2019.

This report provides an overview of the Advantage Ride pilot program and its performance between January 29, 2019 and October 31, 2019. The Commission contracted with the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida to assist with data analyses and evaluating the program's performance in meeting its objectives, including:

- **Customer Satisfaction** – Overall, the program received very positive feedback from participants regarding their transportation experience. The report provides a summary of customer satisfaction survey responses on key areas of performance, including safety, on-time performance, convenience, and experience with drivers.
- **Ridership** – The program experienced a significant increase in ridership over the course of the pilot, from 157 customers in March to 483 customers in October 2019. Despite the introduction of a rider co-pay and cap on total trips (beginning in July 2019), ridership and demand for service continued to grow.
- **Demand** – Growth in demand posed a significant challenge to the program's sustainability. The average trip count grew from 12.4 trips per day in February to 109 trips per day in June 2019. The report chronicles the efforts that were made to maintain funding (\$500,000) through Fiscal Year 2019-20, and their subsequent impact on demand. Despite these efforts, demand for services continued to exceed funding available to maintain the program through June 30, 2020. As of the publication of this report, funding is expected to expire on or before February 29, 2020.
- **On-Time Performance** – The program excelled on on-time performance, where 99 percent of all trips were made within the scheduled pick-up time. Further, the program experienced a low number of rider "no-shows" (596) and trip cancellations (2,399) between January 29 and October 31, 2019, and only 29 of those cancellations were because of an unavailable driver, driver cancellation or administration error.
- **Trip Lengths and Durations** – The average trip length for program participants was 10.7 miles and over 70 percent of all trips traveled less than 15 miles to their destination. The average trip

duration for program participants was 23 minutes and 49.4 percent of all trips took less than 20 minutes to reach their destination. The program allowed for participants to take trips across county lines; however, the majority of trips occurred within the county lines of Hillsborough and Pinellas (only 4 percent of trips were within Manatee County and less than 1 percent were outside of the three counties of service).

- **Program Costs** – The Advantage Ride pilot cost \$886,684, of which \$26,998 was funded by riders through the implementation of rider copayments, and the remaining \$859,686 was funded by the pilot program. A portion of the total costs included the cost of rider education and program setup administration. Given the investigative nature of pilot programs, the cost model over the life of the project have changed. The initial cost structure was based on best estimates of delivering service to the three-county area. Additionally, comparisons between service areas cannot be easily compared due to the wide array of circumstances that go into cost determinations for transportation services for vulnerable populations. Further, the unit costs are difficult to compare because the pricing model, which is based on a flat rate plus a per mile rate, results in shorter trips costing more per mile compared to longer trips.

The report concludes with an assessment and discusses factors to consider if the pilot is continued or applied to other regions or programs serving individuals who are transportation disadvantaged.

Background

Individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) have the same desire as people without disabilities to live, work, learn and play in their community. Transportation plays a critical role to their independence and community inclusion. Yet many of these individuals are confronted by unique barriers that limit their access to activities in the community, including employment, health care, and social recreation. The limitation of transportation options is often cited as the most significant barrier confronting this population.

Transportation Programs Serving Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

APD administers the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver, which provides long-term care and other supports to help individuals live and participate in their community. Individuals must have one of the diagnosed developmental disabilities defined in Chapter 393, Florida Statutes, to qualify for waiver services, including intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, autism, spina bifida, Down syndrome, Phelan-McDermid syndrome, or Prader-Willi syndrome. APD serves over 57,000 individuals with IDD, which includes over 21,000 on the waiting list to receive waiver services.

Approximately 11,600 individuals are receiving transportation services through the APD Waiver. These services are usually delivered by the individual's caregiver or waiver provider organizations, such as residential habilitation and adult day training facilities. An individual must have transportation identified on his or her waiver service plan to qualify for APD-sponsored trips, which is determined by a case manager (known as a "Waiver Support Coordinator"). APD also encourages individuals and their providers to utilize public transportation options, if available and appropriate for the individual.

Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

The Florida Legislature created the Commission in 1989 to ensure the availability of transportation services throughout the state for individuals who are transportation disadvantaged (TD), due to disability, low-income or age. The Commission accomplishes its mission through "coordinated transportation," where it contracts with transportation operators and other organizations (known as "Community Transportation Coordinators" or CTCs) responsible for facilitating transportation services for the TD population, including individuals with IDD, in each county of the state. The TD program is established in Chapter 427, Florida Statutes.

The Commission administers the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund, which disburses funds to the CTCs to support trips to activities in the community, including health care, employment, education, nutrition, and other life-sustaining activities. CTCs and their local coordinating boards may prioritize funding for trips to certain activities, such as dialysis or cancer treatments. The Commission also works with state and local programs, including APD, to purchase trips through the CTCs to support their constituents who are transportation disadvantaged.

The majority of trips delivered by CTCs are multi-loaded, paratransit services and subsidized bus pass programs. Some CTCs subcontract with taxi or transportation network companies (TNCs), where available, to provide “on-demand,” door-to-door trips for certain circumstances.

In 2019, the Florida Legislature created the Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) program, which included an additional \$10 million in recurring funding to the TD Trust Fund. The legislation (s. 338.2278, F.S.) directs the Commission to award this funding through competitive grants to CTCs and TNCs to support door-to-door, on-demand, and scheduled transportation services that accomplish one of the following objectives:

1. Increase a transportation disadvantaged person’s access to employment, health care, education, and other life-sustaining activities;
2. Enhance regional and cross-county mobility; or
3. Reduce barriers to accessing a transportation hub.

This new funding may create opportunities for the Commission and its partners to explore similar service models that are being implemented through the Advantage Ride pilot program.

Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) – Transportation Voucher Pilot Projects

The FDDC is a private, nonprofit corporation, federally funded under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. The FDDC awards contracts for various initiatives impacting children and adults with IDD and their families, including transportation-related projects. In 2017, the FDDC reported findings on two funded transportation voucher pilot programs that explored new approaches to increase access to affordable, accessible, transportation options for individuals with IDD in an urban and rural community in the state:

- **Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART)** – The FDDC and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) funded the urban voucher pilot at \$150,000 for one year in Hillsborough County. The HART voucher pilot funded 27,813 trips at a savings of \$556,260 and became self-sustaining, reflective of a local systemic change outcome.
- **Citizens for Improved Transportation (CIT)** – The FDDC and FDOT also funded a rural voucher pilot in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Okeechobee, and Palm Beach Counties. During the second year, the project’s work focused primarily on the cities within Palm Beach County. The CIT voucher pilot provided a total of 7,441 trips, serving roughly 300 individuals and covering over 126,000 miles. However, the rural pilot experienced challenges with sustainability due to low rider participation and inability to purchase trips through TNCs, which was prohibited by the FDOT for use of its funding at that time. The FDDC solely funded the project for the second year to see if it could become self-sustainable.

In September 2019, the FDDC allocated \$1.2 million for the next two years (contingent upon federal awards) to fund projects that could replicate the successful Hillsborough Transportation Voucher Pilot Project in up to eight counties statewide. The FDDC plans to issue Invitations for Proposals for up to five one-year replication projects at \$150,000 each between February 1 and July 1, 2020.

Other Transportation Programs

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires public transit agencies that provide fixed-route service to provide “complementary paratransit” service to people with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, who cannot use the fixed-route bus because of a disability. In general, ADA complementary paratransit services must be provided within ¼ of a mile of a bus route or rail station, during the same hours and days the fixed route operates and for no more than twice the regular fixed route fare.

The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) administers the Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) program, which provides services to Medicaid recipients to access medical care if they are unable to drive, cannot afford to own or maintain a vehicle, or do not have access to affordable transportation. Individuals enrolled in the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program, including recipients with developmental disabilities, may receive NET services through their managed care plan as a covered service.

2017 Transportation Disadvantaged Services Task Force

During the 2017 Florida Legislative Session, the Legislature created a task force to examine the design and use of transportation disadvantaged services, with a specific emphasis on individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The task force was assigned to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and included the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged and other key stakeholders. As part of the task force objectives, the Legislature directed APD to contract with an independent consultant to “examine the state’s transportation disadvantaged services, how such services are provided in urban and non-urbanized areas and how to assist in the development and use of different provider models.”

The University of South Florida Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) conducted the Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis study on behalf of the task force. The results and recommendations of the CUTR study included an innovative pilot program to provide a customer-oriented mobility service model for persons with IDD. The intent of the pilot program was to explore new techniques, technology and applications on a trial basis, to learn, refine and consider long term change that can significantly improve mobility services for customers.

Advantage Ride Pilot Program Overview

During the 2018 Florida Legislative Session, the Legislature tasked the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged to “competitively procure an entity that can provide a transportation services experience” for individuals with developmental disabilities, as defined in s. 393.063, F.S., consistent with recommendations made by the task force and CUTR report in 2017. The Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for the Commission to administer the pilot program in FY 2018-19.

The Commission, with technical assistance from the FDOT, conducted a competitive procurement and selected UZURV to provide services for the “Advantage Ride” pilot program to eligible individuals in Hillsborough, Manatee and Pinellas Counties. The Commission also contracted with CUTR to assist with data analyses and the performance evaluation of the program.

UZURV

UZURV is an adaptive transportation network company (TNC). Its mission is to provide access to a better quality of life for all people through on-demand, reliable transportation, with credentialed drivers able to serve those who require a "higher level of care." UZURV serves a variety of customers, including clients served by American Cancer Society, using standard and wheelchair accessible vehicles. Reservations can be made through a call center.

UZURV promotes safety, security and reliability of on-demand transportation to its customers, who can select certified drivers and vehicles that match their specific needs. Highlights of UZURV's service characteristics include:

- **Certified Drivers** – Drivers are trained and certified in CPR, first aid, and disability sensitivity.
- **Rider Safety** – UZURV has a technology platform and real-time ride oversight team that track every ride during all hours of program operation to ensure rider safety. Caregivers can also track the real-time status of rides through the call center and technology platform.
- **Service Quality** – Riders can schedule trips at least two hours in advance and receive door-to-door, one-on-one transportation. Riders can also choose their favorite driver.

