

# Austin, Texas Taxi/Pedicab/ELSV Study Briefing

Objective : Review Findings and  
Recommendations

September 20<sup>th</sup> , 2011

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**TTLF**

# Tasks Accomplished

## **Task I**

*Initial meetings with Austin City Officials*

## **Task II**

*Analysis of existing Austin, Texas taxi & pedicab operating  
Procedures ( Interviews )*

## **Task III**

*Analysis/Comparison of Austin, Texas 's Taxi  
Regulations / Rules / Practices with other cities*

## **Task IV**

*Austin, Texas Taxi User Survey – Admin & Evaluation  
Austin, Texas Taxi Secret Shopper Admin & Evaluation  
Meetings with taxi drivers and taxi association representatives*

## **Task V**

*Analysis of Industry Provided Dispatch & Operating Data*

## **Task V & VI**

*Prepare and Present Project Findings & Recommendations*

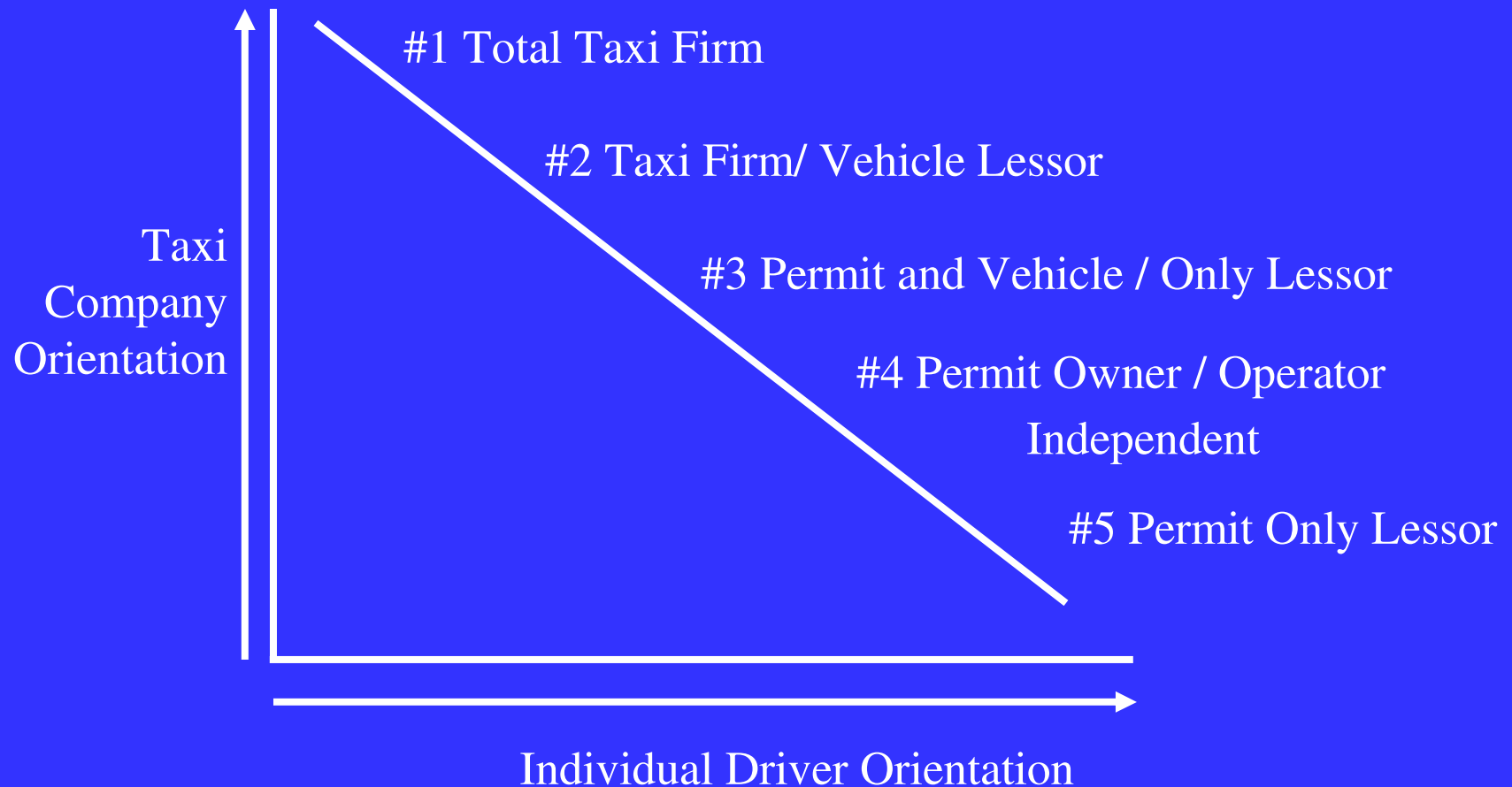
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# Why regulate taxis at all ???

Why does government interfere with the private market?

- City of Austin – Regulated Competition
- Ensure safe and economical per-capita transportation to residents and visitors
- Provide a positive image and service within the community
- Ensure public's interest
- Ensure equal access to a public service

# Continuum of Austin Taxicab Firms



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# Continuum of Austin, Texas Taxicab Firms

**#1 Total Taxi Firm With Employee Drivers: None exists**

**#2 Total Taxi Firm/Vehicle Lessor: Yellow Cab of Austin**

**#2.5 Total Taxi Firm/Vehicle Lessor: Austin Taxi Company**

**#3 Permit/Vehicle Lessor: Owner Operator: Lone Star Cab Company**

**#4 Permit Owner/Operator Independent: Proposed**

**#5 Permit Only Lessor: None exists**

## Comparisons with other American cities

Dr. Paul Dempsey, in summarizing the empirical data from these researchers' studies and other commissioned studies<sup>[1]</sup>, listed the results of taxi deregulation in 21 major U.S. cities prior to 1983. These were:

- 1.A significant increase in new entry;
- 2.A decline in operational efficiency and productivity;
- 3.An increase in highway congestion, energy consumption and environmental pollution;
- 4.An increase in rates;
- 5.A decline in driver income;
- 6.A deterioration in service; and
- 7.Little or on improvement in administrative costs.<sup>[2]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Dempsey, Paul Stephen, " Taxi Industry Regulation, Deregulation & Regulation: The Paradox of Market Failure" Transportation Law Journal, University of Austin, College of Law, Austin, Texas, Volume 24, #1, Summer 1996, p.102

<sup>[2]</sup> Dempsey, Op. Lite, p. 102

# Yellow Cab of Austin



**Communications Stats**  
For the week ending Saturday, 4/23

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Total Dispatched Trips	3063	2823	2698	2801	3305	3726	3514
Flag Trips	3312	1675	1629	2010	2091	2858	2981
Time Calls	890	763	702	761	949	1102	802
Web Bookings							
Avg Answer Time	121 sec	32 sec	28 sec	61 sec	98 sec	156 sec	55 sec

**Peak Business Hours**  
Number of ICD's Signed In

	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am
Thursday	325	321	324	300	260	262	260	241	210	246	4070	
Friday	318	341	353	340	322	305	301	280	285	316	2550	
Saturday	304	320	335	325	314	309	301	295	291	311	1850	

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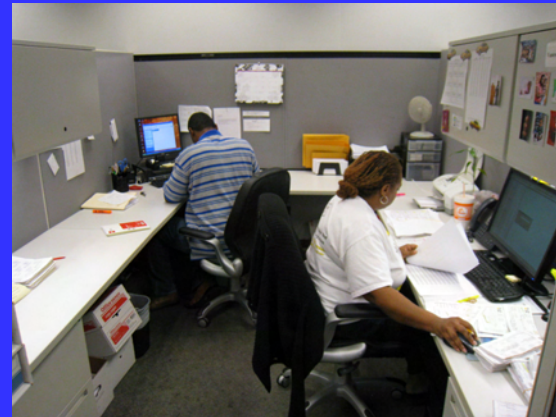


# Major Maintenance Facilities.





# Yellow Cab of Austin



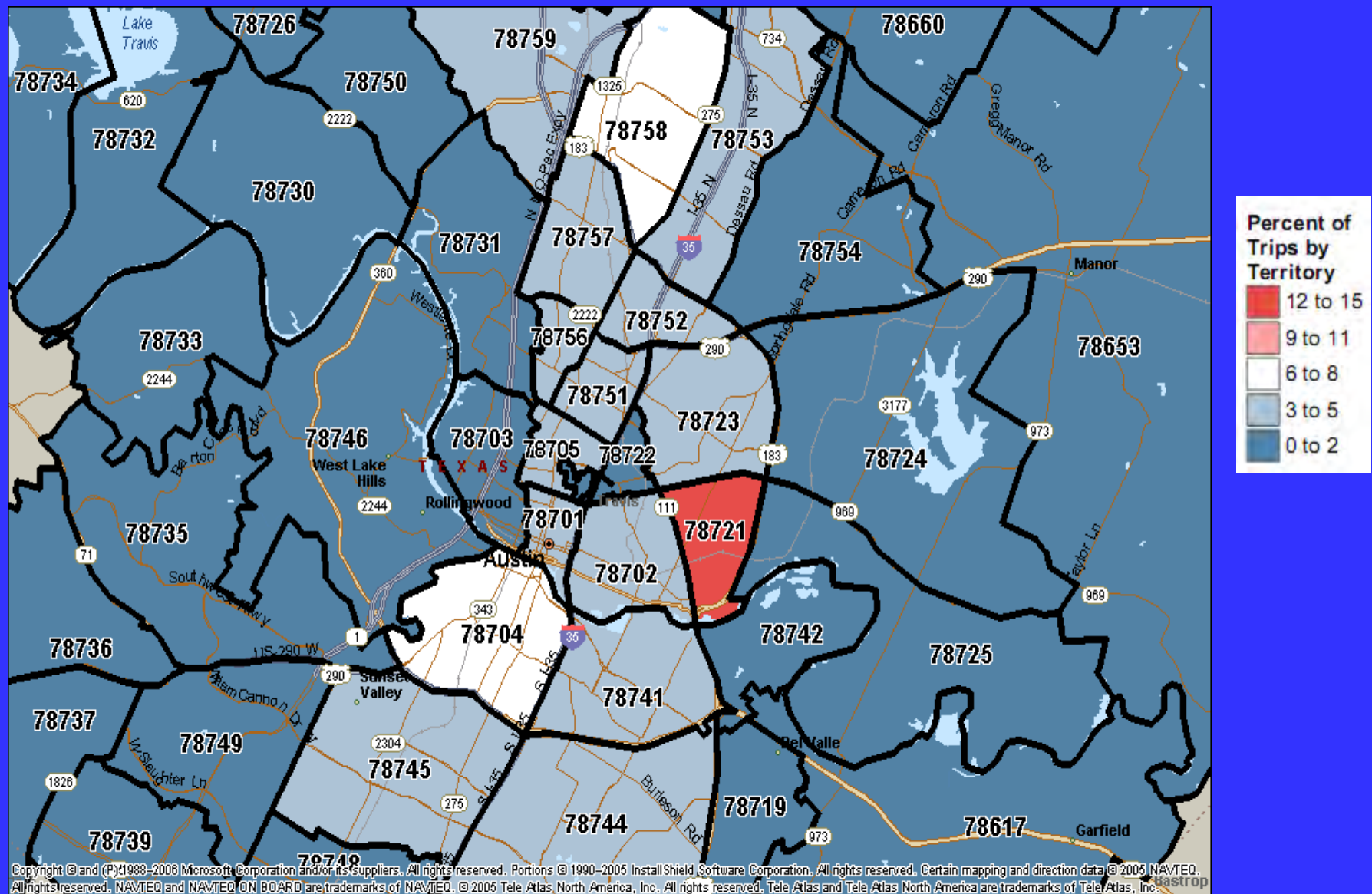
# Stats for Yellow Cab

## 2010 – Last Full Year of Data

# of Vehicles in Dispatch Data	464
# of Vehicles in All Meter Data	585

Trip Type	Avg. # of Daily Trips	Std Dev
Dispatch Only	7.54	5.35
Dispatch & Flag	13.55	11.01

