



North Bay Social Planning Council

RideShare Program



Rider Satisfaction Survey Results:

Making ends meet and improving the quality of life of low-income families in North Bay

March 2009

Background

The RideShare Program has been developed to assist low-income families in getting to and from essential destinations within North Bay in an affordable and convenient way. With the help of volunteer drivers, RideShare provides rides to medical and agency-based appointments, grocery stores, food banks, Laundromats, and early learning programs. The RideShare Program is currently in its Transition Phase, serving 17 families, and moving toward its expanded version. This report includes feedback that has been generated by a Rider Satisfaction Survey conducted in March 2009. The survey aimed to measure the impact that the RideShare Program has had in the lives of those who have accessed the Program. A total of 17 families were surveyed. All families surveyed have accessed RideShare during its Transition Phase, from June 2008 – March 2009. All survey questions and responses are included in the Appendix.

1 – Time Savings

Nearly 50% of parents surveyed reported that they **save roughly 2 hours in travel time** by taking a ride with a RideShare Driver as compared to a city bus or taxi. Many parents, 40% reported saving 30 minutes to 1 hour per trip; the remainder of parents reported saving 3 or more hours per trip. The less time spent waiting for connections, means the more time that parents and their children have to do the things that they enjoy. For instance, 76% of respondents reported having **more quality time to spend with their children** since joining RideShare .

One parent explains what he or she likes most about RideShare:

“It’s an amazing program, we are extremely grateful... our daily activities are no longer a burden – it takes sometimes over an hour just to get on the city bus with a transfer, wait, etc..”

2 – Cost Savings

Parents also clearly indicated the cost savings involved in accessing RideShare as compared to other means of transportation. In fact, 67% of riders reported saving \$15.00 or more per round-trip ride to a grocery store with RideShare as compared to other means of transportation; while 32% of parents reported saving at least \$4.00 per round-trip ride. All riders surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that having access to RideShare has helped them budget for their transportation needs.

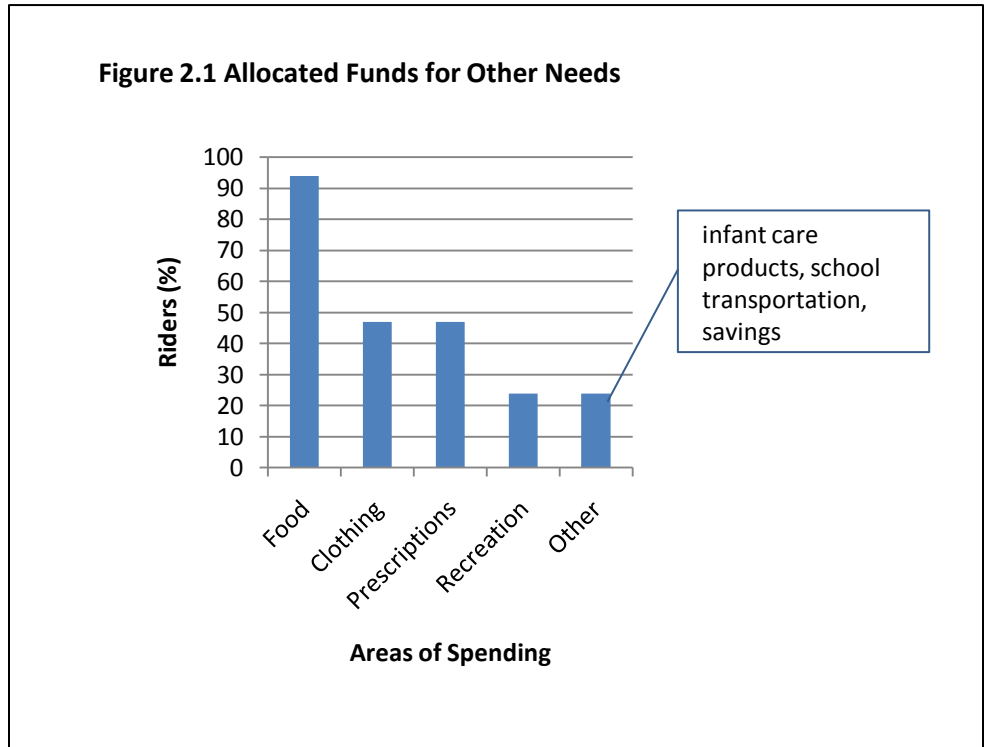
One parent expresses some of the benefits of the RideShare Program:

“I love that the cost of a roundtrip ride is only \$2.00. I love that I can guarantee myself a ride with RideShare, it makes me so much more self-reliant and it’s good that I’m not spending a lot”

3 – Reallocating Saved Funds -- Putting money where it is needed most

When riders have saved money on transportation, they have been able to allocate those savings to other areas of need. For instance, over 90% of respondents reported having **more money to spend on food** (Figure 2.1); in addition, 88% of respondents have found that they have fresh food more often.

Nearly half of parents surveyed reported having more money to put toward necessities such as clothing and prescriptions, while 25% allocated their savings to recreation and entertainment. Lastly, 25% of respondents reported having more funds for other needs, such as infant care products, school transportation, general and emergency savings.



2 – Social Inclusion and Access to Community Resources

Overall, parents reported feeling less isolated since joining the RideShare Program. The majority of parents felt that having access to RideShare has made other community resources, such as child and family-serving agencies, medical offices, and food banks, more accessible to them.

One parent explains how RideShare has helped his or her family:

“We can now attend our programs regularly and not have to miss out”

It seems that RideShare has eased the whole experience of booking appointments, participating regularly in appointments or programs, and arriving on time. Nearly 90% of parents reported feeling **less overwhelmed when planning for appointments** since becoming riders.

A parent explains how RideShare has helped him or her:

“Being able to book the necessary appointments without getting worried about how we are going to get there”

The majority of riders, 76%, reported that they and their children are **attending appointments more regularly** since joining RideShare; and furthermore, 88% of riders find that they have been arriving on time for appointments more often since accessing the RideShare Program.

All riders agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: “RideShare has improved my family’s quality of life”.

3 – Gauging Interest in Rides to Recreational Destinations

All riders reported that they would be more likely to encourage their children to participate in sports or other recreational activities if transportation to these destinations were available. Expanding RideShare destinations to include recreational destinations was also commonly expressed as a way to improve the RideShare Program.

4 – Feedback on Volunteer Drivers

Overall, parents provided very positive feedback regarding the performance of our volunteer drivers. Nearly all riders (94%) found their drivers to be punctual and 90% of riders found their drivers to be reliable, safe, and friendly. Most riders (82%) found their drivers to be professional, respectful and non-judgmental.

In two cases, riders were not satisfied with their volunteer drivers. In one instance, the driver had a half-tonne truck with an extended cab -- the parent was not able to fasten the child safety seat in properly. Despite this incident, this rider reported that the program is good and that it has been very helpful.

In another instance, a rider reported that a driver was judging him or her on his or her socio-economic status; therefore, the rider found the driver to be unfriendly, disrespectful, and unprofessional. This volunteer has not participated in the program since this incident.

5 – Feedback on RideShare Coordinator

All riders reported being very satisfied with their experiences in dealing with the RideShare Coordinator. Riders have expressed that the Coordinator has been professional, warm-hearted, non-threatening, and flexible.

6 – What riders like most about the RideShare Program

Some common themes expressed by parents when asked what they liked most about RideShare were: the cost, convenience, and reliability of the program. The following are responses from riders when asked to share what they like most about RideShare:

- The cost and convenience
- Something I can depend on – asking a friend can sometimes be hard and plans change...but RideShare is always there
- The ability to call and have a non-judgmental voice on the other end
- Being able to book the necessary appointments without getting worried about how we are going to get there
- I like that when we need them, they are there
- Not having to take the city bus and knowing that it is safe, sometimes they have car seats for my children
- The cost – it saves me a lot of money that would have otherwise been spent on cabs
- Amazing program, we are extremely grateful for our quality of life, daily activities are no longer a burden – it takes sometimes over one hour just to get somewhere on the city bus with transfer, wait, etc. We can now attend our programs regularly and not have to miss out
- They are on time and do whatever they can to get you to your destination
- It has been very helpful in a lot of ways
- Direct transportation, not having to find rides or try to make bus connections
- I like the convenience and the people
- I like that all members work to benefit our family, the amount of rides we receive, the very low cost of the rides, -- the time, stress, and energy it saves our family
- It's a good program, it's been very helpful
- Having less stress on our time management and it helps me out financially
- Convenience of knowing you have options
- I like that my child is safe and that safety is a real concern. I love that the cost of a roundtrip ride is only \$2.00. I love that I can guarantee myself a ride with RideShare, it makes me so much more self-reliant and it's good that I'm not spending a lot