Program Objectives

- A. Improve an individual's and individual's caregiver awareness of and ability to use the transportation system in their area through travel training, outreach activities, and other methods;
- B. Use drivers who are trained to understand the sensitivity challenges associated with persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities;
- C. Provide various ways for an individual or individual's caregiver to schedule an immediate ride or a ride for a later date;
- D. Enhance a rider's personal safety before, during and after a trip;
- E. Provide, at a minimum, door-to-door services and transportation that crosses county lines, if requested by the individual or individual's caregiver;
- F. Ensure a rider is picked-up and dropped-off at the appointed time and place;
- G. Establish a transportation network that ensures a person with special mobility needs has access to accessible vehicles;
- H. Provide cost-effective transportation; and
- I. Collect data to measure transit performance.

The Commission facilitated an Advantage Ride advisory subcommittee that convened on a monthly basis to review and report on the progress of the program meeting the above objectives. The subcommittee consisted of representatives of the Commission, UZURV, APD, FDDC, Family Care Council, Florida Self-Advocacy Network'D (FL SAND), Department of Elder Affairs, and CUTR.

Scope of Services

The scope of service for the Advantage Ride pilot program included the following elements:

Eligibility – Individuals were eligible to participate in the program if they are receiving services through the APD Waiver and Waiting List and reside in Hillsborough, Manatee or Pinellas County. The Commission and APD established a data-sharing agreement, meeting the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), where APD provided the Commission with an encrypted list of Waiver and Waiting List clients who reside in the three counties of service, which was updated on a monthly basis.

Services – UZURV provided on-demand and scheduled trips to eligible individuals in Hillsborough, Manatee and Pinellas Counties. Eligible individuals could take trips across county lines, if requested. Riders could also request a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) if they have special mobility needs.

Outreach and Awareness – During the first months of operations, UZURV provided travel training and outreach activities for eligible participants and their caregivers. UZURV collaborated with the Commission, FDCC, and APD to develop appropriate travel training materials and communicate with key stakeholder groups. Between January 29, 2019, and March 31, 2019, UZURV conducted 16 outreach and education sessions, 8 customer training sessions and 2 vendor sessions.

Sensitivity Training – In addition to training related to safety (discussed below), UZURV collaborated with the Commission and FDCC to develop sensitivity training, specialized in serving persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, for all drivers and call center staff.

Scheduling – Participants or their caregivers could schedule trips through the UZURV call center at least two hours in advance. Trips could be scheduled Monday through Friday, 7:00am to 7:00pm, and weekends, 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Safety and Security – UZURV was responsible for ensuring TNC drivers meet the requirements of s. 627.748, F.S., and their vehicles are clean and neat, have at least four doors, be less than ten years of age, and have working air conditioning. Drivers selected for the program were trained and certified in CPR, First Aid, Defensive Driving, Disability Sensitivity, Passenger Assistance, and HIPAA compliance. UZURV was also responsible for making available technologies and methods for riders and their caregivers to enhance their personal safety, including real-time monitoring and notifications of ride status.

Operations

Due to a lengthy procurement process, the program did not begin operations until January 2019. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the events that occurred with the program's operations from January 29 to October 31, 2019. UZURV opened its call center to serve persons with IDD participating in the Advantage Ride pilot program on January 24, 2019. UZURV began providing trips on January 29 and became fully operational when its service included non-ambulatory riders (requiring wheelchair accessible vehicles) on March 1, 2019. UZURV also entered into a contract with Lyft to deliver trips when drivers were not available through UZURV's scheduling platform.

During the first five months of operation (until June 30, 2019), the program funded services at no cost to the rider. Riders could also schedule an unlimited number of trips, up to two weeks in advance, during this period. As discussed in the performance evaluation section of this report, ridership peaked in June, where the program funded over 3,000 trips.

Continuation of the Pilot and Challenges with Sustainability

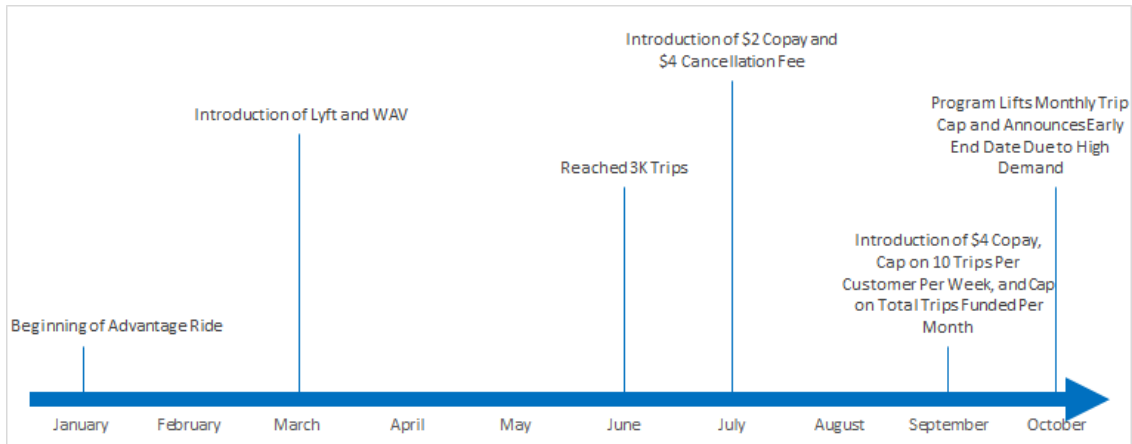
During the 2019 Legislative Session, the Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for the Commission to continue administering the program for FY 2019-20 (until June 30, 2020). The Commission re-entered into a contract with UZURV and implemented changes to the program in an attempt to preserve funding through a 12-month period, beginning on July 1, 2019. These changes included:

- Lowering base trip rates, from \$19.00 to \$4.00 per ambulatory trip;
- Adding a rider co-pay, which was increased from \$2.00 in July to \$4.00 in September;
- Limiting the number of “no-shows” allowed for riders who do not cancel trips ahead of the scheduled time.
- Instituting a cancellation fee that was equal to the co-pay, \$2.00 in July and \$4.00 in September;
- Reducing the maximum number of days an individual can schedule a trip in advance, from two weeks to 48 hours; and
- Capping the total number of trips provided per month as well as limiting each rider to 10 trips per week, beginning September 1, 2019.

The performance evaluation analyzes the impact of these efforts on ridership and demand. In October, the program imposed a limit of 1,432 trips per month to maintain funding at least through March 2020. The program reached this cap on October 17, where riders would be denied services until the first of the following month. The Advantage Ride advisory subcommittee expressed concerns that such disruptions, where services are cut-off by the mid-point of each month, would defeat the original intent of the pilot.

On October 18, 2019, in response to these concerns, the program lifted the cap and announced an early end date of the pilot of December 31, 2019, to allow participants at least two months to identify alternative transportation before the funding runs out. The program experienced a decrease in demand during the months of November and December, which allowed the program to continue funding services in January 2020. As of the publication of this report, the funding is anticipated to run out on or before February 29, 2020.

Figure 1- Project Timeline



Performance Evaluation

The 2019 Legislature directed the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged to continue collecting data to measure transit performance for individuals served by the Advantage Ride pilot program and report the findings to the President of the Florida Senate and Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives by February 1, 2020. The Commission contracted with the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) to conduct the evaluation using the following performance measures:

Transit Performance Measures:

1. **Ridership** – Number of trips
2. **Ridership** – Number of unduplicated riders transported
3. **Demand** – Number of trips by time of day and day of the week including number of ambulatory and non-ambulatory trips provided
4. **On-Time Performance** – Percentage of pickups made within the designated service window
5. **Average Trip Lengths and Durations** – Average length (miles) of trips provided an average duration (time) of trips provided
6. **Cost Efficiency** – Average cost per trip

Customer Satisfaction Measures:

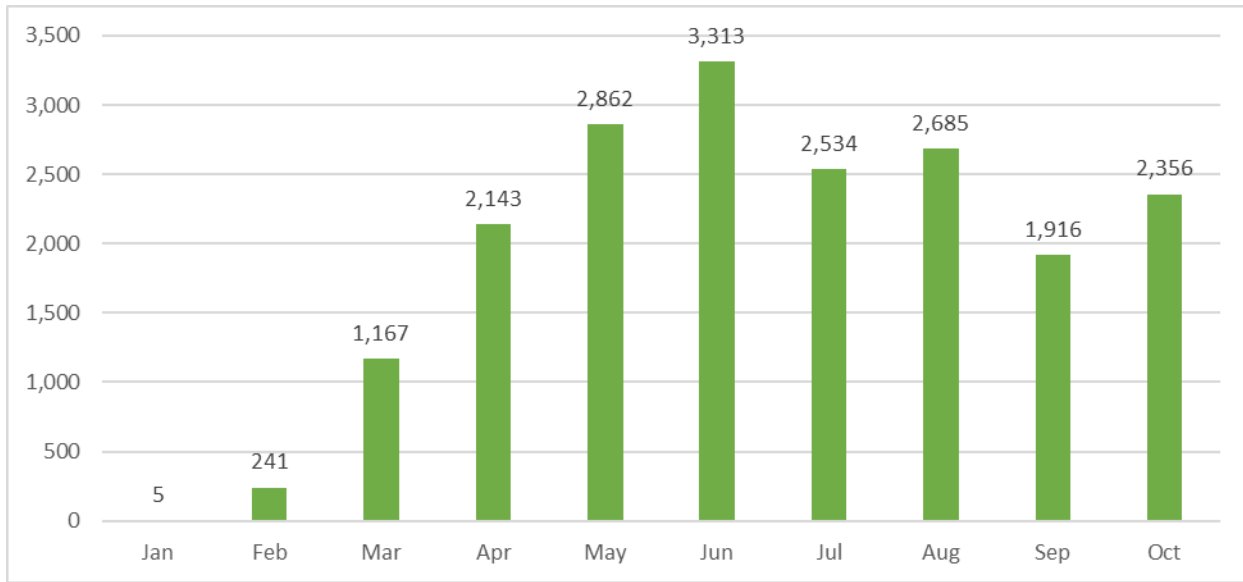
1. Satisfaction with travel training, if rider requested training
2. Ease of scheduling a ride
3. Reliable vehicles that arrive on schedule
4. Courteous, friendly, helpful and sensitive drivers and call center personnel
5. Safe rider experience from pickup through arrival at destination
6. Vehicle meets the accessibility needs of rider
7. Cleanliness of vehicle