## Yellow Demand by Zip Code

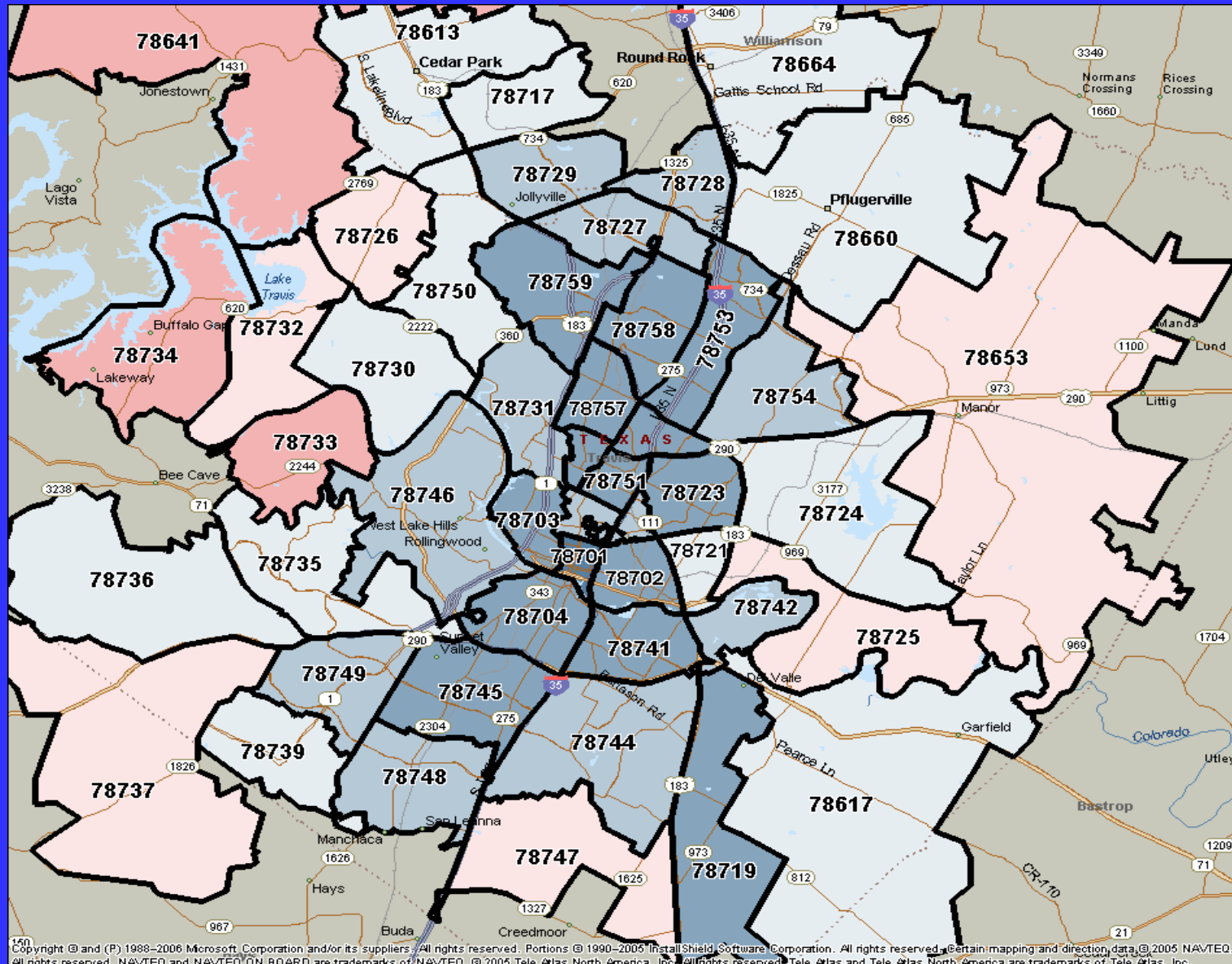


### Yellow Wait Time in Minutes by Zip Code

**Average Wait**

- 40 to 70
- 35 to 39
- 30 to 34
- 25 to 29
- 20 to 24
- 15 to 19
- 10 to 14
- 5 to 9

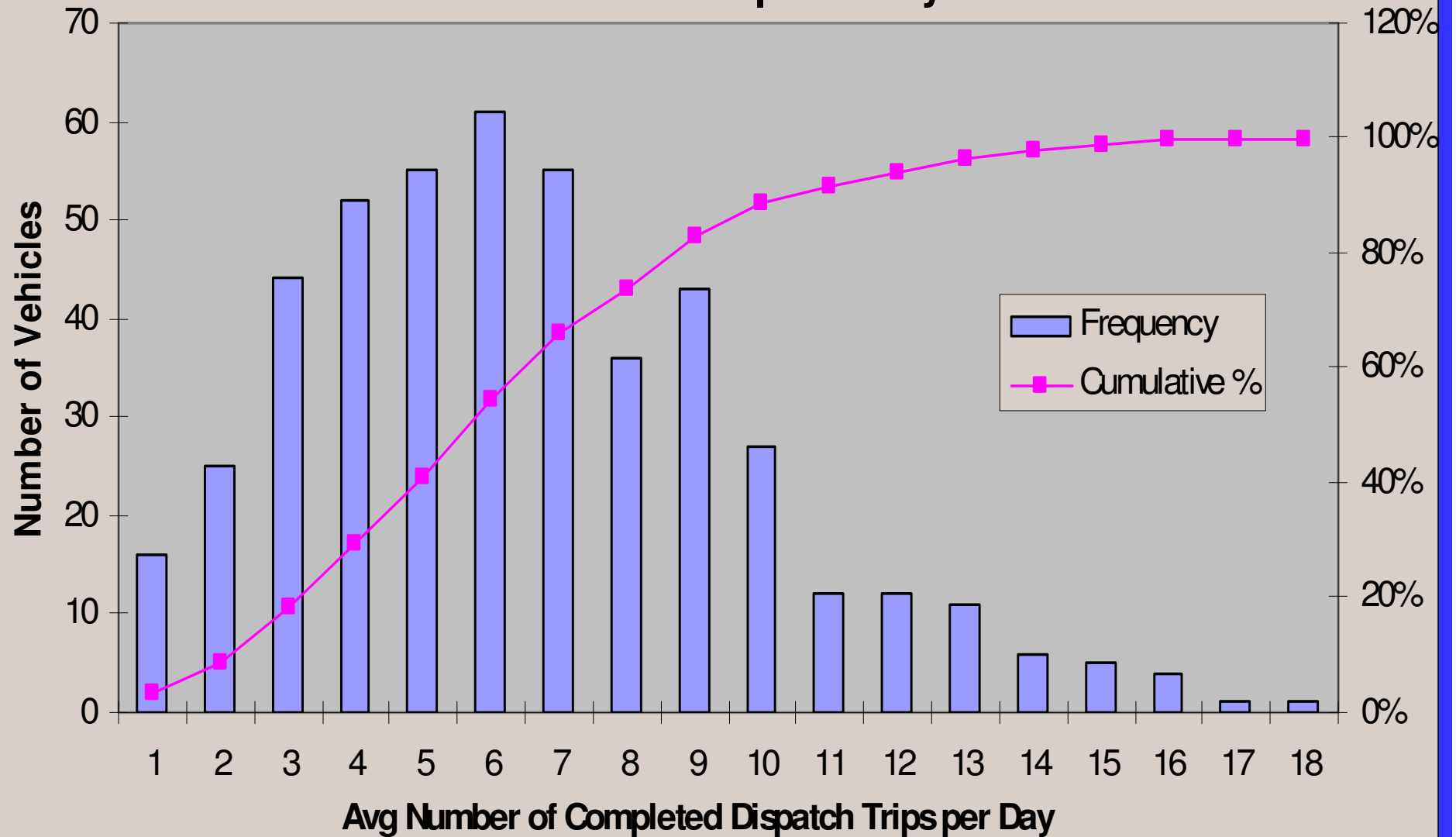
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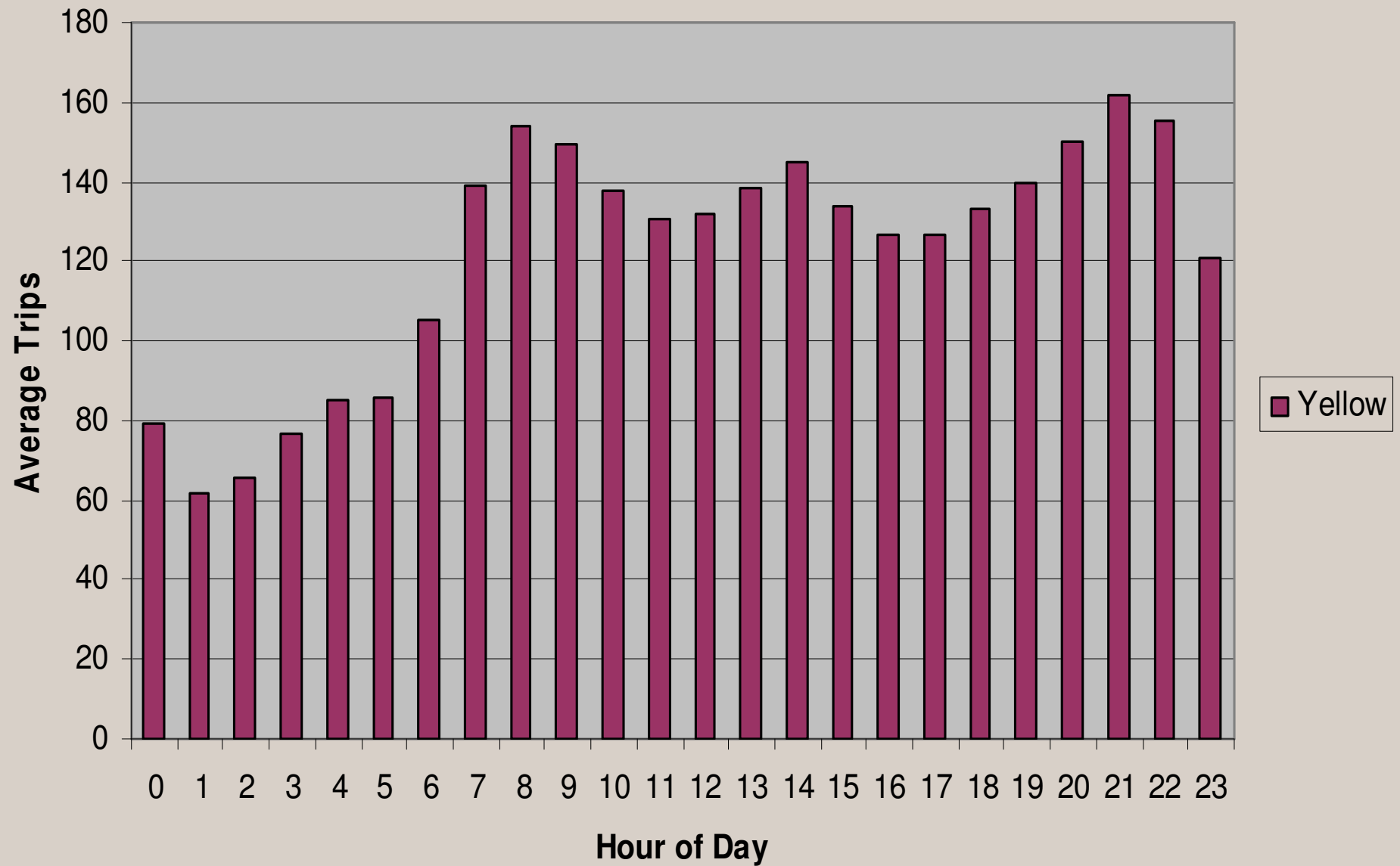
40 to 70  
35 to 39  
30 to 34  
25 to 29  
20 to 24  
15 to 19  
10 to 14  
5 to 9

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# Histogram of Daily Completed Trips Vehicles - Calendar Year 2010 Yellow Cab - Dispatch Only