7—Ways to improve the RideShare Program

Riders have made the following suggestions for ways to improve the Program:

- Expand to include sports (as a destination) and seniors
- Nothing it's perfect - Maybe more options for destinations
- Rides to interviews
- Destinations to school functions, recreational activities for school, i.e. gymnastics
- More than two rides per week, 5 times per week or whenever needed
- We could use some more choices in destinations
- I find it great already – could use a van for multiple children or consider going to take kids to summer camps out of city limits.
- Having to book rides two days in advance is hard to plan for sometimes. One day in advance would be better. Make sure drivers are experienced with installing car seats in their vehicles. Make sure there's enough room to accommodate passengers and parcels.
- More volunteers, more rides
- Expand to add activities
- It would be awesome to see RideShare grow into a service that could provide rides to every errand at many more possible destinations. Some examples would be children's activities, schools, daycares, stores with other necessities, bank, whatever.

Conclusion

The responses provided by the riders in the RideShare Program demonstrate the program's ability to improve the quality of life for families involved. It is evident that RideShare has assisted families in feeling more included in the community. Most importantly, RideShare has allowed parents the opportunity to put their money where it is needed most, rather than on costly transportation.

Riders would like to see the RideShare Program grow to include more families. The addition of recreational destinations to the Program could help parents and their children achieve an even greater sense of inclusion in the community.

With the help of quality volunteers, the RideShare is doing what it is intended to do – it is improving the quality of life of the people it serves.

APPENDIX

RideShare Program
North Bay Social Planning Council

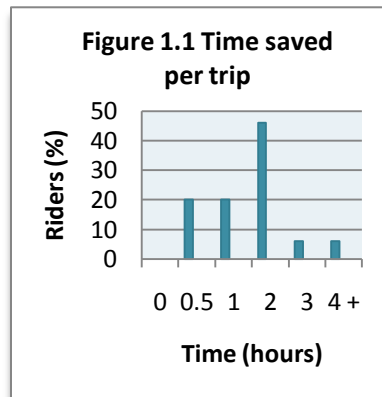


Rider Satisfaction Survey

(Results are recorded in blue font)

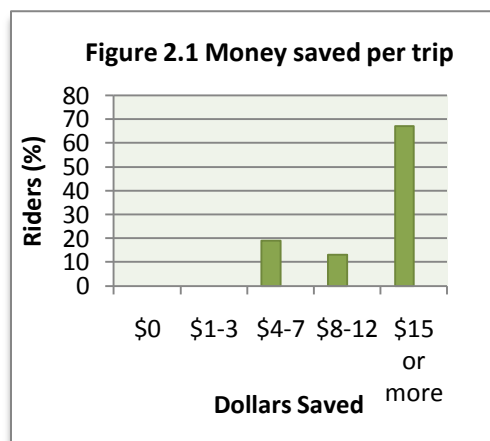
For each of the following questions, please check all that apply.

- 1) On average, how much time does your family save by taking a round-trip ride to the grocery store with RideShare as compared to another means of transportation (city bus or walking)?



- no time
- 30 minutes
- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- 3 hours
- 4 hours or more
- not applicable

- 2) On average, how much money does your family save per round-trip ride by using RideShare as compared to another means of transportation?