Transit Performance Evaluation

Ridership (Trips)

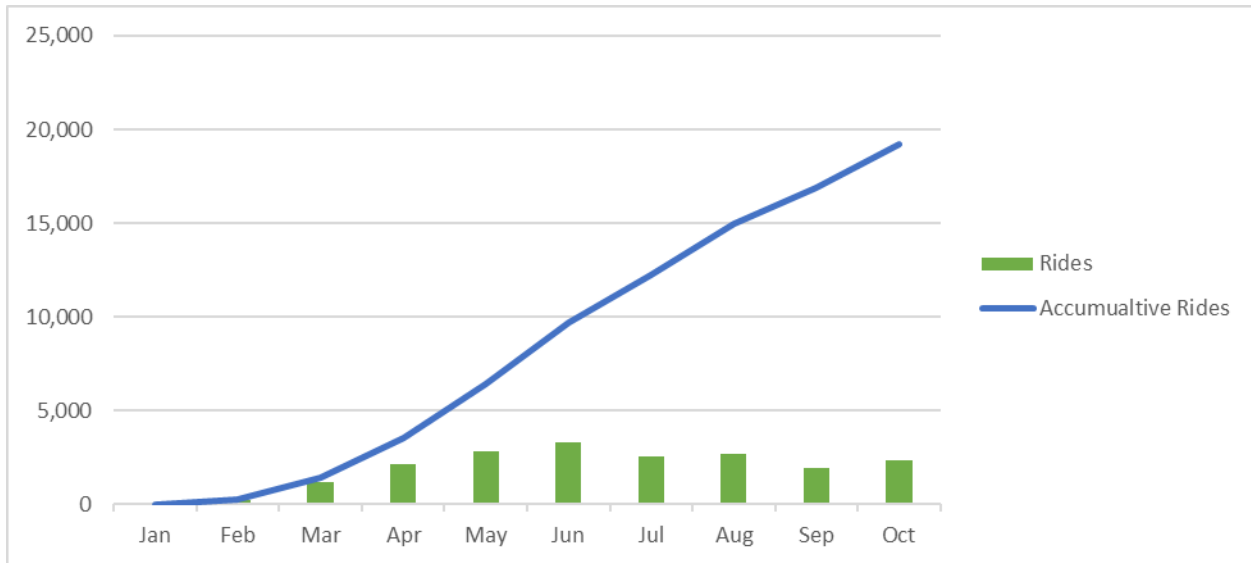
UZURV provided 19,222 trips between January 29, 2019, and October 31, 2019. Figure 2 illustrates the total trips by month from January to October 2019. Ridership peaked in June with 3,313 trips and experienced declines in July and September with the introduction of \$2 and \$4 co-pays, respectively. The first drop, from 3,313 in June to 2,534 in July, illustrates the introduction of the co-pay. The second drop, from 2,685 in August to 1,916 in September, represents the introduction of an increased co-pay (from \$2 to \$4). It is important to note that each time the co-pay was adjusted, there was an initial drop in ridership, but the subsequent month experienced an increase in ridership.

Figure 2 - Monthly Trips



The monthly totals illustrate the demand for trips and the patterns that followed the introduction of co-payments and service caps. However, the overall adoption and usage of Advantage Rides services continued its upwards trend. Figure 3 highlights the trend of accumulative trips over the course of the pilot program.

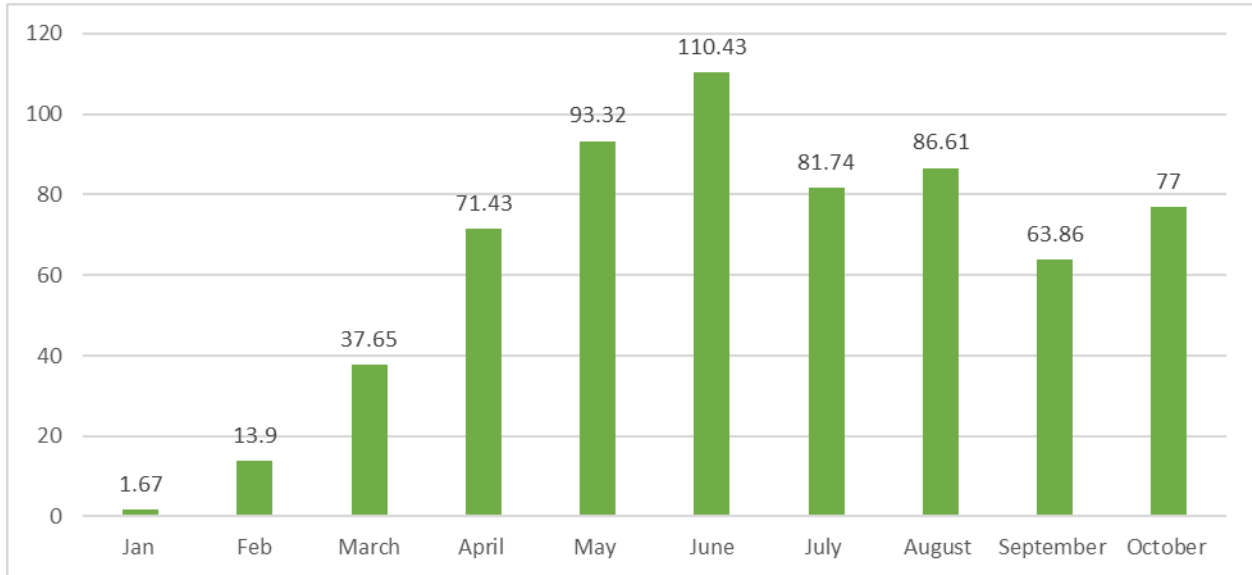
Figure 3 - Accumulative Total Trips



Ridership patterns illustrate the extent of service delivered and the overall demand for the service. The average daily trips represent the activity and service capacity of the Advantage Rides program. The overall average of 72 trips per day is misleading due to the impact of the initial period of the program where awareness and participation was lower. Examining the average daily ridership after April, when

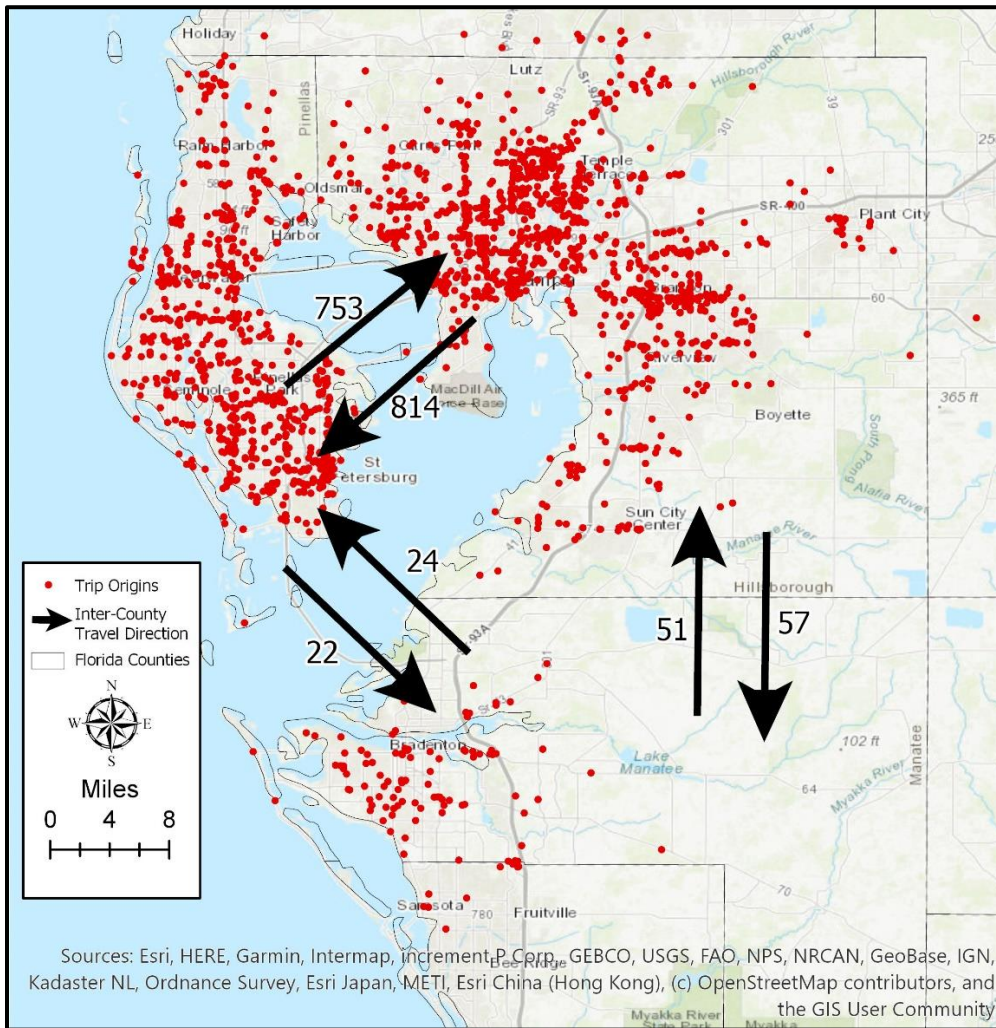
the outreach efforts were complete, is higher at 83 and a better representation of the average daily trips. Figure 4 represents the average daily trips per month.