## Average Hourly Dispatch Trips Yellow

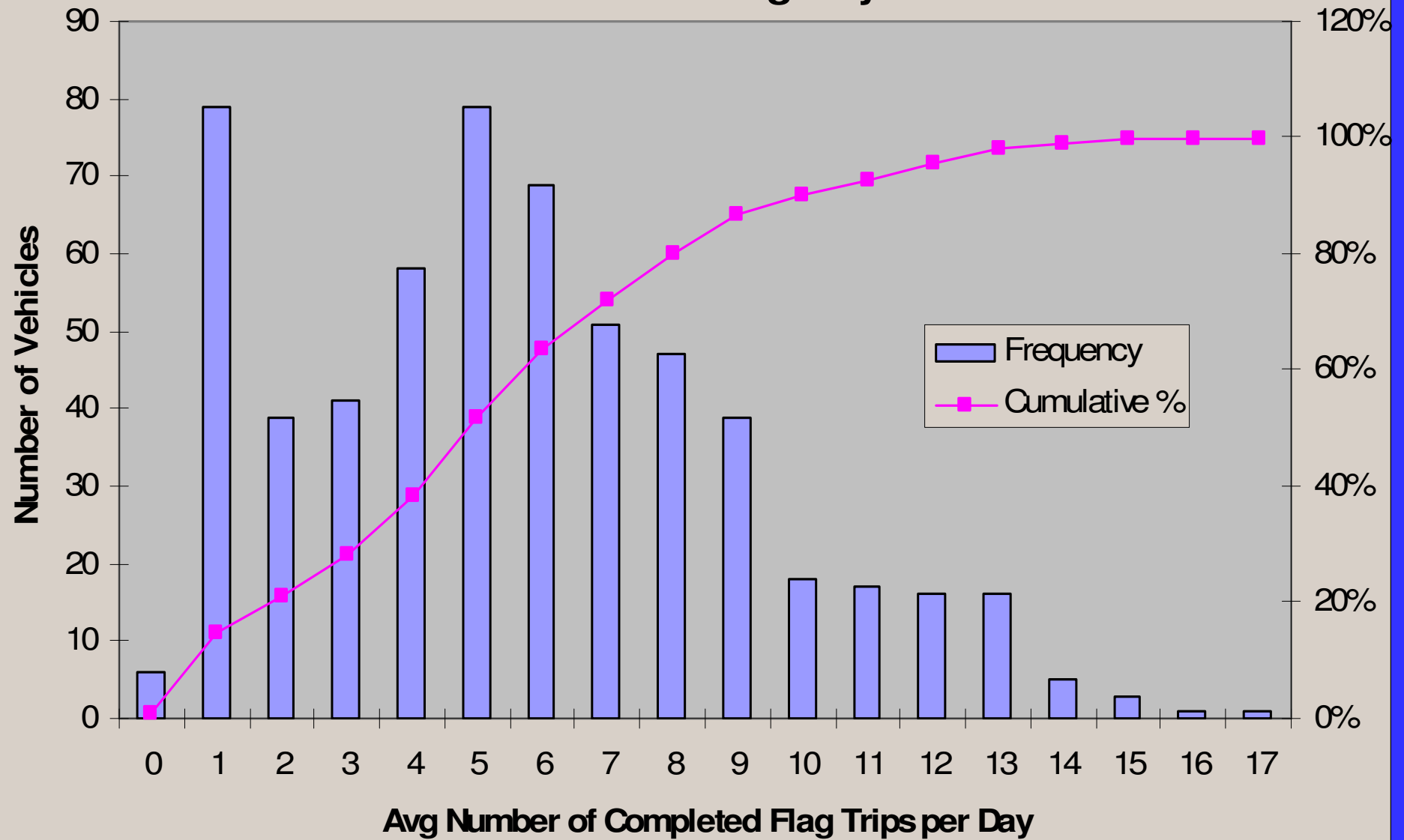




# Histogram of Daily Completed Trips

## Vehicles - Calendar Year 2010

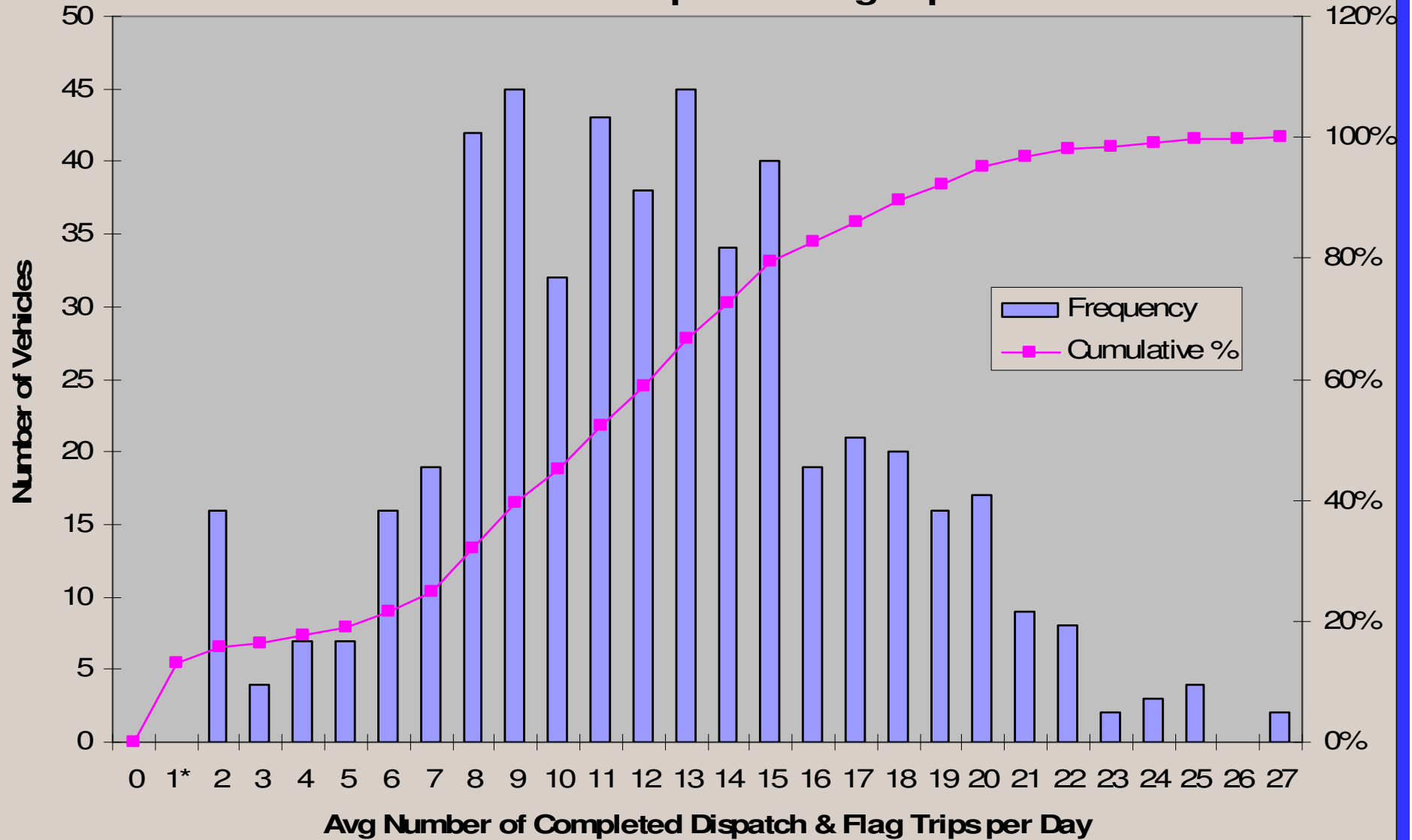
### Yellow Cab - Flag Only



# Histogram of Daily Trips

## Vehicles - Calendar Year 2010

### Yellow Cab - Dispatch & Flag Trips

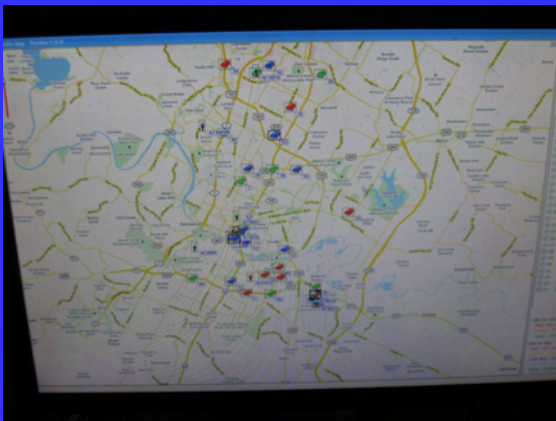


\* Data removed for better comparison of dispatch compared to all trips

# Austin Cab Company

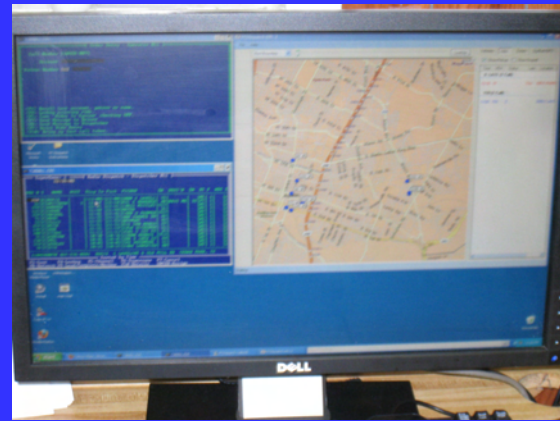