- \$0.00
- \$1.00 – \$3.00
- \$4.00 - \$7.00
- \$8.00 - \$12.00
- \$15.00 or more

- 3) If you have saved money on transportation by using RideShare, in what ways have you been able to spend that savings?
- Food
 - Clothing
 - Prescriptions
 - Recreation / Entertainment
 - Other, please specify _____

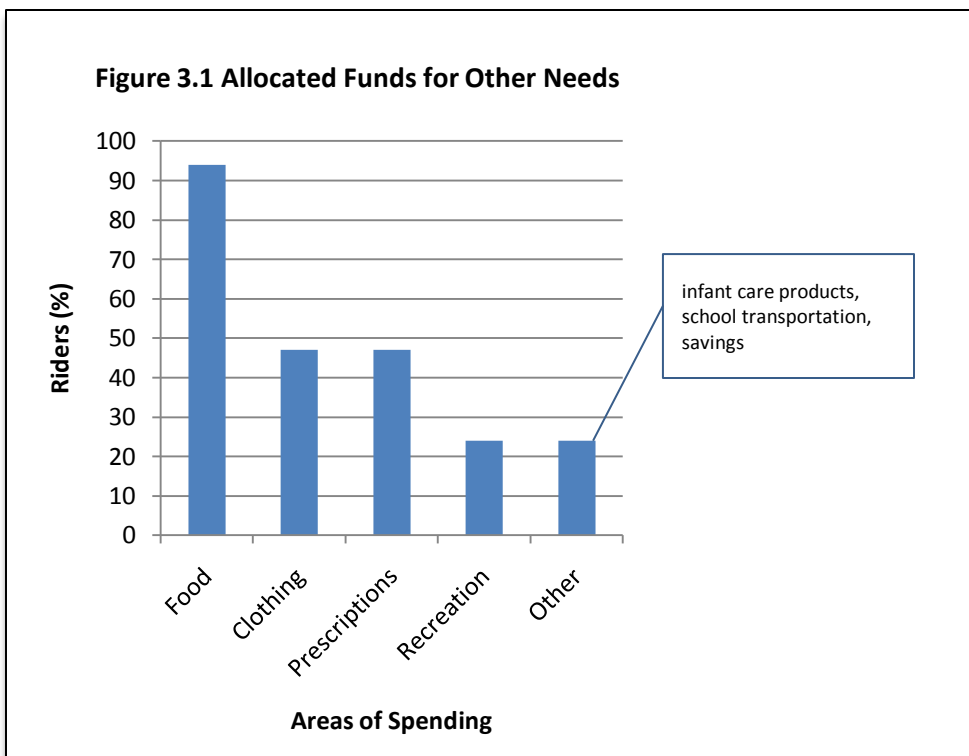


Figure 3.2

Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Having access to RideShare helps me plan for my everyday needs and activities	--	5%	--	41%	53%
RideShare makes it easier to access community resources for myself and my children	--	5%	--	18%	76%
I feel less isolated since joining RideShare	--	5%	12%	47%	35%
I feel that my family is safer when travelling with a RideShare driver as compared to walking, taking the city bus or a taxi	--	--	12%	29%	59%
Having RideShare has allowed me to budget for my transportation needs	--	--	--	35%	65%
RideShare has improved my family's quality of life	--	--	--	53%	47%

For the following questions, please check all that apply.

4) Since joining RideShare my children and I:

- feel less overwhelmed when planning for transportation to necessary medical and/or agency-based appointments → 88%
- attend appointments more regularly → 77%
- arrive at appointments on time more often → 88%
- have fresh food more often → 88%
- have more quality time to spend together → 76%
- Other, please specify _____

5) I have found my Volunteer Drivers to be:

- Punctual → 94%
- Reliable → 88%
- Safe → 88%
- Friendly → 88%

- Professional → 82%
- Respectful/non-judgmental → 82%

If a driver has not demonstrated the above characteristics while on duty, please explain:

- Rider felt judged on his on her socioeconomic status; therefore felt the driver did not meet the above qualities (this driver has not participated since this incident)
- Rider had trouble installing car seat in the extended cab of a truck

6) How would you rate your overall experience in dealing with the RideShare Coordinator?

- Excellent → 100%
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

Please explain: _____

7) If RideShare provided rides to recreational destinations, such as children's sports practices, would you be more likely to encourage your child/children to participate in sports or other recreational activities?

- Yes → 100%
- No
- Other, explain _____

Tell us what you like most about the RideShare Program.

- The cost and convenience
- Something I can depend on – asking a friend can sometimes be hard and plans change...but RideShare is always there
- The ability to call and have a non-judgmental voice on the other end
- Being able to book the necessary appointments without getting worried about how we are going to get there
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Continued...

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What could we do to improve the RideShare Program?

- Expand to include sports (as a destination) and seniors
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