Figure 4 - Average Daily Ridership by Month



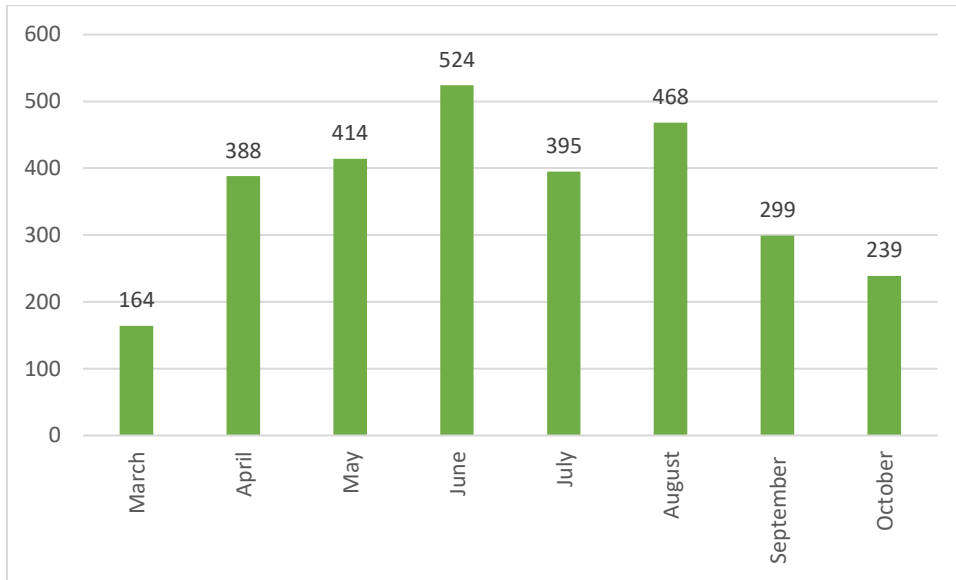
The trips are distributed throughout the three counties with 50 percent of the trips occurring in Hillsborough County, 46 percent of the trips in Pinellas County and 4 percent of the trips in Manatee County and 0.70 percent of the trips with destinations in other counties. Figure 5 below portrays the origins of the trips provided by UZURV's services and the number of inter-county travel.

Figure 5 - Origin of Advantage Ride Trips



The transportation needs of non-ambulatory customers (individuals who require a wheelchair) are acute. Accordingly, the pilot program attempted to address the transportation needs of this segment of the market. UZURV contracted with wheelchair accessible transportation companies to provide wheelchair-accessible rides, as requested, beginning in March 2019. CUTR examined the wheelchair accessible reservations and trips and found it provided 2,891 trips from March to October, representing 13 percent of all trips. Feedback from WAV customers indicated challenges with arranging WAV trips in the month of September. UZURV reported a temporary capacity challenge with the call center when it expanded its service to other areas. This difficulty was remedied the following month. Figure 6 shows the total wheelchair trips by month.

Figure 6 - Total Wheelchair Trips



Ridership (Unduplicated Riders)

The unduplicated headcount represents the total unique customers served. The Advantage Ride Pilot Program served 483 customers between January 29, 2019, and October 31, 2019. This is a significant increase from the 157 customers served between January 29, 2019, and March 31, 2019. As stated earlier, these customers took over 19,222 trips. The following table provides a breakdown of the participants, compared to all eligible APD clients, in each county being served by the Advantage Ride program as of December 2019. Table 1 highlights the participation rates among the eligible APD clients varied between the three counties with higher participation rates in larger and more urban counties. However, the reason for the differing rates of participation is unclear. Conditions like living arrangements, availability of transportation options, individual needs, program awareness and organizational partnerships may all impact the participation rates of the APD clients.

Table 1 - Percent of Eligible APD Clients Participating by County

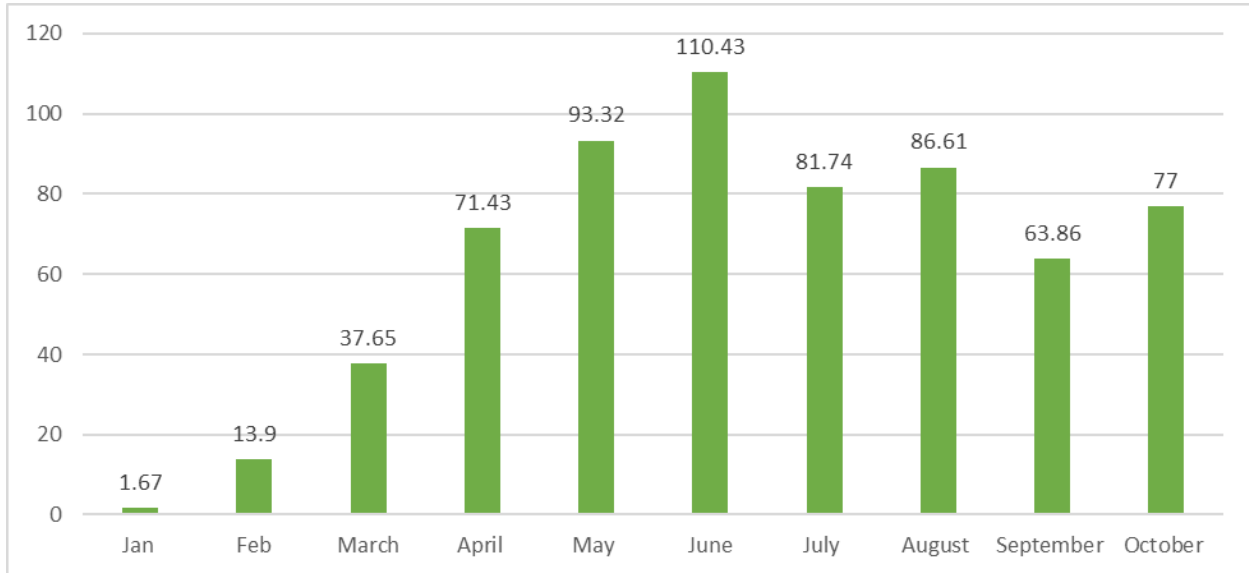
County	Percent Participating
Hillsborough	6.0%
Manatee	2.8%
Pinellas	5.2%
Grand Total	5.3%

Demand

Activity patterns reflect the demand for trips on the Advantage Ride program. Monthly trip totals, average daily trips, activity by days of the week, and hour of the day reveal a profile of the travel patterns of the Advantage Ride customers.

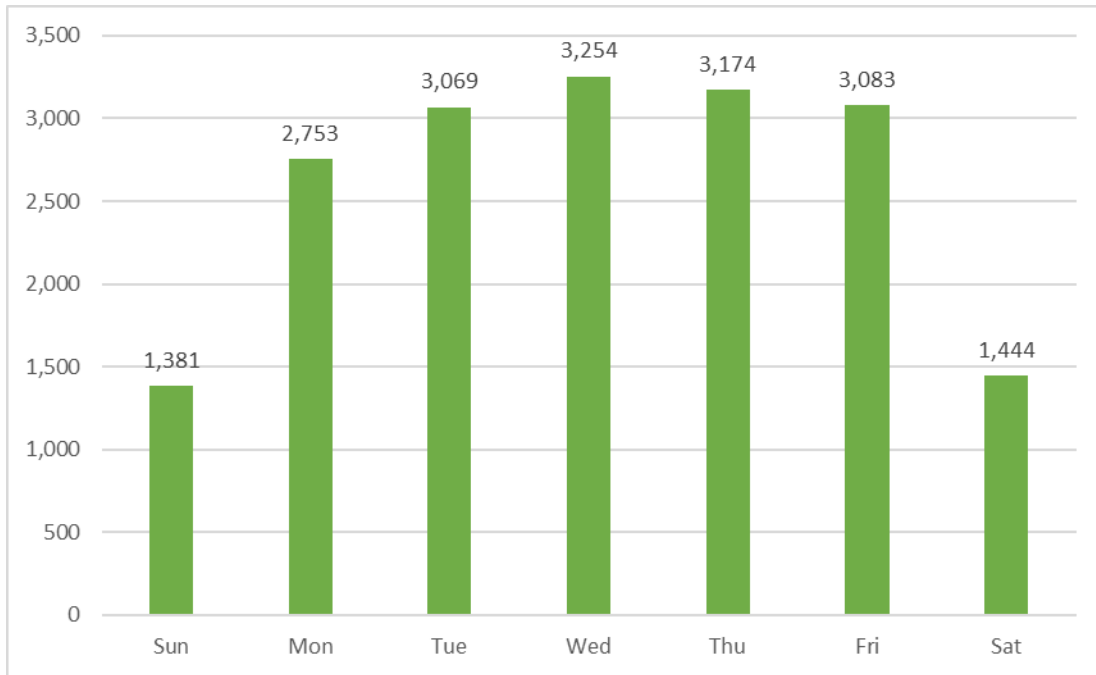
Daily Ridership is an indicator of the daily demand for the service among the Advantage Ride participants. Daily ridership increased steadily from the inception of the program, peaking in June with 110 daily trips. The introduction of the co-payments, and limits to allowable trips per customer resulted in a decline of the daily trips. Figure 7 below illustrates the overall trend.