# Austin Cab Company

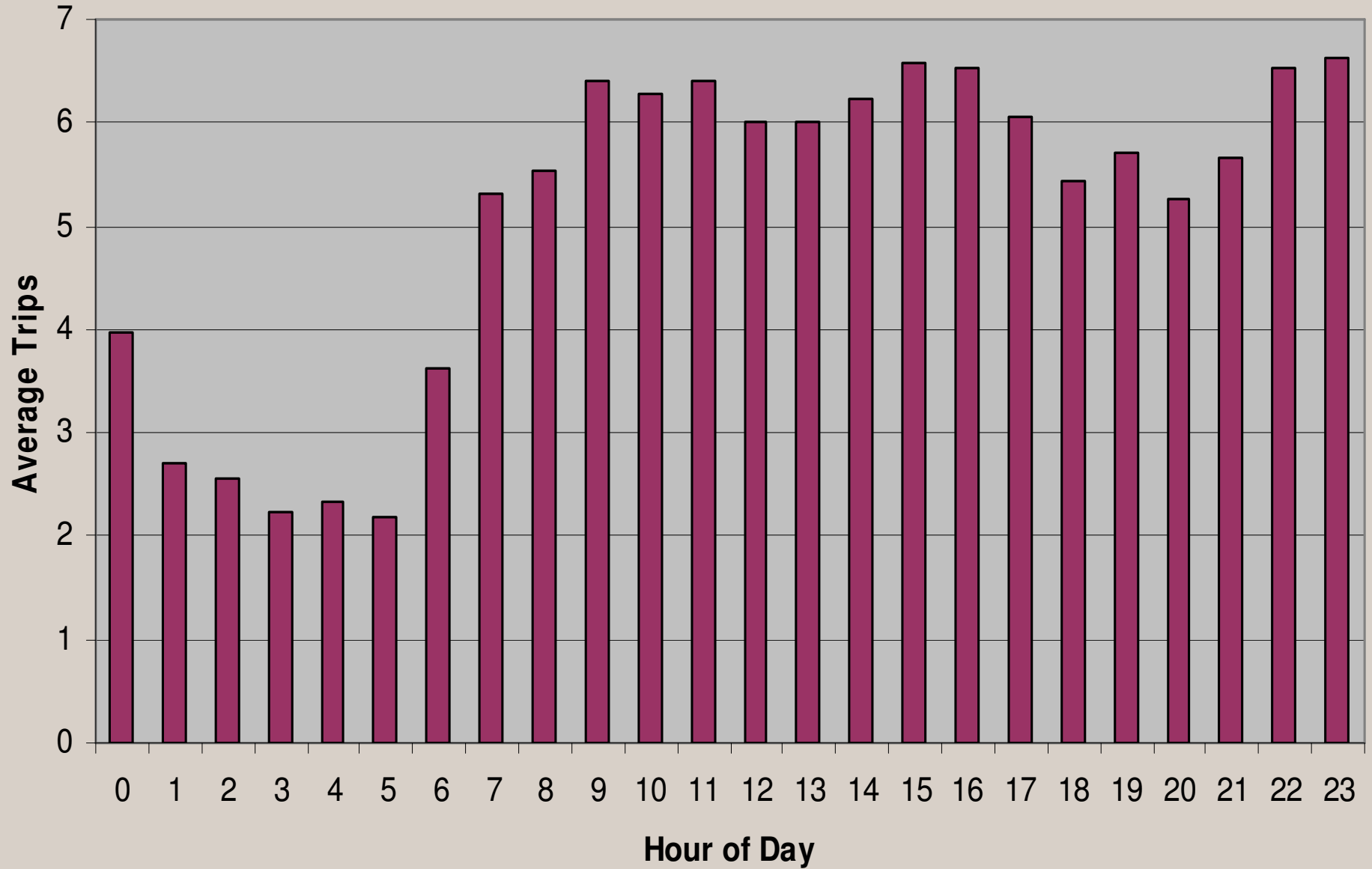




# Austin Cab Company

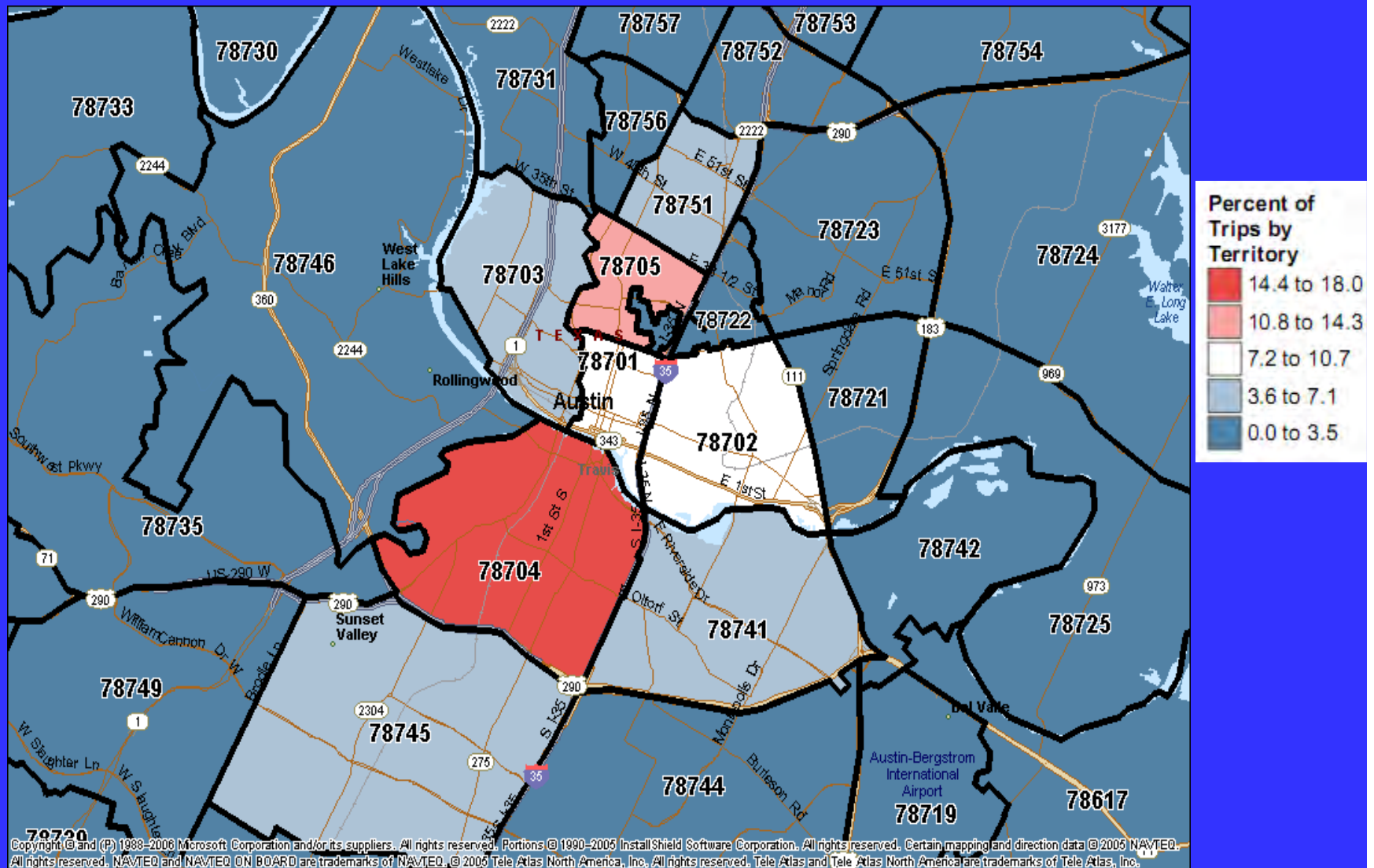


## Average Hourly Dispatch Trips Austin Cab

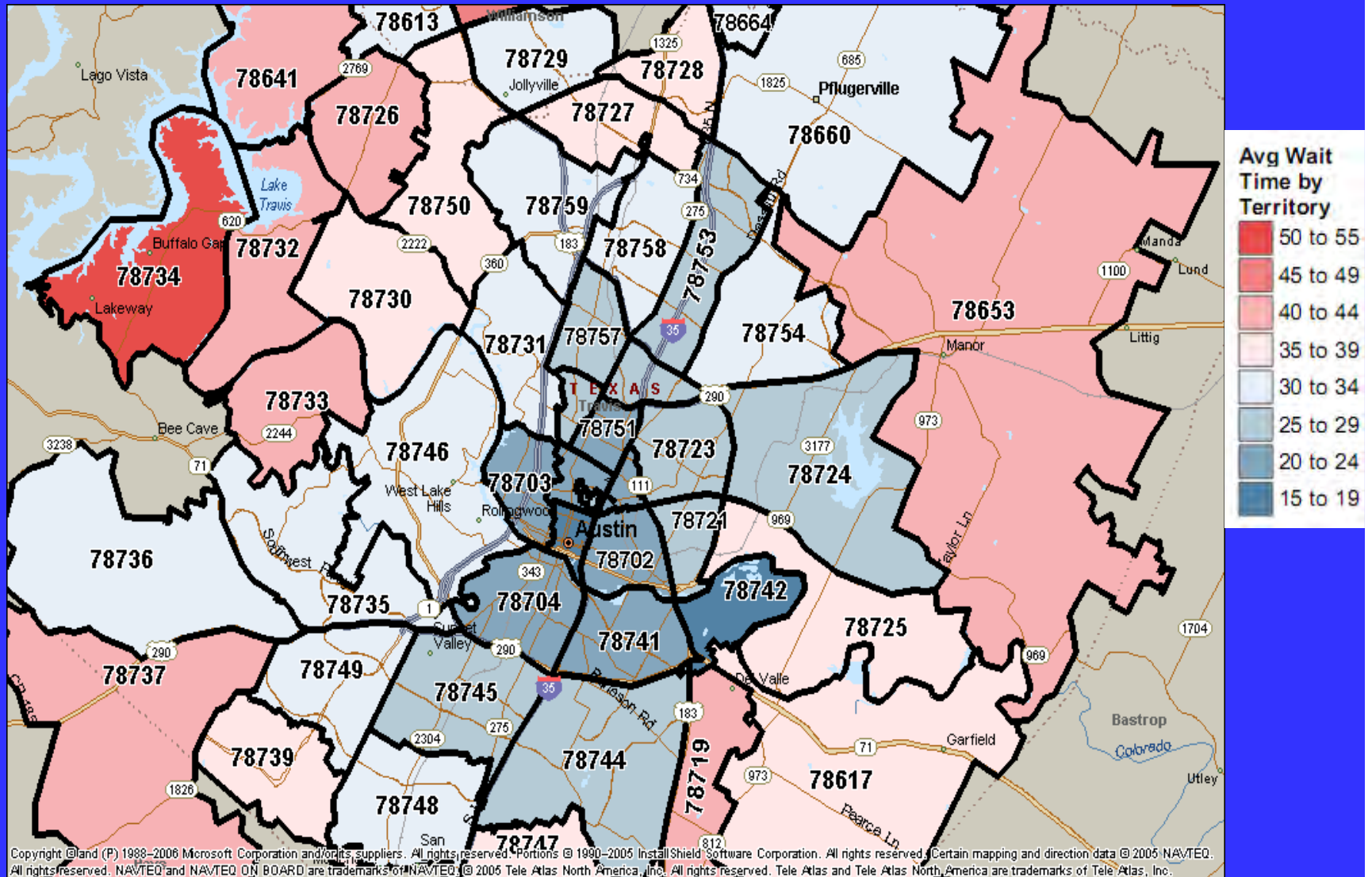




# Austin Cab Demand by Zip Code



## Austin Cab Wait Time in Minutes by Zip Code

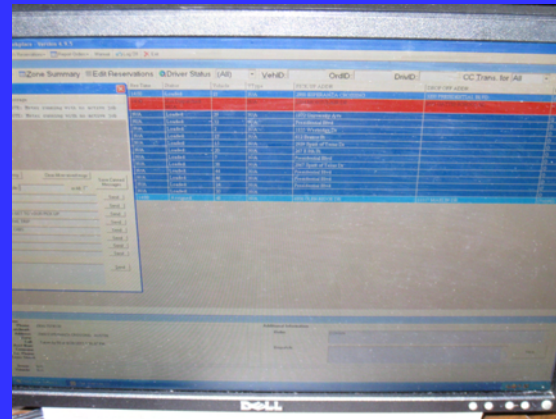


# Lone Star Cab Company

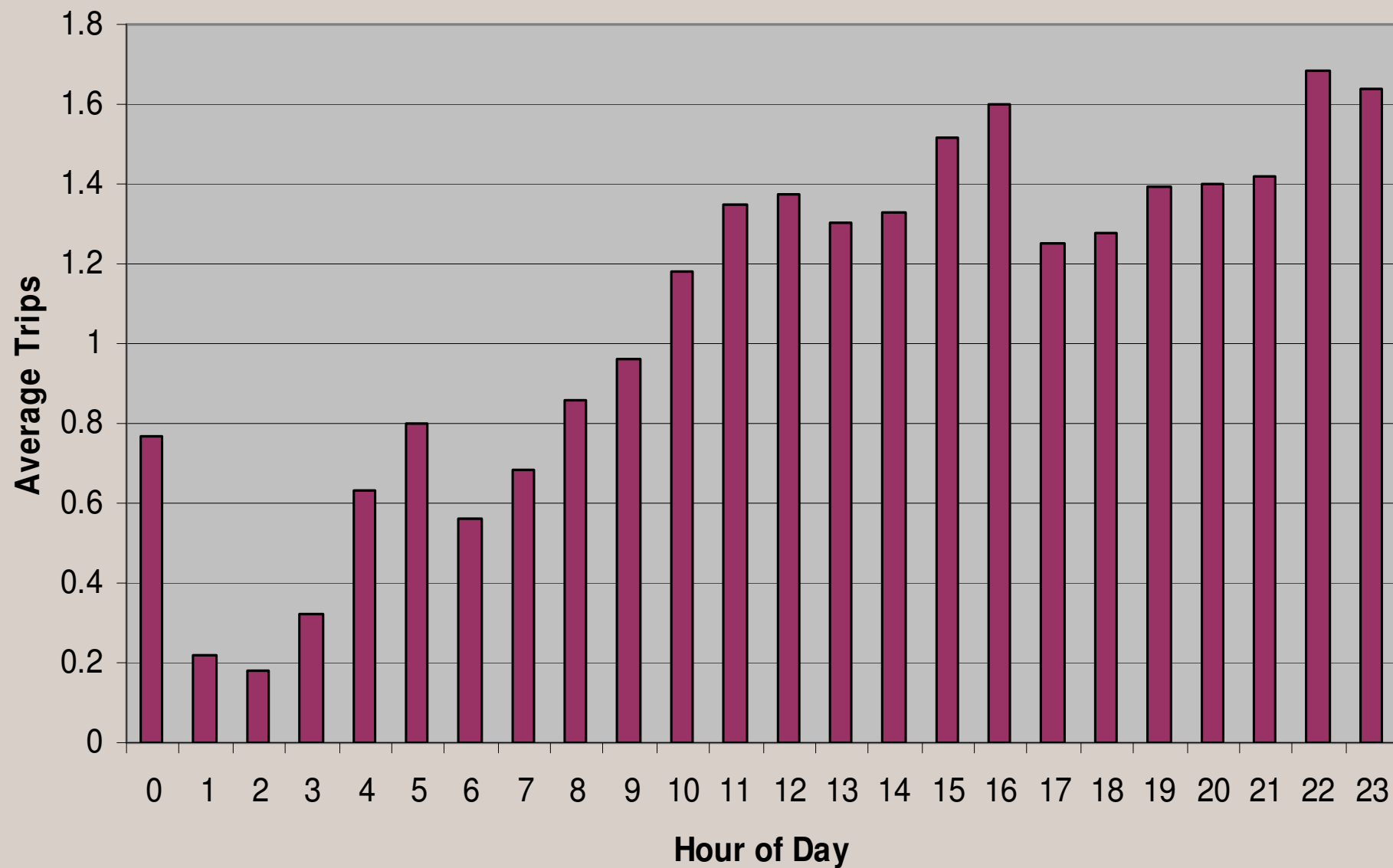




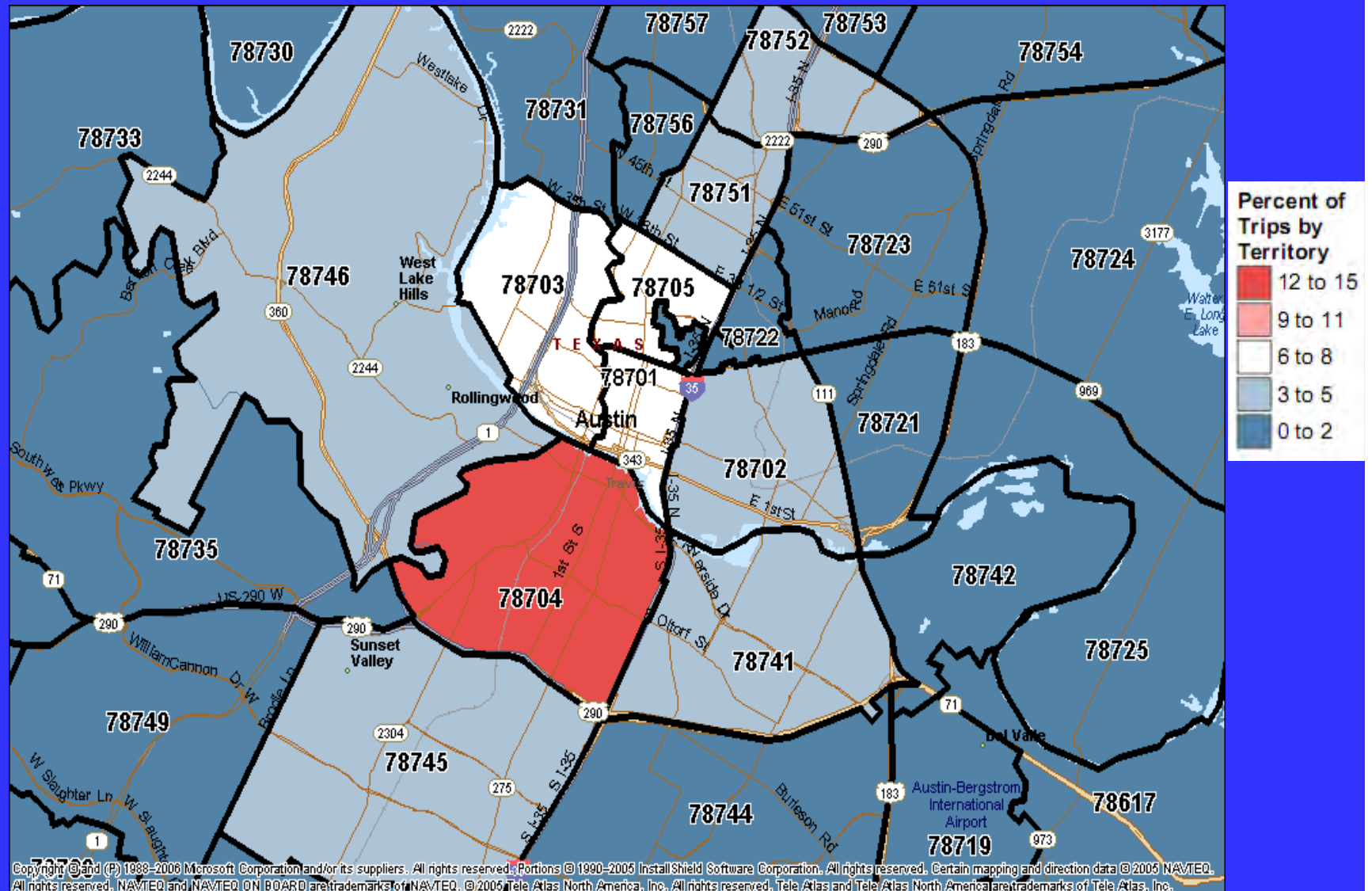
# Lonestar Cab Company



## Average Hourly Dispatch Trips Lonestar

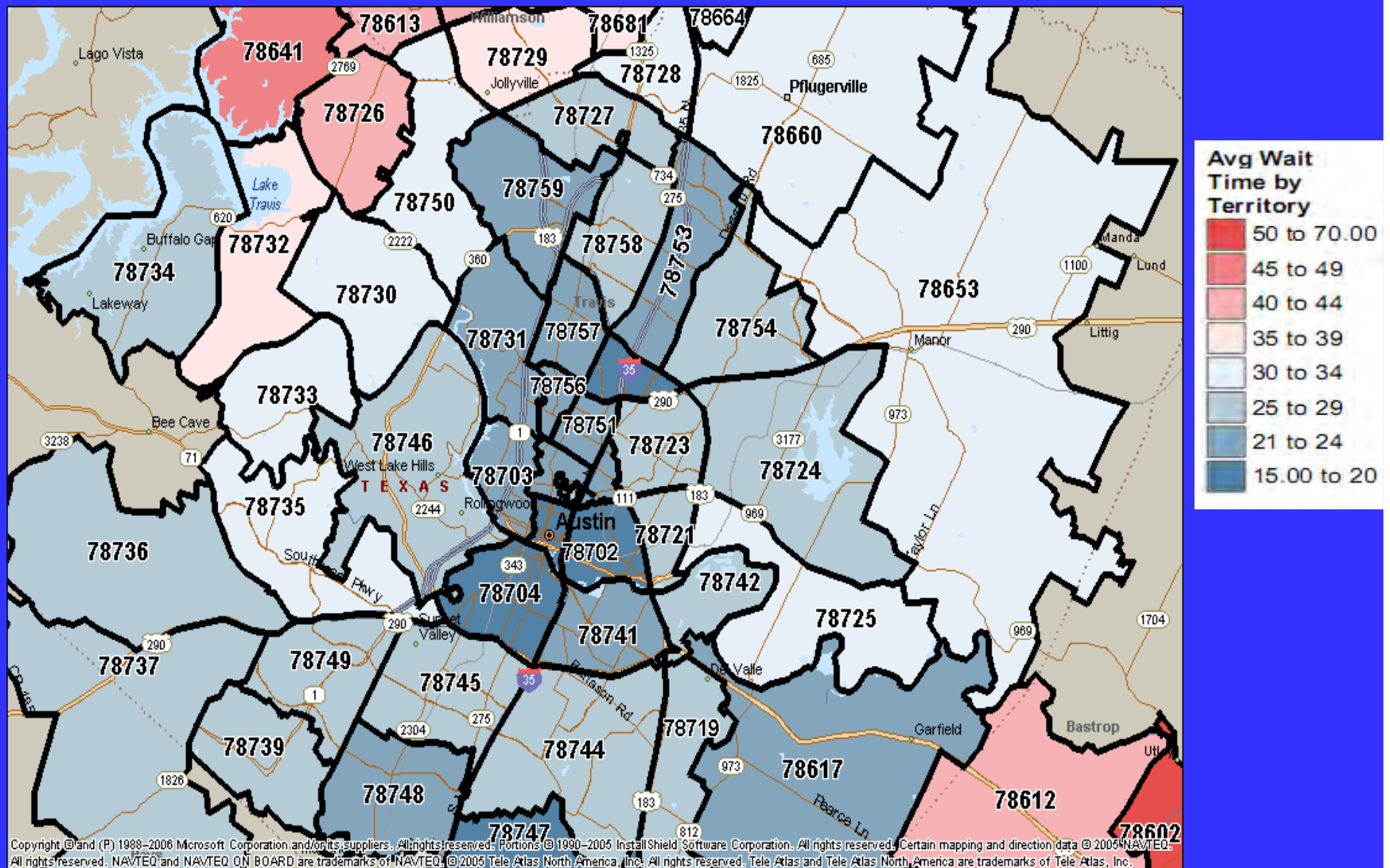