Figure 7 - Average Daily Ridership by Month



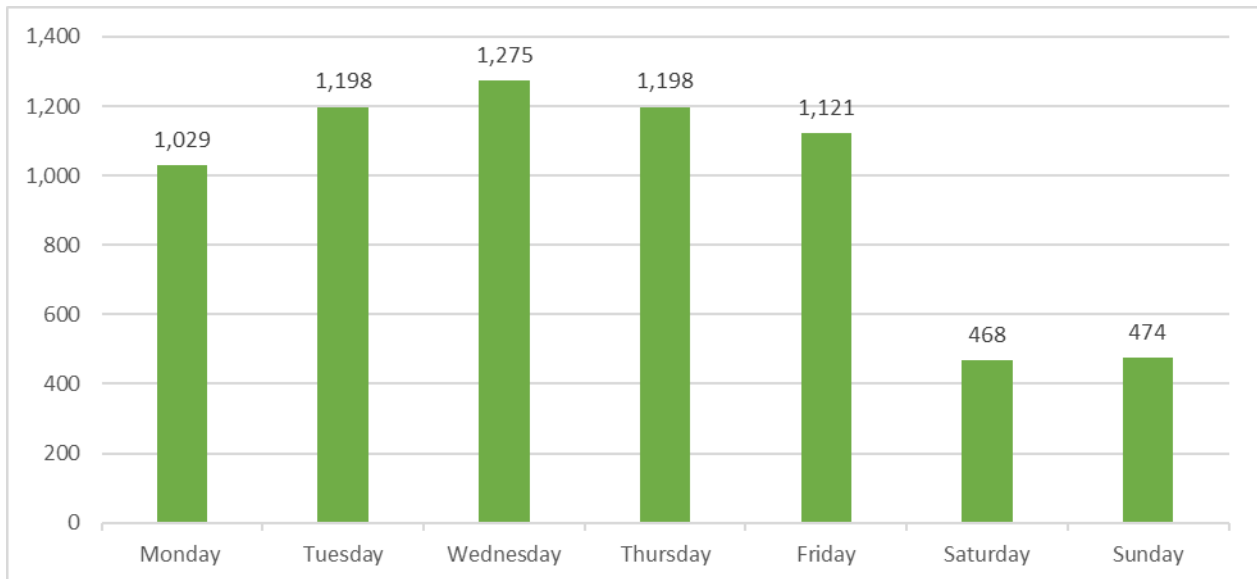
Activity levels by day of the week reflect the behavioral pattern of the Advantage Ride participants. The Advantage Ride participants' travel patterns reflect typical travel habits with more travel during the weekday. The total hours and total trips by day of the week indicate the activity levels. A comparison of the two statistics also indicates consistent activities. Users of the system are making repeat trips each day of the week (e.g., employment, enrichment activities and medical trips). Figure 8 features the total trips provided by the day of the week.

Figure 8 - Total Ridership by Day of the Week



The total driver hours by day of the week follows a similar pattern of the total trips with more hours on the weekdays. However, an examination of the driver hours, which represents a large portion of transportation costs, underscores the resources needed to serve the Advantage Rides customers. Figure 9 illustrates the total hours and the pattern of driver demand by day of the week.

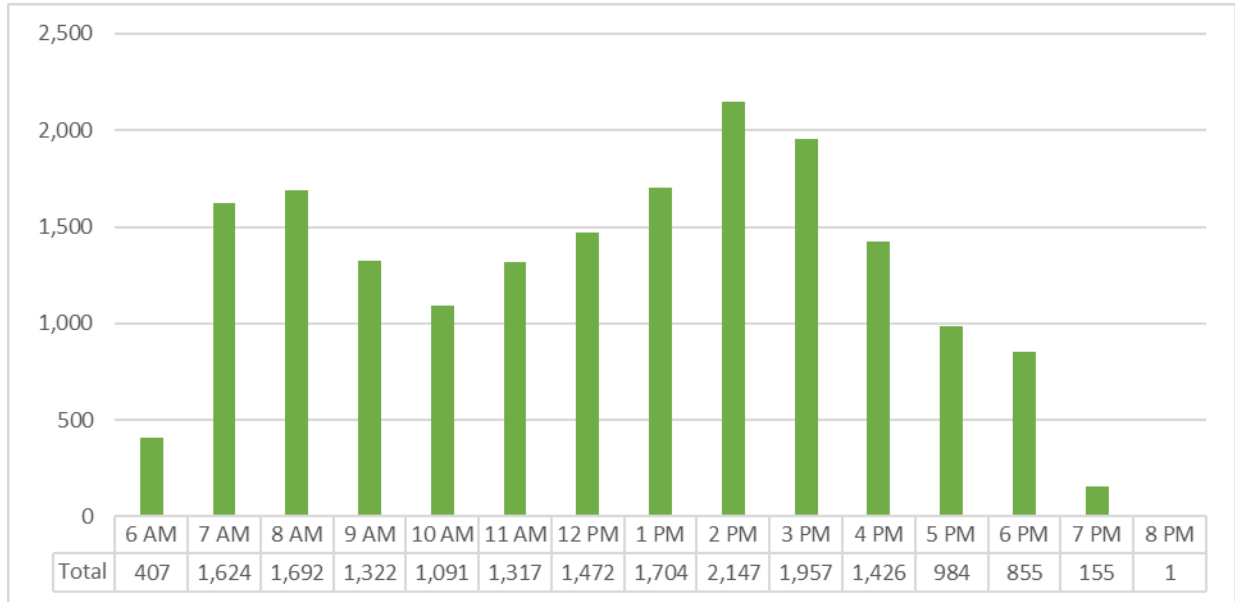
Figure 9 - Driver Hours by Day of the Week



Activity levels by time of day reveals the hourly travel patterns over the course of a day. Typical travel patterns reveal two peak travel times in the morning, between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and evening, between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The Advantage Ride participants hourly patterns aligned with the

typical a.m. peak travel times, but its evening peak occurred closer to mid-afternoon. Figure 10 illustrates the hourly travel activity among the Advantage Ride participants.

Figure 10 - Distribution of Trips by Hours of Day



On-Time Performance

On-time performance, defined as trips arriving within 15 minutes of the scheduled pick up, is based on actual trips performed and not trips requested or reserved. Over 99 percent of the trips provided by the Advantage Ride program were on-time. Trip cancellation rates reflect the reliability of the service and high number of cancellations are costly for service providers. A goal of the on-demand service is a reduction in cancellations due to missed trips. Figure 11 illustrates the low rate of cancellations due to interruption or unavailability of service. The high number of rider-cancelled trips is an added cost to the program. To address this issue, the Advantage Ride program instituted a cancellation fee equal to the co-pay. As a result of the cancellation fee, rider canceled trips decreased markedly. Figure 12 illustrates the decline in total cancellations and the monthly rates.

Figure 11 - Cancellation Reason

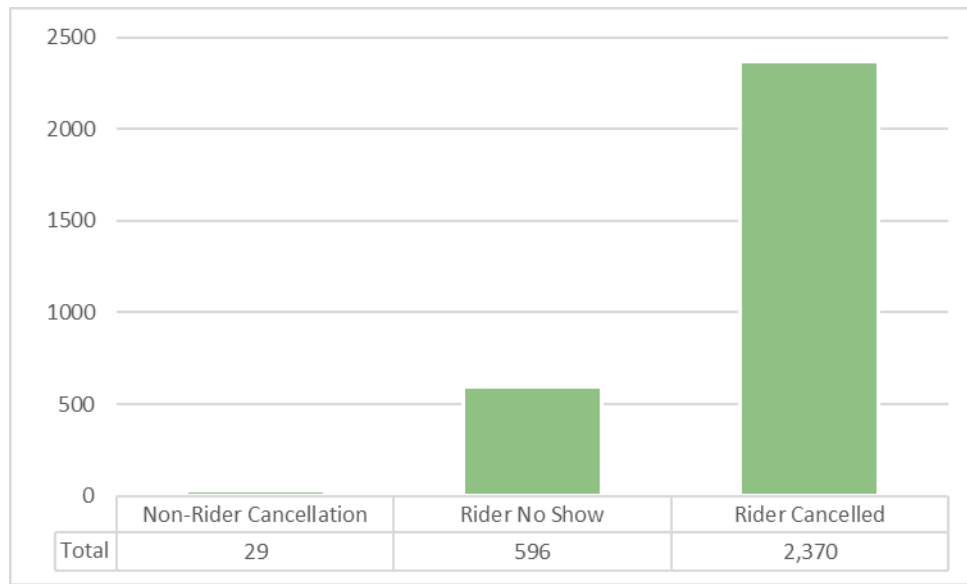
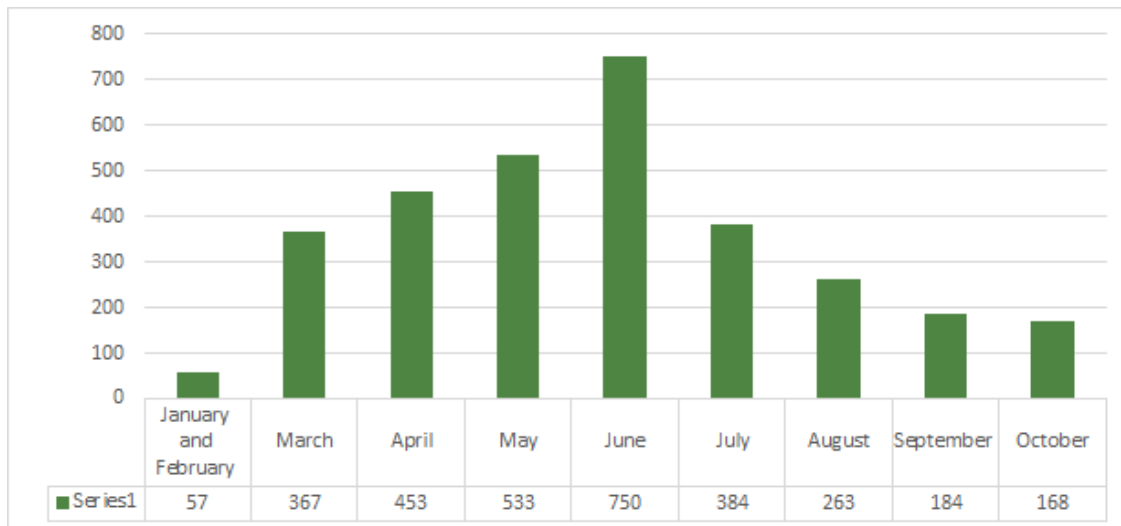


Figure 12 - Rider Cancellation Rates



Average Trip Lengths and Durations

Between the dates of January 29, 2019, and October 31, 2019, the Advantage Ride program provided 184,821 miles of service to customers mostly in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee County and the average trip length was 10.7 miles. Figure 13 illustrates the total trips grouped into three categories of less than 15 miles, 15 – 30 miles and over 30 miles. Over 70 percent of the trips were under 15 miles and a small portion (3 percent) of the trips were more than 30 miles. Further, the average trip time was 23 minutes and 49.4 percent of the trips were less than 20 minutes and a small percentage (8.5 percent) of

the trips were over 45 minutes. Figure 14 illustrates the distribution of the travel time for the Advantage Ride customers.