## Lone Star Demand by Zip Code





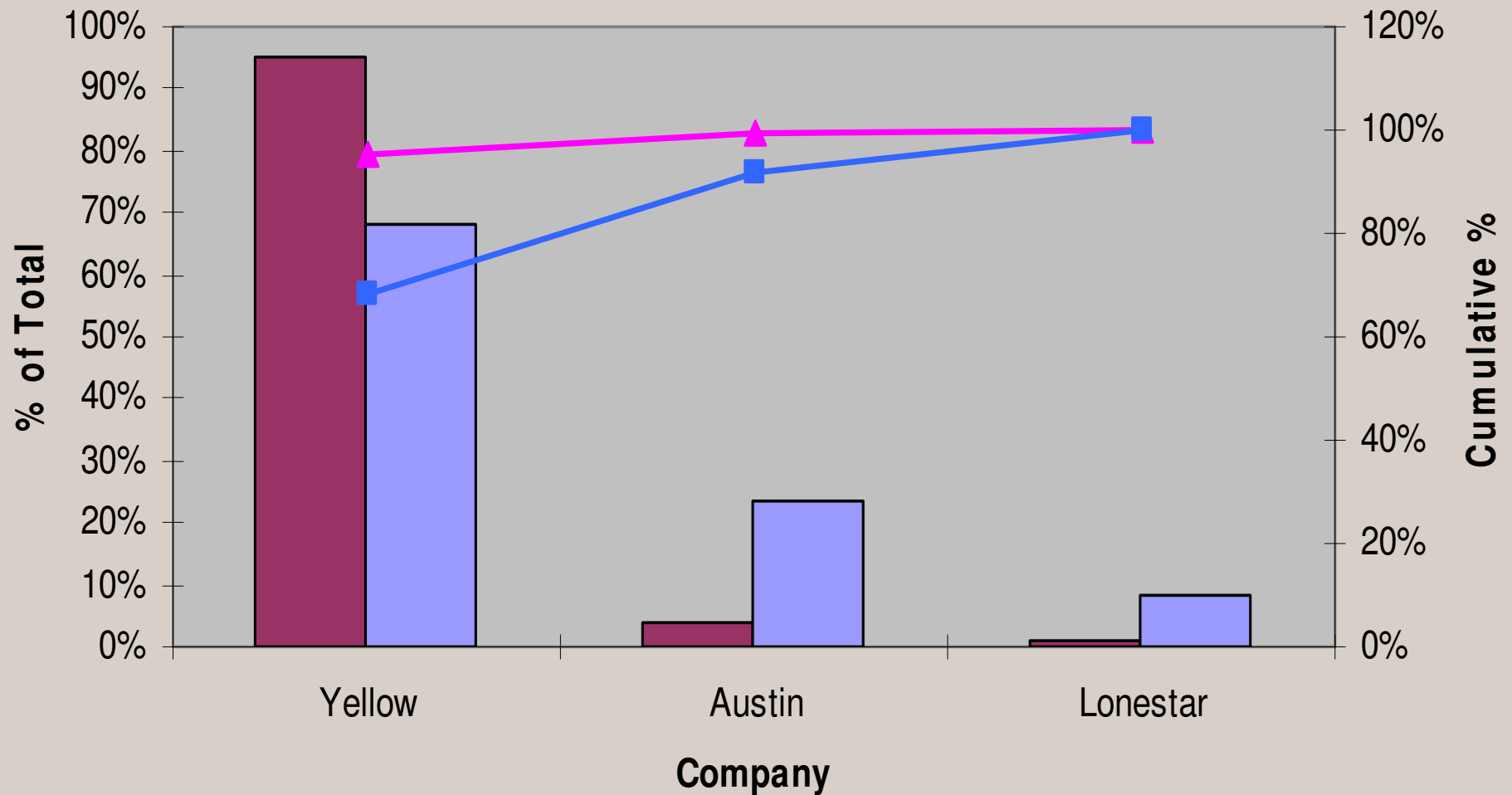
## Lone Star Wait Time in Minutes by Zip Code



# Comparative Statistics

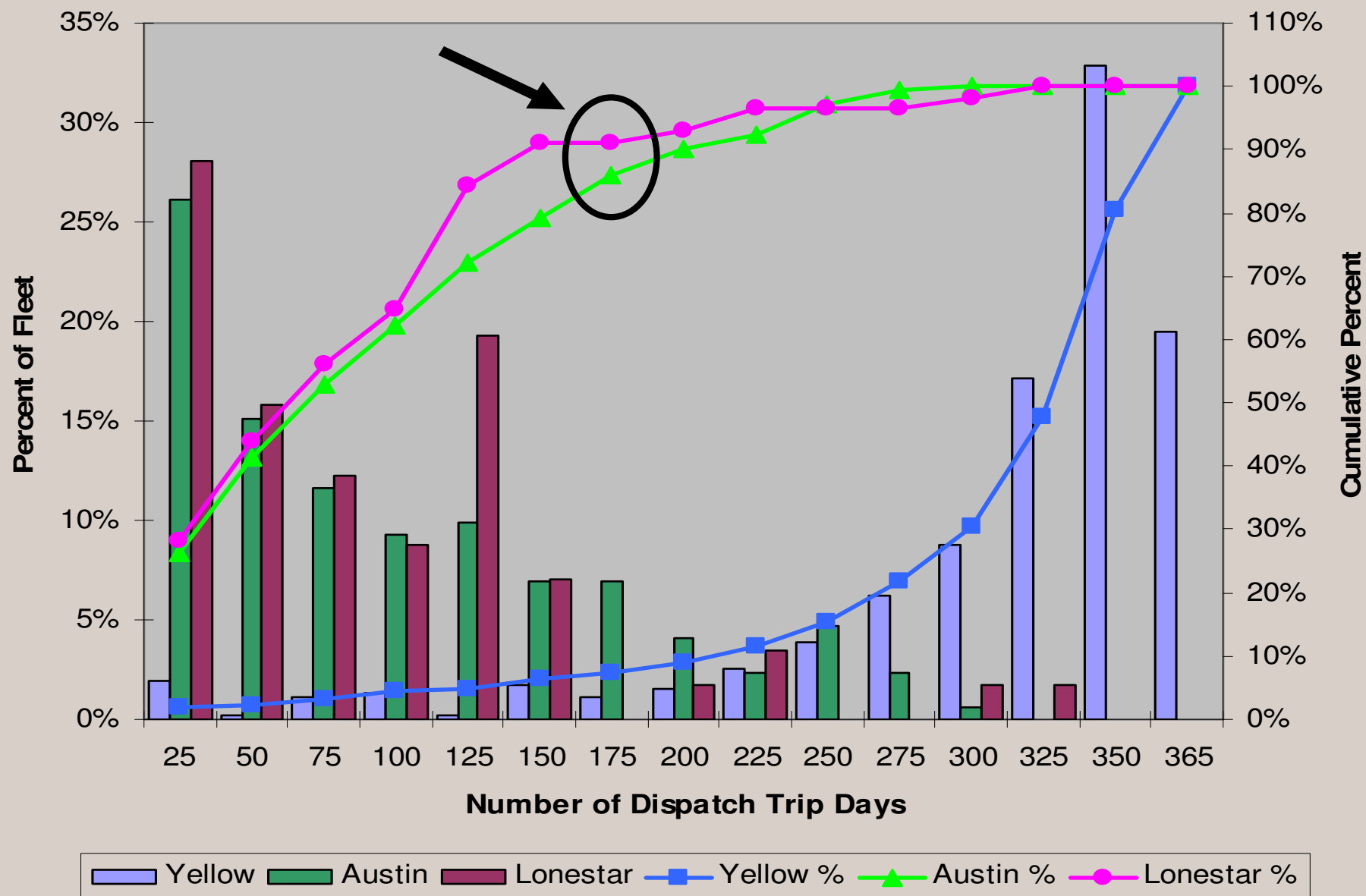
- Yellow Cab of Austin
- Austin Cab
- Lone Star Taxi

## Percentage of Dispatch Trips and Permits Comparison of Companies for 2010

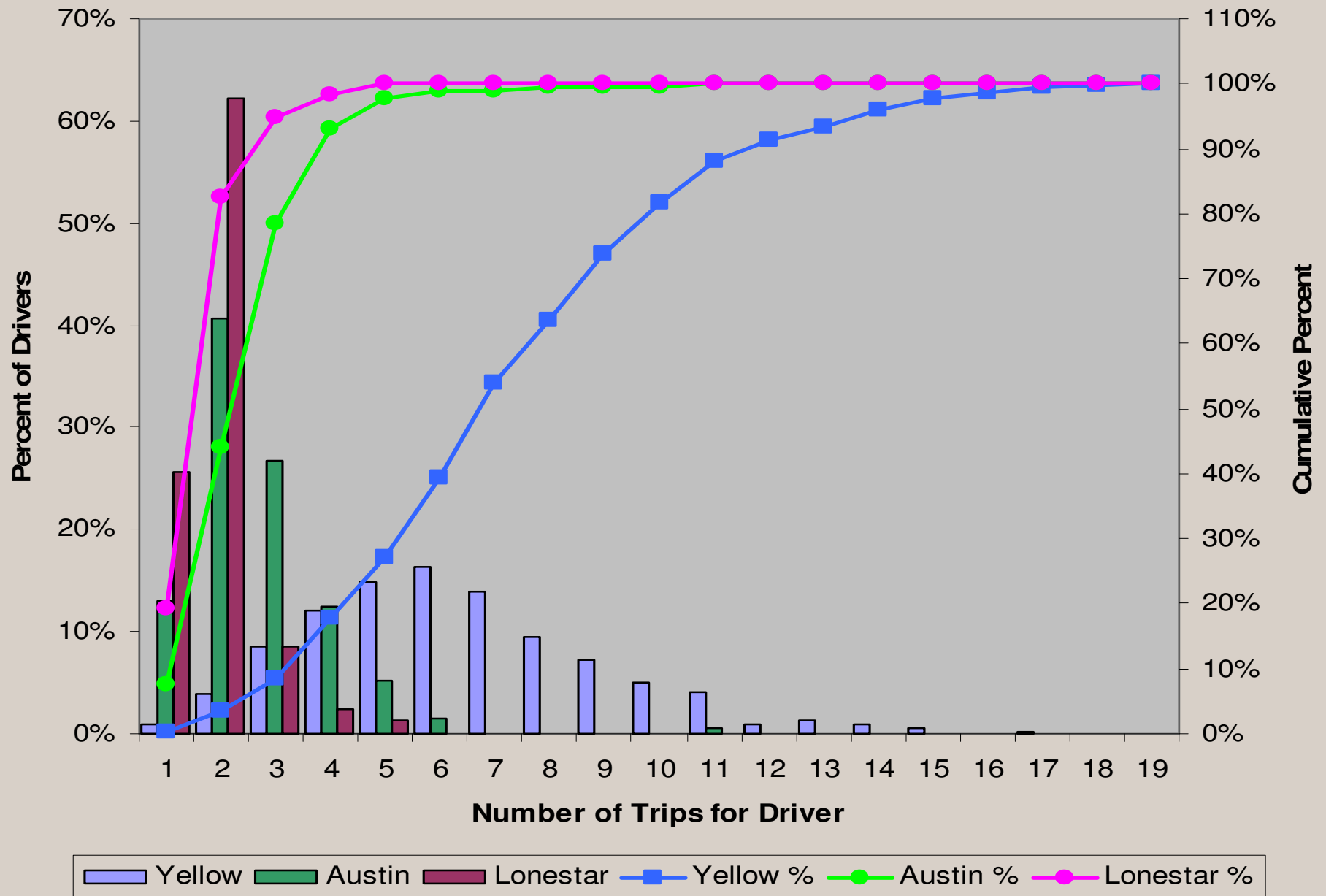


■ % of All Dispatch Trips    ■ % of All Permits  
—▲— Cumulative % - Trips    —■— Cumulative % - Permits