Figure 13 - Distribution of Trip Distance

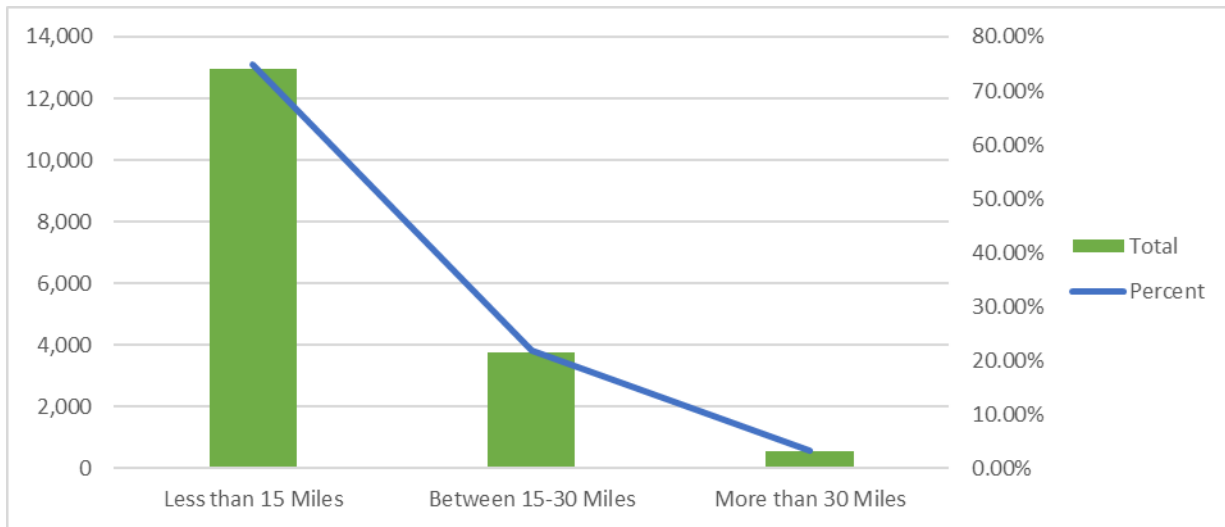
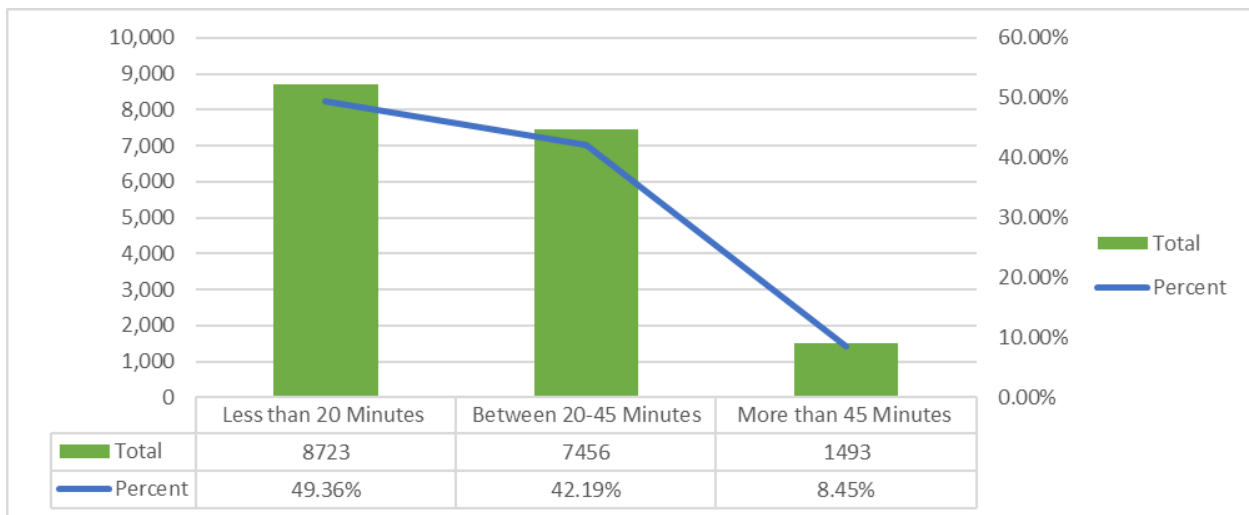


Figure 14 - Distribution of Trip Time

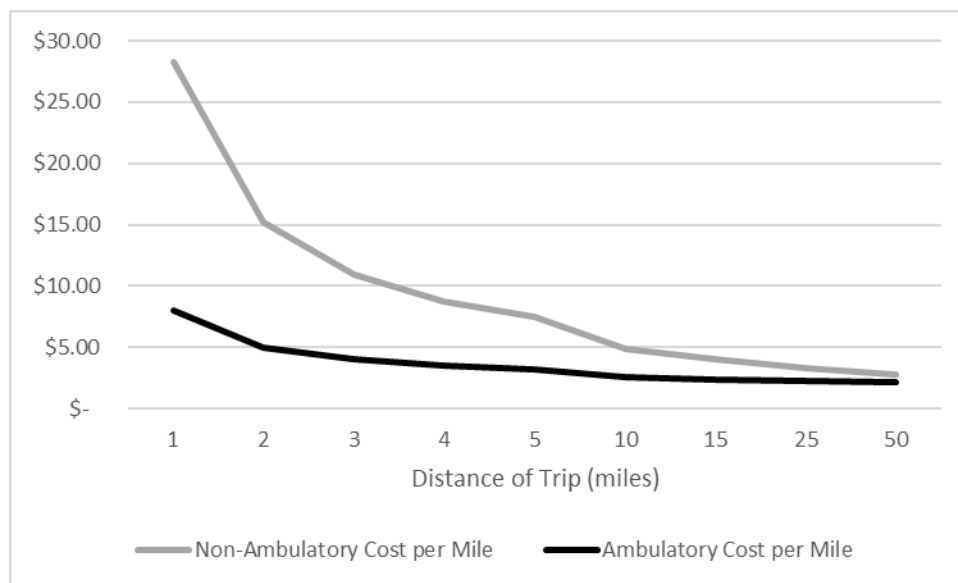


Cost Efficiency

Unit costs, such as cost per mile, are often used as a measure of efficiency for transportation services. With customer-centered services, such as paratransit services, which is inclusive of the UZURV on-demand service, the cost per mile is often skewed based on the pricing model employed. The pilot program established a separate pricing model made up of a base flat fee (i.e., per trip rate), \$26 per non-ambulatory trip and \$6 per ambulatory trip, and a per mile rate of \$2.25 for non-ambulatory and \$2.00 for ambulatory.

This structure results in improved efficiency as trip lengths increase; this trend is most pronounced with the wheelchair trips with a higher flat rate. It is important to note that pricing models for transportation services often vary depending on the operating environment and types of trips provided. For example, transportation providers would develop a different pricing model if the service is designed to meet many short trips versus a service that is devised to transport customers to a regional hospital. Consequently, cost efficiency comparisons are difficult due to the influence of the pricing models on unit costs analysis. Commonly, price models are negotiated based on the circumstances of the transportation needs of the customer and the transportation conditions (e.g., urban versus rural, short trips versus long trips). Figure 15 below illustrates the impact of the pricing model on the cost per mile of the Advantage Ride program.

Figure 15 – Impact of Distance on Cost Efficiency



Performance in Customer Satisfaction

CUTR examined customer satisfaction data from surveys conducted by mail or telephone calls to Advantage Ride customers or their caregivers. The surveys were provided in two forms: Survey 1 was delivered by mail and over the phone, which included 9 questions with a “yes” or “no” response (with an opportunity to provide additional written or verbal comments); for Survey 2, questions were more in-depth, asking respondents to mark their trip uses and number of trips as well as to rate the qualities of the service.

The sections below summarize the results of these surveys. Overall, the Advantage Ride pilot was a well-received program, with a very high rating (above 4.5 or 90 percent) in satisfaction on almost all areas of services. It is important to highlight that the riders’ sense of safety was one of the highest ranked areas of the Advantage Ride program, which is a major priority for this population. In terms of improvement, the scheduling process was cited as the area needing the most improvement. This was largely due to an increase in call volume and lack of other options (such as a mobile or web-based app) for customers to schedule trips during the duration of the pilot.

It is also worth noting that both surveys received a high response rate. Based on the services provided between January 29, 2019, and October 31, 2019, there were 186 responses from Survey 1 and 97 responses from Survey 2. The following sections include the written feedback received from the open-ended questions.

Survey 1

Below are the 9 questions asked of the customers with a brief reporting of the responses:

1. Did you get travel training from Advantage Ride?
2. Did the training help you feel more independent and safe when you traveled?
3. Were you able to schedule a ride easily?
4. Were you satisfied with the arrival time of your driver?
5. Was your driver polite, friendly and helpful to you?
6. Did you feel safe when your driver picked you up and while you were riding in the vehicle?
7. Was the vehicle accessible to your transportation needs?
8. Was your vehicle clean and comfortable?
9. If your vehicle was wheelchair accessible, was your wheelchair properly tied down

Some over-the-phone respondents were asked an additional question beginning in July:

10. How do you feel about the new copay put in place by CTD?

Here is a summary of the responses to Survey 1:

- All respondents (100 percent) felt safe when being picked up and while in the vehicle and all respondents felt that their driver was polite, friendly, and helpful. The survey results also revealed that all the respondents felt the vehicle was accessible to the rider's needs and all the WAV riders indicated their wheelchairs were properly tied down.
- 32 percent of the survey respondents received travel training from Advantage Ride and 90 percent of those indicated the training helped them feel more independent and safer when they traveled.
- 98 percent of respondents indicated scheduling with the Advantage Ride program was easy.
- 97 percent indicated they were completely satisfied with the arrival time of the driver.
- When asked about the introduction of the co-pay, 56 percent responded unfavorably, 42 percent responded that it was alright or reasonable and 1 respondent (1.5 percent) responded positively.