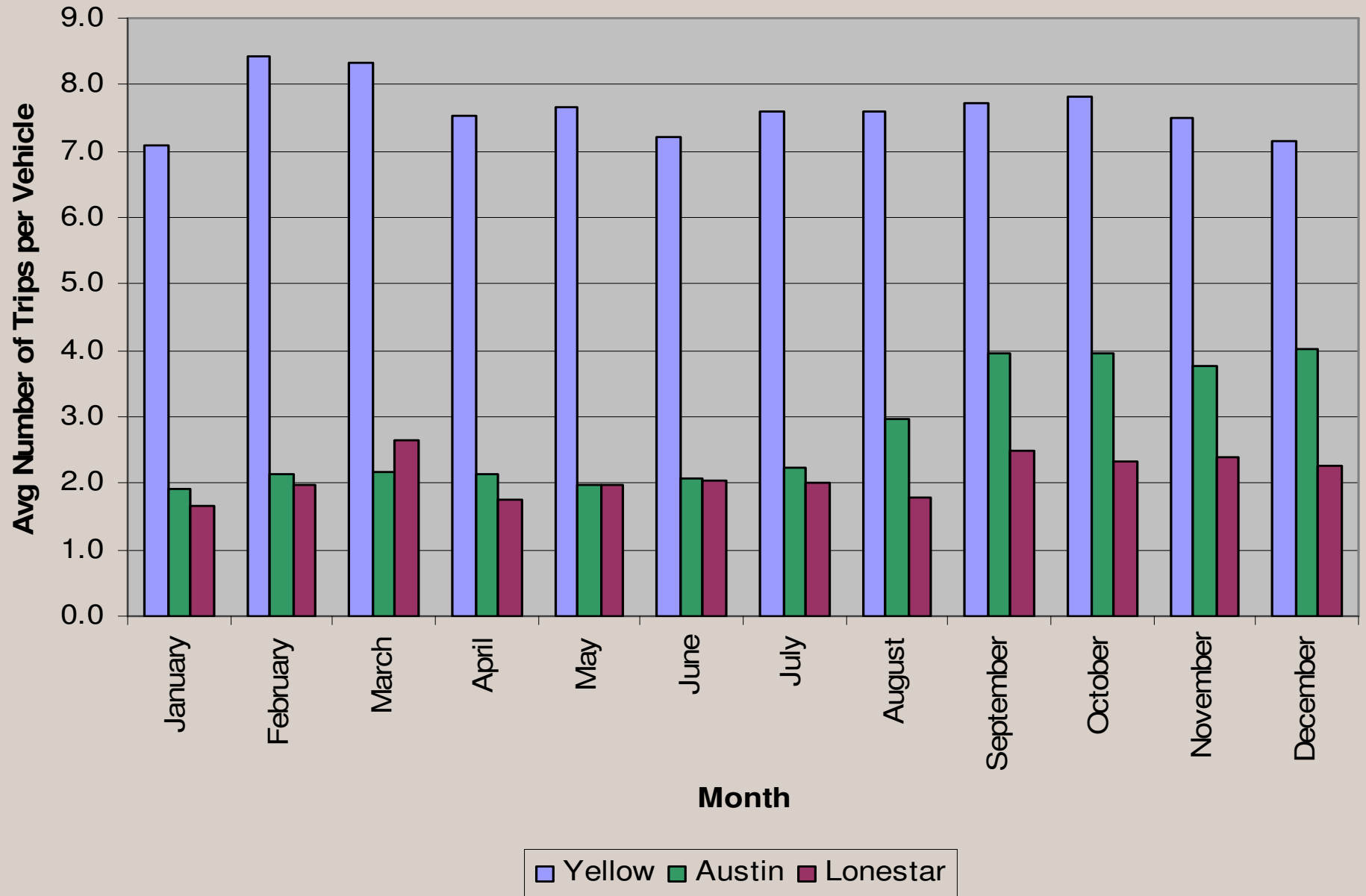
## Comparison of the Number of Days Vehicles Completed a Dispatched Trip in 2010



## Comparison of Average Daily Dispatch Trips per Driver (Based on Days Where Dispatch Trips are Taken)

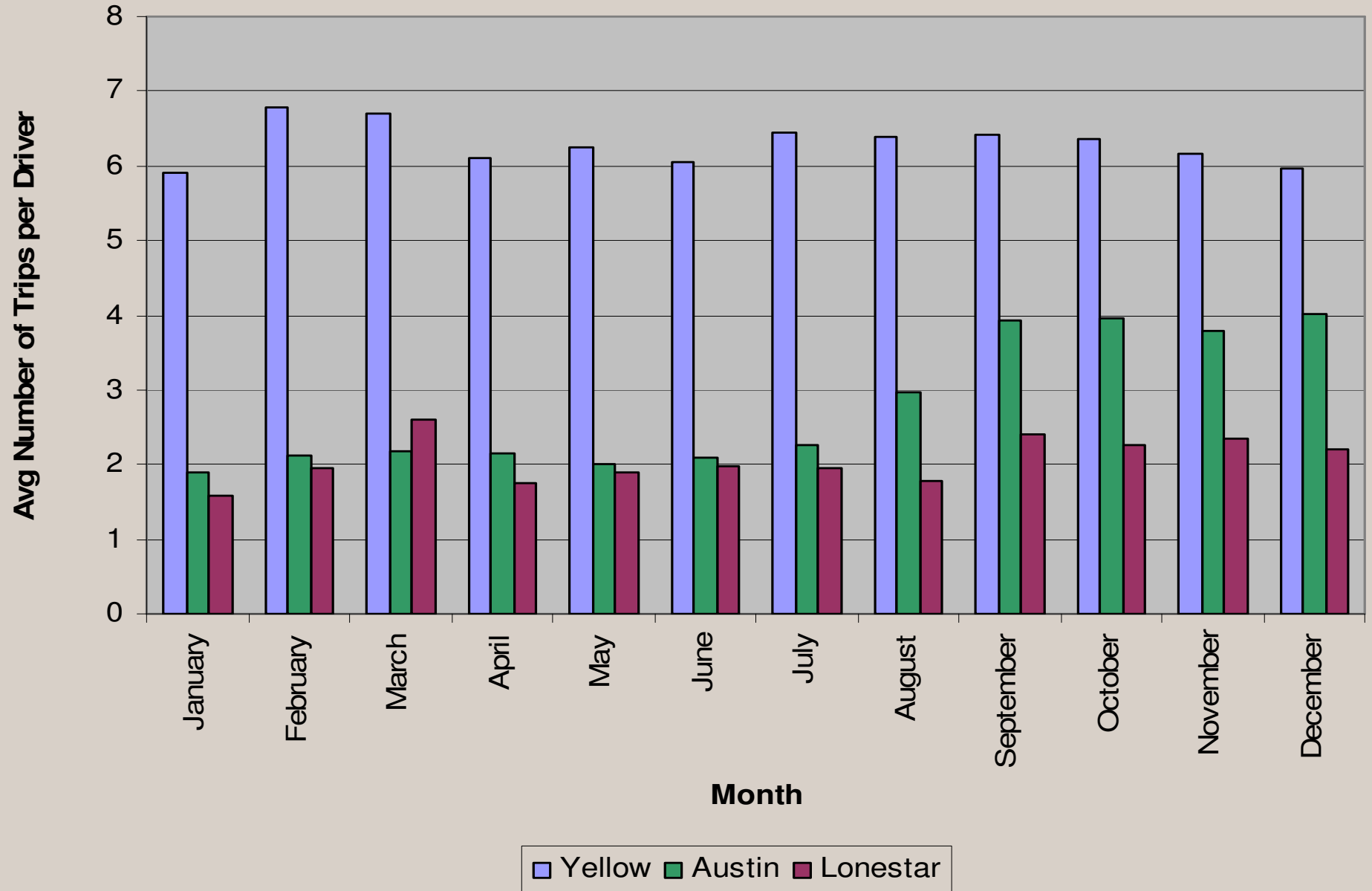


## Comparison of Avg Daily Dispatch Trips Completed per Vehicle by Month

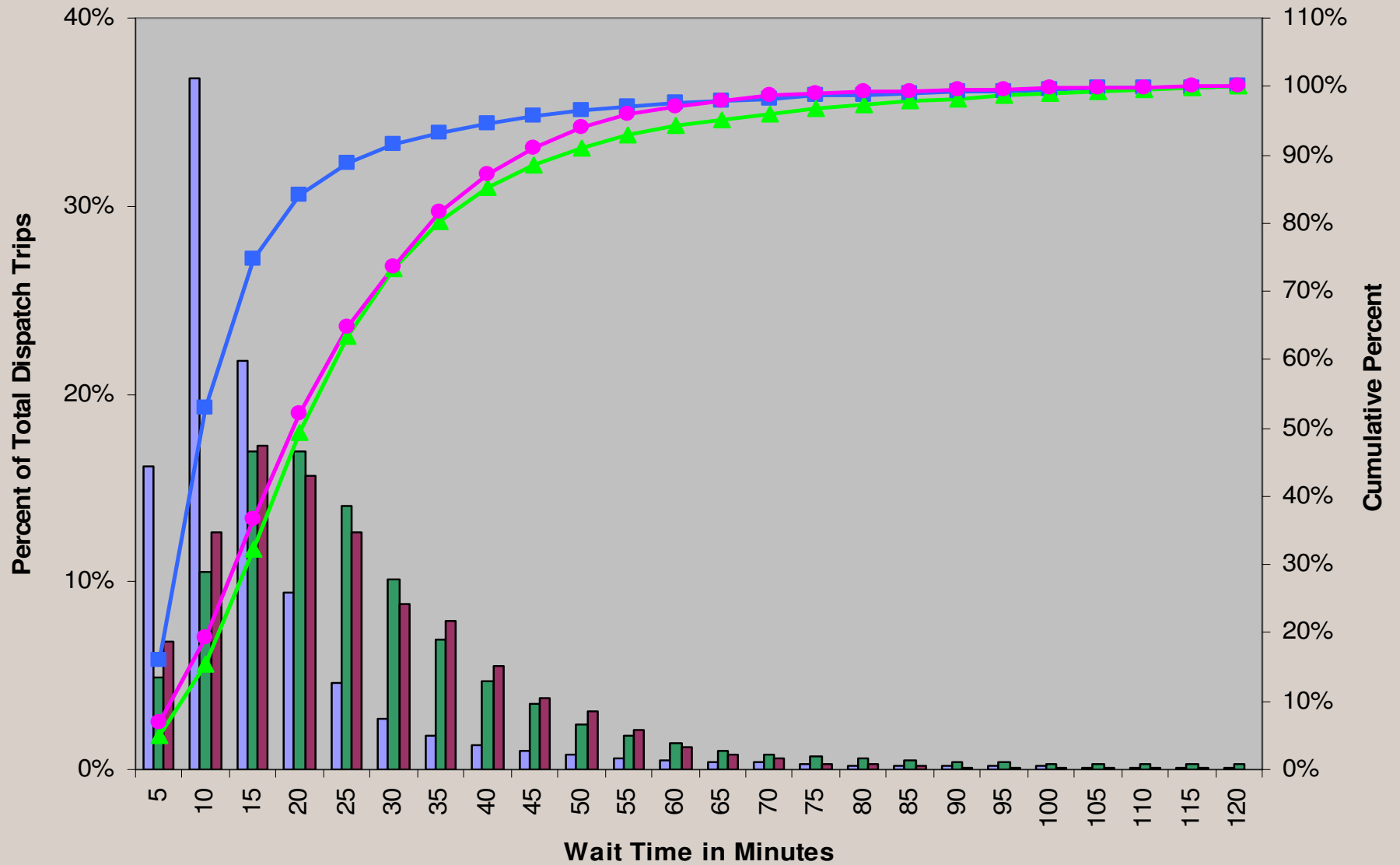




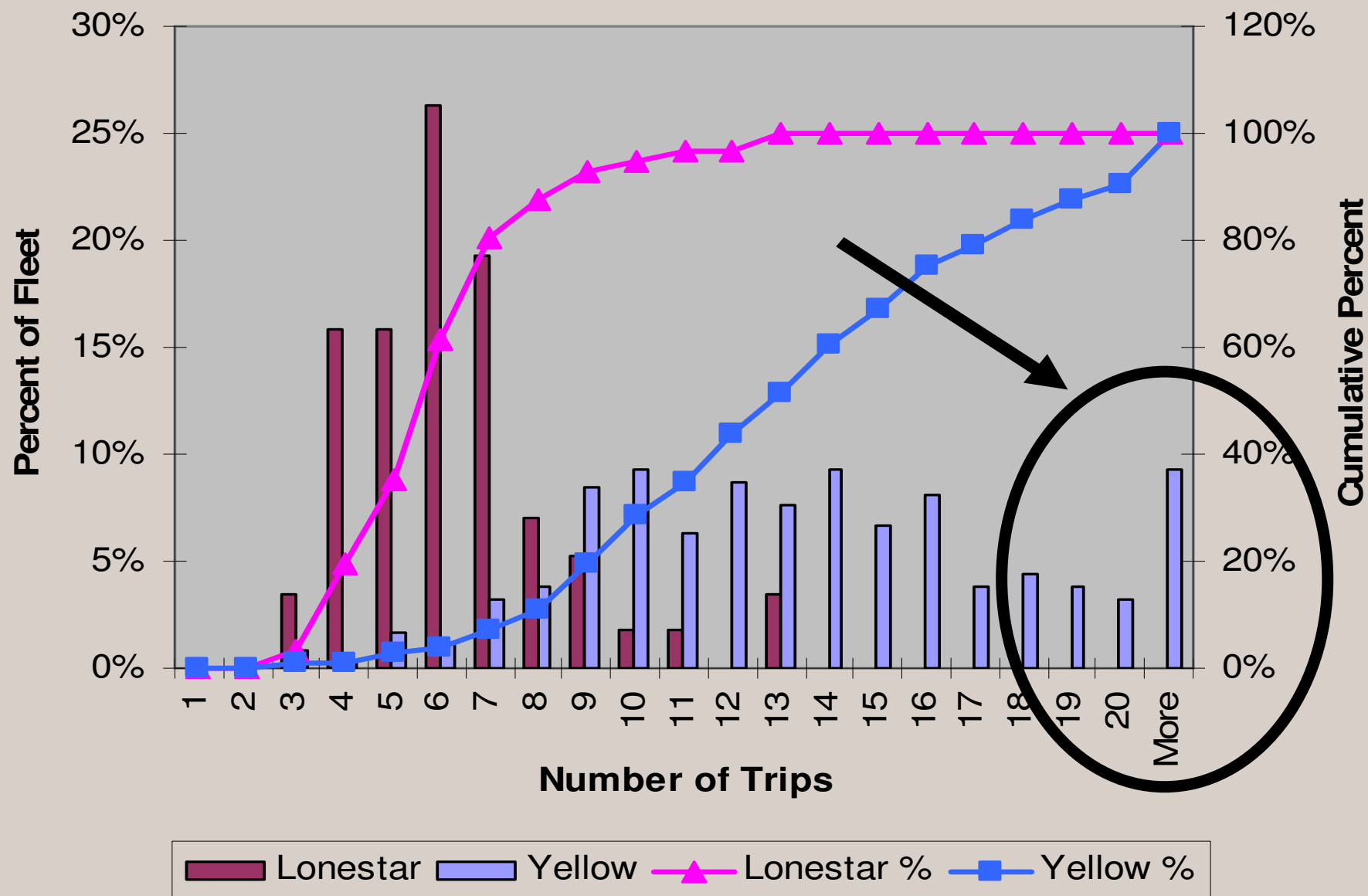
## Comparison of Avg Daily Dispatch Trips Completed per Driver by Month



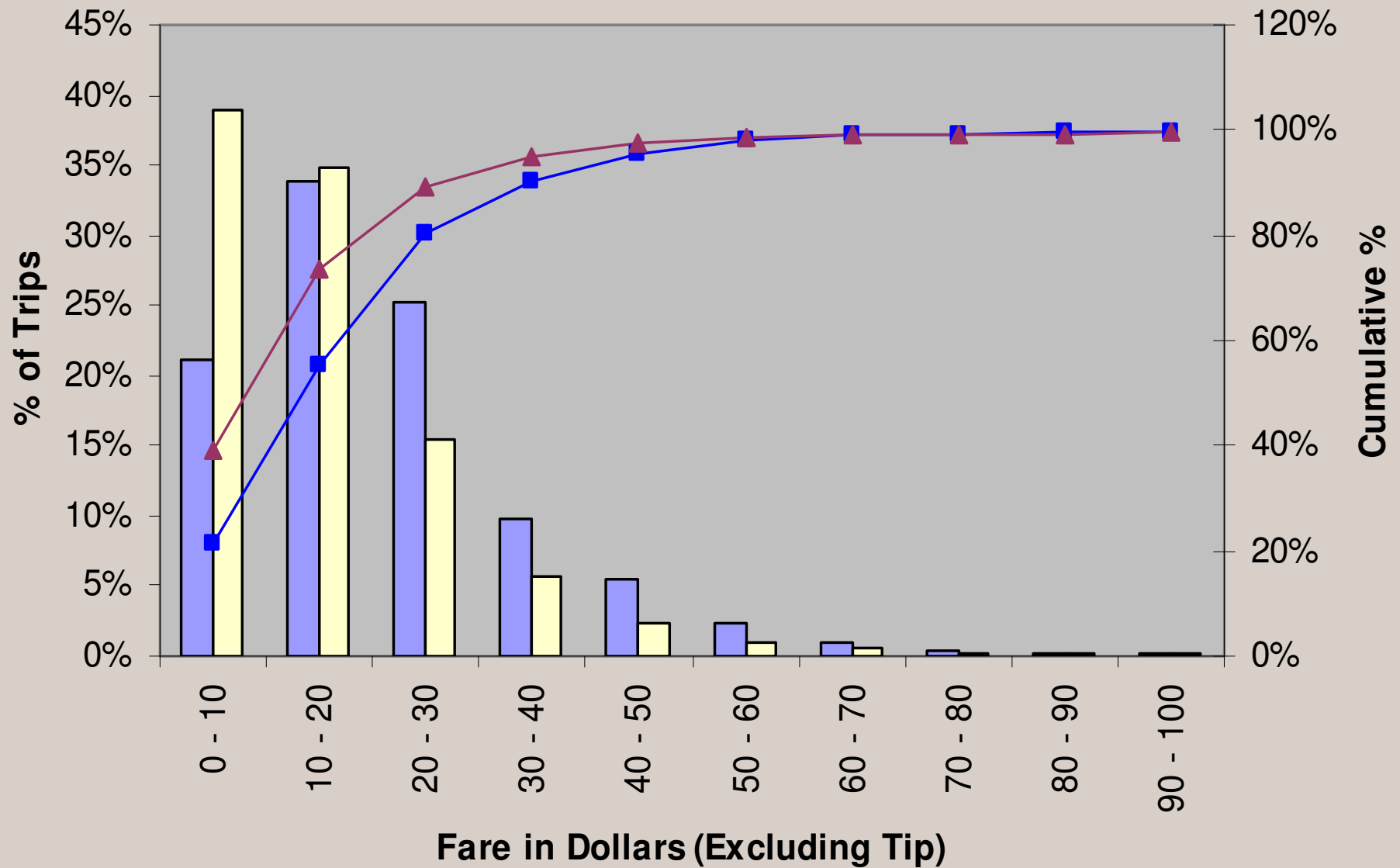
# Comparison of Wait Time Durations from Call Time to Pick Up for Dispatch Trips



## Comparison of Average Daily Trips per Vehicle



## Dispatch Trip Fare Values

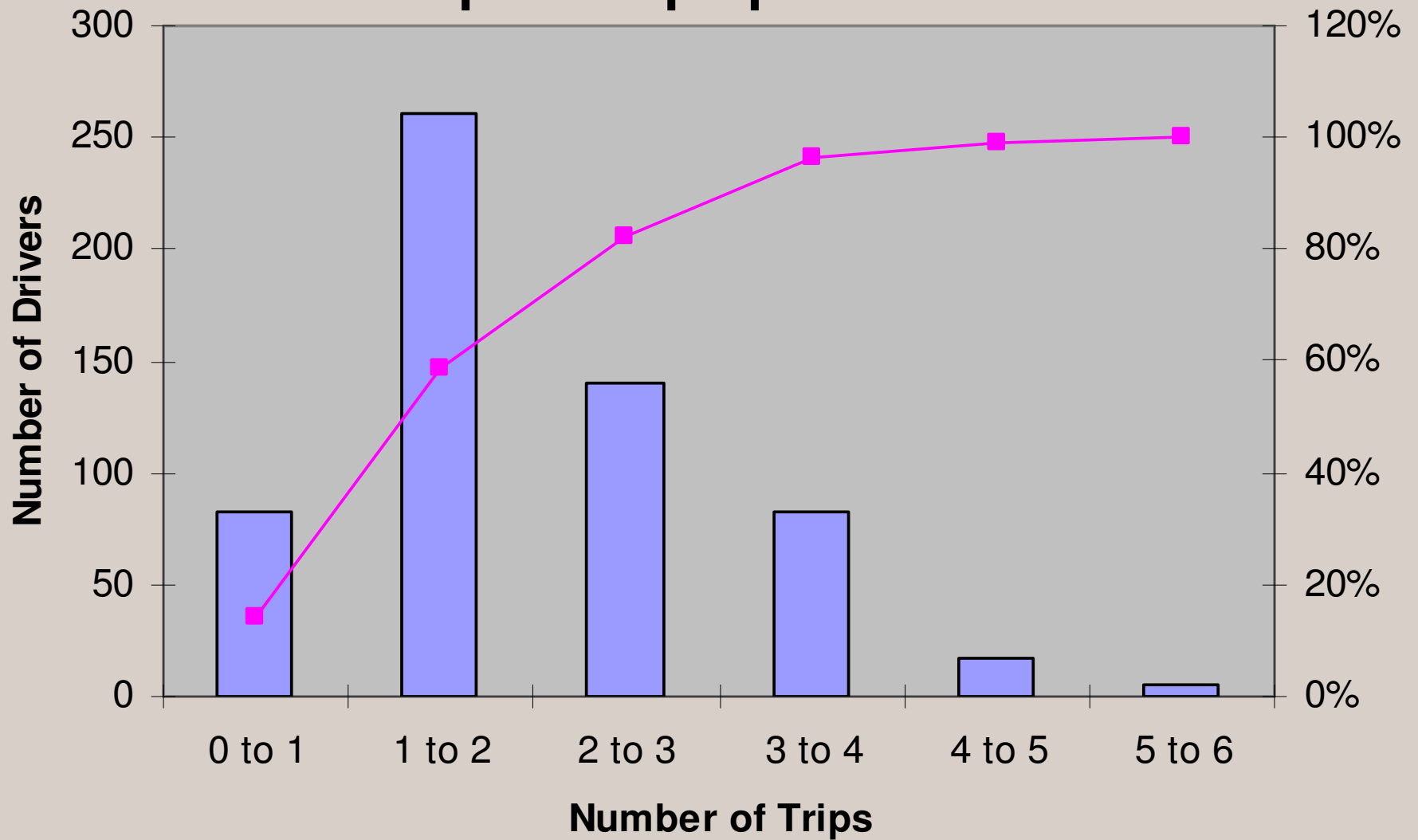


Company A Company B Cumulative % A Cumulative % B

# Austin-Bergstrom International Airport Taxi Service



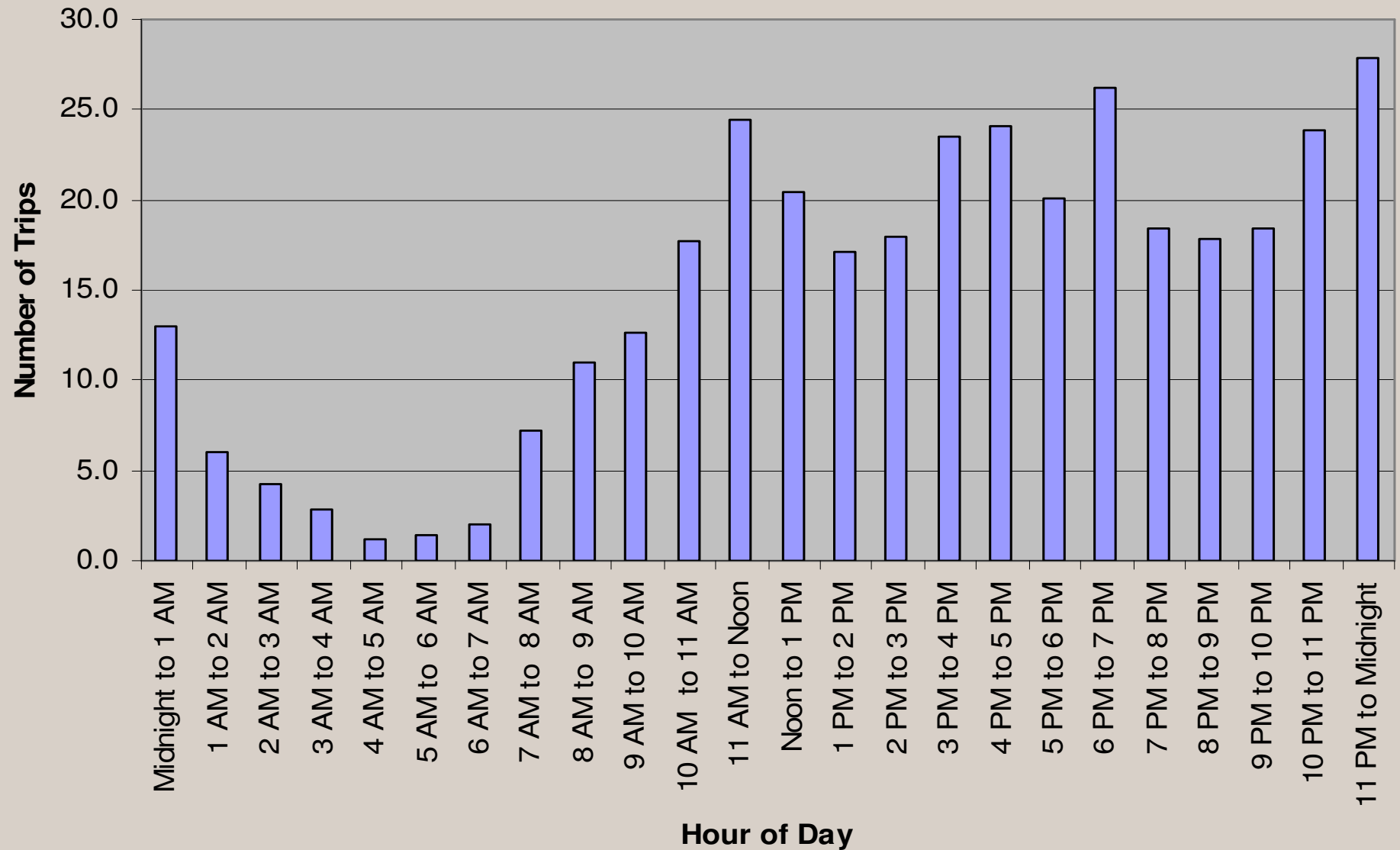
## Average Daily On-Demand Airport Trips per Driver