The mail-back survey also included opportunities for customers to comment on their experience. Ten of the surveys contained comments and all but one about scheduling on Sundays was extremely positive:

"I am very thankful for your ride program! It is a wonderful way to help those with disability to feel independent and able to get around to work, play and be healthy.

My daughter used 3 times and felt secure with the responsible/ safe drivers that she used. Please continue with the program!"

"They were always on time to pick me up, to get the job and to get me home. They always call to tell that they're pm their way. I'm very happy with their services and like to have it all the time."

"Sammy has three jobs- working Monday through Friday 8:30-3:00 but not at the same place- so when I say Advantage Ride has been a God send- it has helped me be a sane person again! A HUGE thank you to all the excellent drivers- I feel very comfortable with sending Sammy off to her three jobs!"

"Your program is super. It helped me be on time for work and help me save money. I love Advantage Ride Pilot Program. Thank you"

"In the beginning we have some trouble making the trip for the week, if you make your reservation on Sunday, is not guarantee that Monday, the ride will show, so now we make reservations on Saturday. That's the problem sometimes. But in general, the drivers are very good and the services very good. Thank you to make our lives a little bit better."

"I love Advantage Ride Project. I wish it could stay for very. I love it. People are so nice and treat you like family."

Survey 2

Below is a copy of Survey 2, which was mailed to Advantage Ride customers in November 2019:

Advantage Ride Survey

1. Before using Advantage Ride, about how many trips per week did you take from your home?
- A. 0
B. 1-4
C. 5-9
D. 10+
2. Before using Advantage Ride, what forms of transportation did you use? Please select all that apply.
- _____ Drive
_____ Uber/Lyft or other carsharing service
_____ Ride with someone
_____ Taxi
_____ Walk or Bike
_____ Public transit
_____ Other (specify)
-

3. While using Advantage Ride, about how many trips per week did you take from your home?
- A. 1-3
B. 4-6
C. 7-9
D. 10+
4. What qualities of Advantage Ride have been beneficial to you? Please select only three (3) qualities.
- _____ Convenience
_____ Qualified drivers
_____ Hours of service
_____ Scheduling process
_____ Private rides
_____ Price
_____ Reliable
_____ Other (specify)
-

5. In general, how would you rate each of the following aspects of the Advantage Ride?

<i>Please circle the number that best reflects your opinion</i>	Very				Very
	Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Poor
a. Safety	5	4	3	2	1
b. Ride availability	5	4	3	2	1
c. Door to door service	5	4	3	2	1
d. Vehicle cleanliness and comfort	5	4	3	2	1
e. Driver courtesy	5	4	3	2	1
f. Ability to schedule rides	5	4	3	2	1
g. Price	5	4	3	2	1

6. What purposes do you use Advantage Ride for? Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusion/Social |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nutritional/Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Errands |

Thank You for completing the survey!

Figure 16 and Figure 17 show the number of trips before and while using the Advantage Ride pilot program. Twelve percent of respondents indicated they did not take any trips before participating in the program and that the service gave them mobility. The results also showed that fewer people took more than 10 trips per week funded by the Advantage Ride program. Overall, the highest amount of responses were around 4 trips per week both before and during the program.

Figure 16 – Total Trips per Week Prior to using Advantage Ride

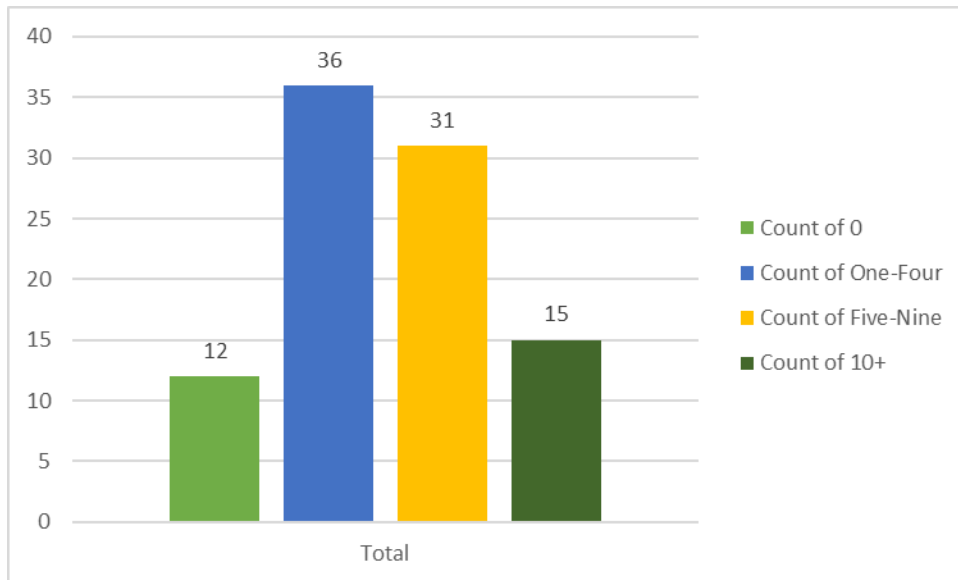


Figure 17 – Total Trips per Week Since using Advantage Ride

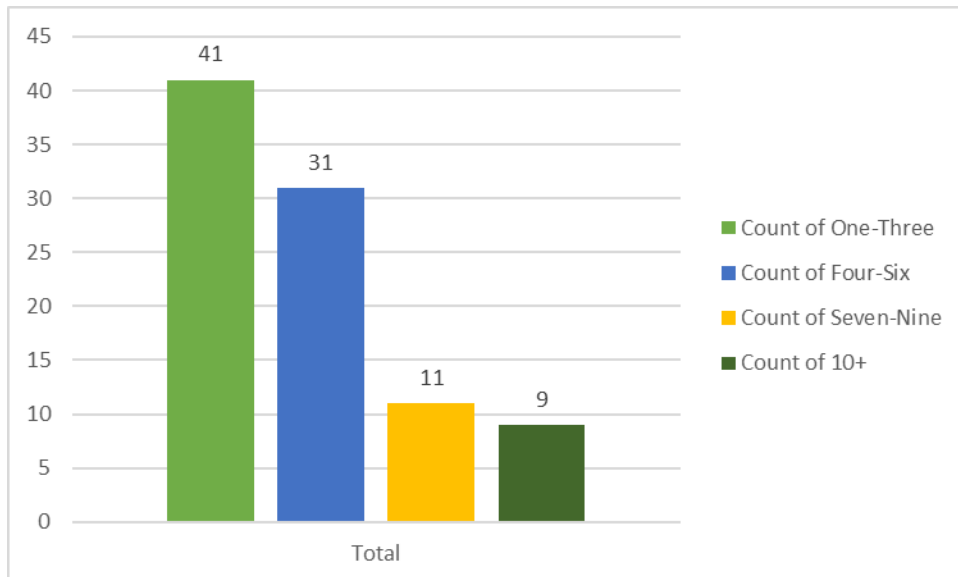


Figure 18 shows the most common forms of transportation respondents used before participating in the Advantage Ride program. 65 respondents (67 percent) indicated they rode with someone while only 2 (2 percent) indicated they use a taxi service. It is important to note that this question allowed for multiple

responses, so some may have used just one form of transportation while others used all forms of transportation.

Figure 18 - Forms of Transportation Before Advantage Ride

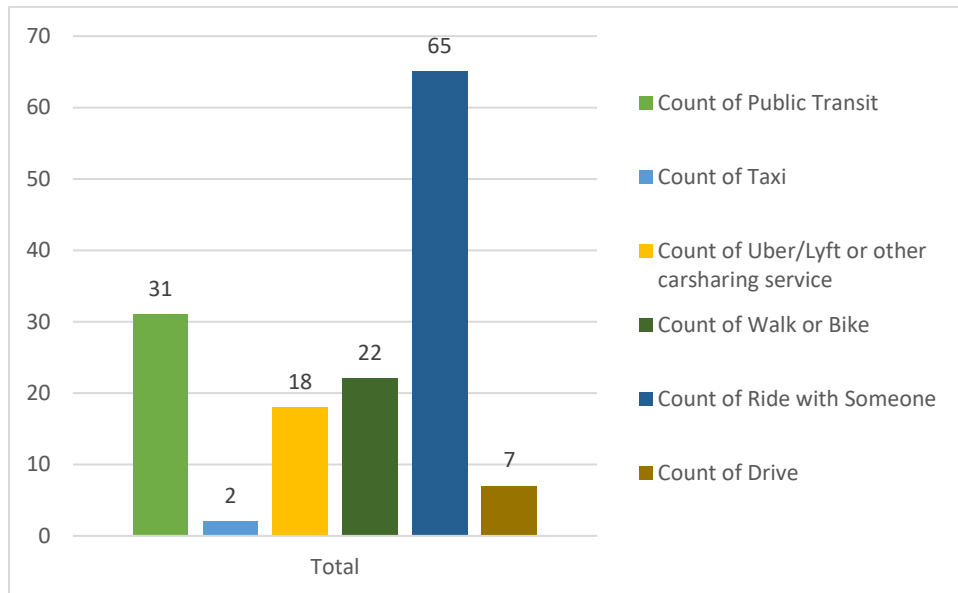
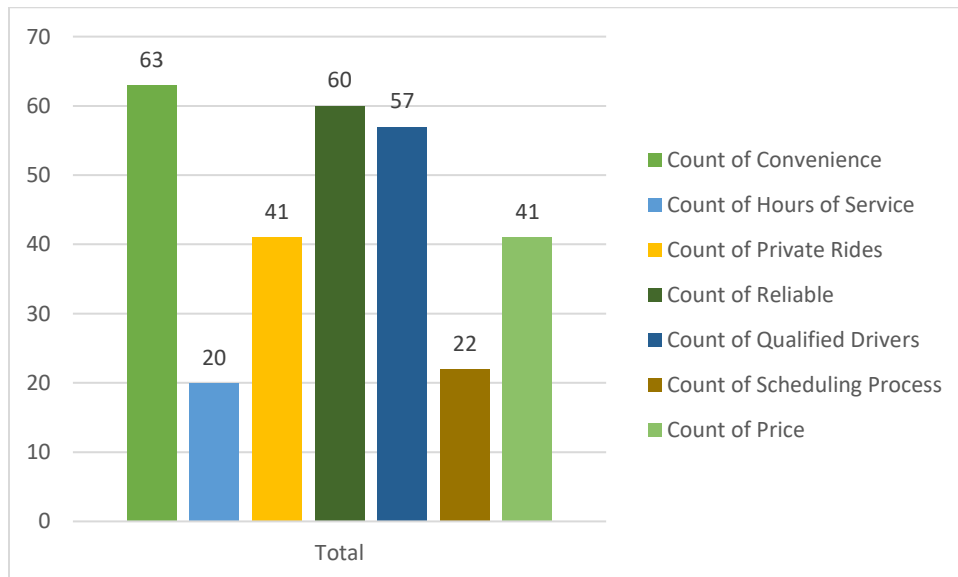


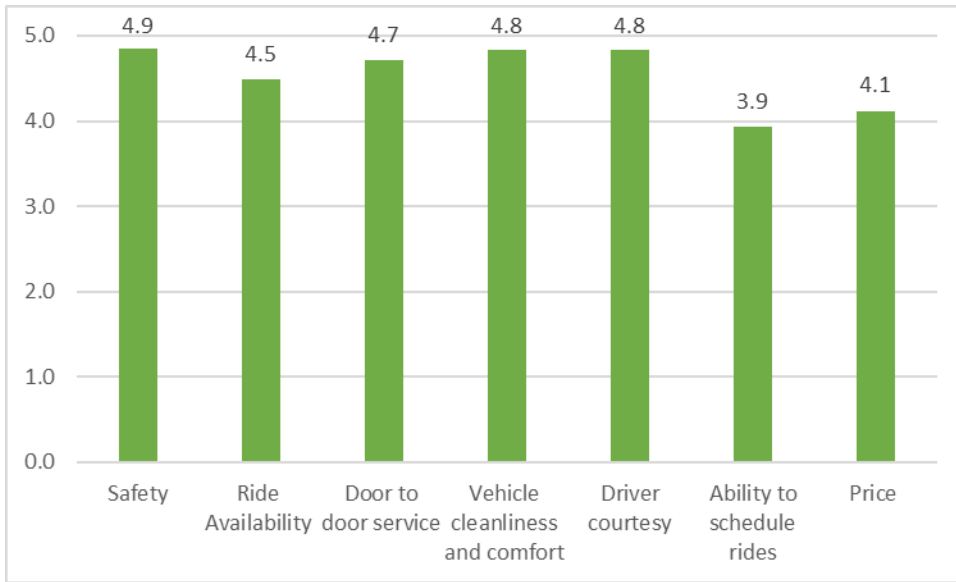
Figure 19 shows the most favored qualities of the program. The most favorable quality was convenience while the least favorable qualities were hours of service and scheduling process. Again, this question allowed for multiple responses.

Figure 19 - Favored Qualities



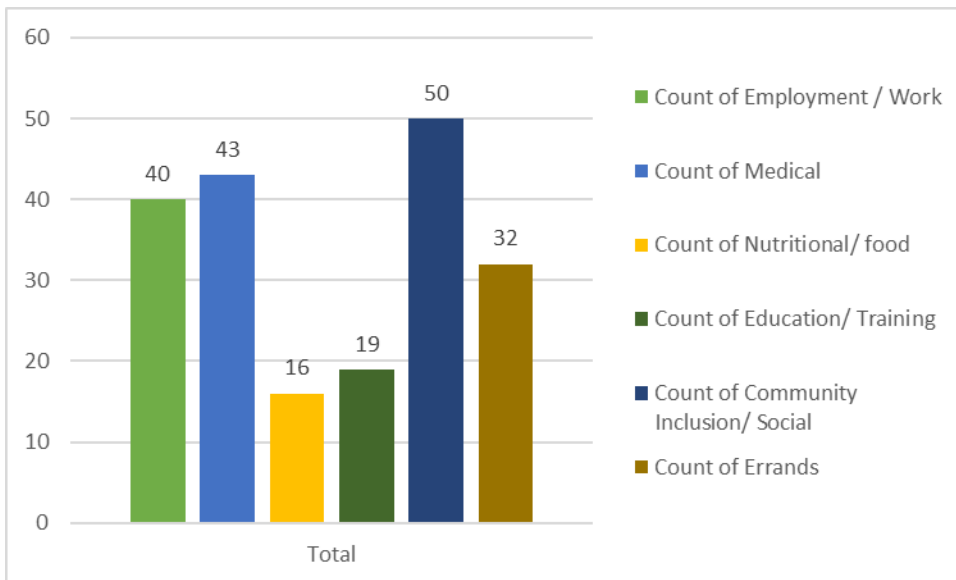
For question 5 of Survey 2, respondents were asked to score various aspects of Advantage Ride. Figure 20 illustrates the averages of these responses. Safety scored the highest at 4.9 while the ability to schedule rides scored the least at 3.9.

Figure 20 - Performance Scoring



Finally, in the last question of Survey 2, respondents were asked to indicate the purpose of their trips while using Advantage Ride. Respondents were encouraged to select all that apply. Figure 21 illustrates their responses. Most trips were for social inclusion followed by medical and work. The least number of trips were for food (groceries, restaurants, etc.).

Figure 21 - Advantage Ride Trip Purposes



Although Survey 2 did not allow space for comments, some respondents provided additional feedback on the margins and on the back of the survey. One respondent even mailed back a separate letter. Here are some of those comments:

“I would like to thank you personally for letting Advantage Ride be a Pilot Program for the past year. I can’t tell you how much we need a program like Advantage Ride for our young adults to get to work. My husband and I returned to the State of Florida (after 4 years) in May 2017. To only find there was no transportation to get my intelligently disabled (ID) daughter to work. We moved from the State of Northern Virginia where Samantha has transportation to pick her up daily for fifteen years with a charge of \$120 a month (which we gladly paid). Sammy holds down two jobs and works five days a week from 9:00 until 3:00 in Tampa. It’s extremely difficult for someone who is ID to find employment. Therefore, they have to take a position that is usually not close to their home.

Advantage Ride has truly been a gift for a family like ours- who will always be responsible for their child with disabilities. Not only has it helped build independence in Samantha, she is so happy to go off to work daily even if it means being in the car for 20 minutes four times a day. I have been so pleased with the drivers- they are always polite and always on time. I feel that Samantha is very safe when she leaves me in the morning- which is always a huge concern when you have a child with a disability. Before Advantage Ride I (senior citizen) was on the road constantly. Samantha falls in the moderate range of retardation. Therefore, she is not capable to use any other form of transportation- she needs constant supervision when maneuvering herself in the community. Advantage Ride was a perfect solution to her needs to become more independent in the community.

I encourage you to do whatever you can to keep this most IMPORTANT program!”

“No rides past 7:30 pm. Classes end later”

“I have tried numerous times and can’t get anything but machines. I need something more reliable for my mentally disabled brother”

“Thank you so much for this wonderful service! It has been extremely helpful. We are hoping it will continue on.”

Overall Assessment and Future Considerations

Results from the evaluation indicate the Advantage Ride pilot program has delivered on several of its performance metrics, including customer satisfaction, on-time performance, and providing a high-quality transportation services experience to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The program also excelled in promoting safe and reliable services, which are significant issues for this population. Improvements could be made to the scheduling process, including an introduction of a web-based or mobile application scheduling service, to reduce call volume and wait times.

Based on growth in ridership and positive customer satisfaction, participants appear to prefer “on-demand” transportation as an alternative mobility option available in their community. However, this poses significant challenges with program sustainability. Though the program experienced a slight decrease in demand after a co-pay and trip limits were introduced, these efforts were not enough to fund services through a state fiscal year period. Additional funding and/or additional limits imposed on services would be required to continue the program for a long-term period.

It is important to note that both the positive features and challenges highlighted in this report may not necessarily be unique to serving customers with IDD. Other programs may consider these factors when designing “on-demand” services for their customers who are transportation disadvantaged. It is also difficult to determine whether this service model would be successful in other regions of the state, particularly in rural communities, given the low participation in Manatee County. The TNC service model does not lend itself to rural areas given its reliance on abundant service providers and the lower availability of drivers in less populated areas.

Cost parameters are a crucial question for all providers of transportation services. Similarly, the cost structure for this pilot was designed to meet the needs of the targeted populations. It is not reasonable to infer the costs associated with this pilot are easily replicated. The experimental nature of pilot programs, the unique conditions that impact transportation costs and the land use design all play a factor in costs associated with transportation. Consequently, the findings cannot infer the true cost for a community to service different populations. Nevertheless, the demand for such service, the impact of quality service on the well-being of those utilizing the service are crucial for all communities to address. Cost saving strategies, such as cost sharing with riders through co-pays, fees related to trip cancellations, ridership and funding caps should be considered when implementing such programs.

As mentioned in the background section, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged is administering a new grant program with the funding received through the M-CORES legislation. This funding may be used to support similar projects like Advantage Ride that support greater access and cross-county mobility through on-demand, door-to-door and scheduled trips. The Commission will encourage Community Transportation Coordinators and other TNCs to consider applying for future projects to explore similar service models for other customers who are transportation disadvantaged.

Overall, the Advantage Ride pilot program demonstrates there is a need for the state to explore more mobility options for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The rapid adoption and growth of ridership over the course of the pilot is evidence of the latent demand for such service to improve the lives of the pilot’s participants. The positive outcomes from this program are largely the result of the outreach and collaborative efforts that occurred with self-advocates and other stakeholders at the state and local level. It is critical that all parties – state government programs, transportation

provider organizations, and individual and family advocates – are involved in contributing to the solutions to support greater mobility for individuals with disabilities.