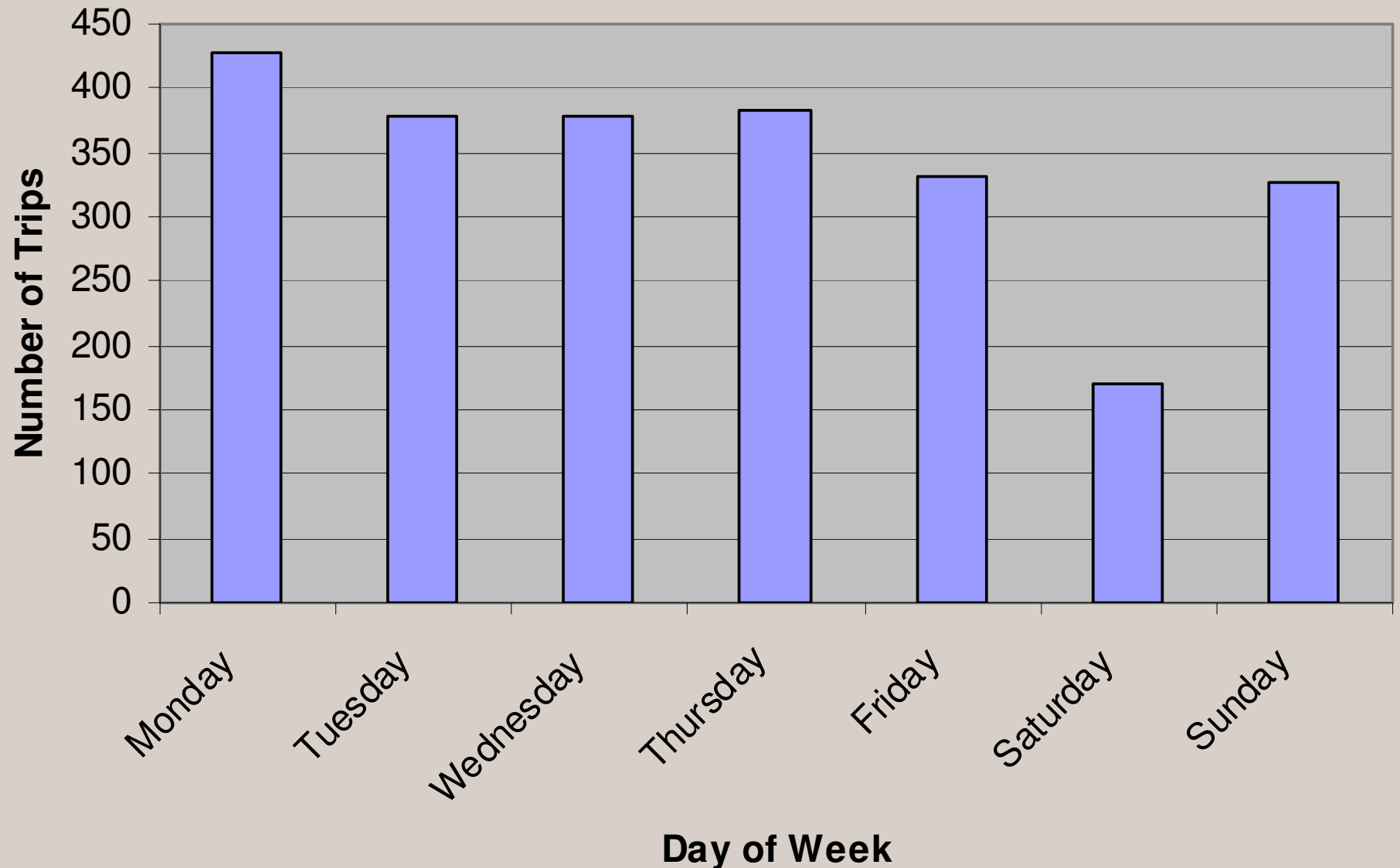
Number of Trips Cumulative %



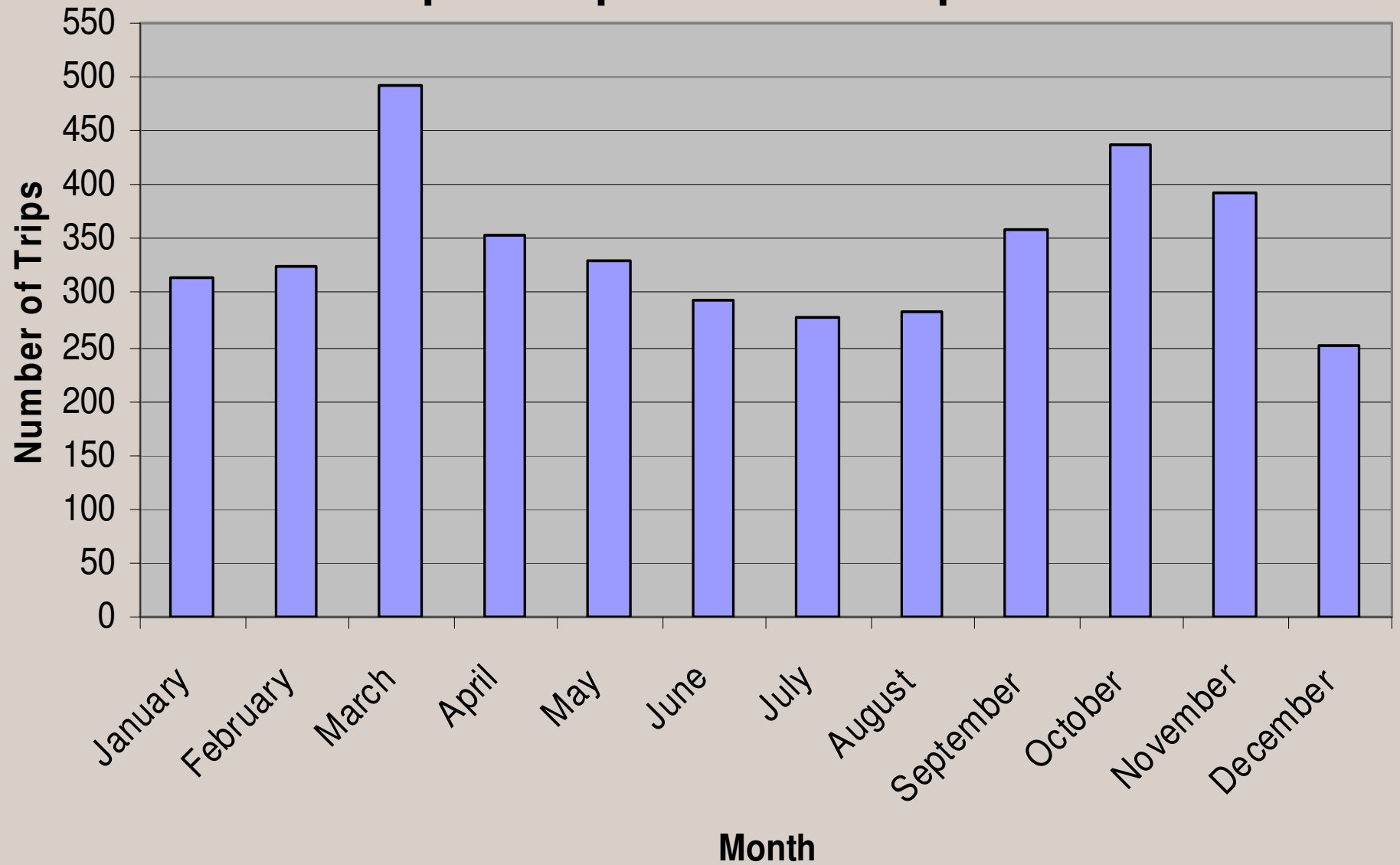
## Average On-Demand Airport Trips by Hour of Day



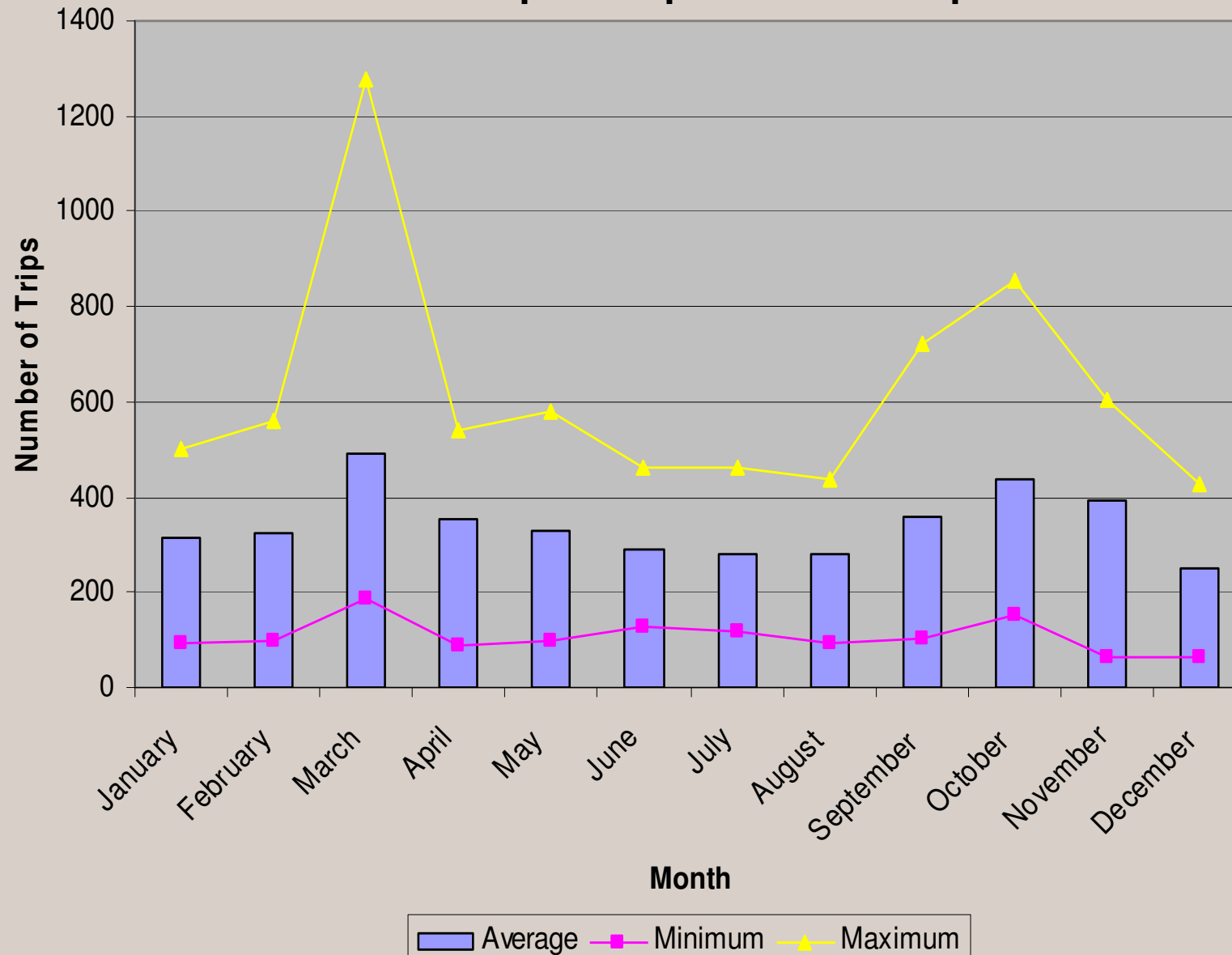
## Average On-Demand Airport Trips by Day of Week



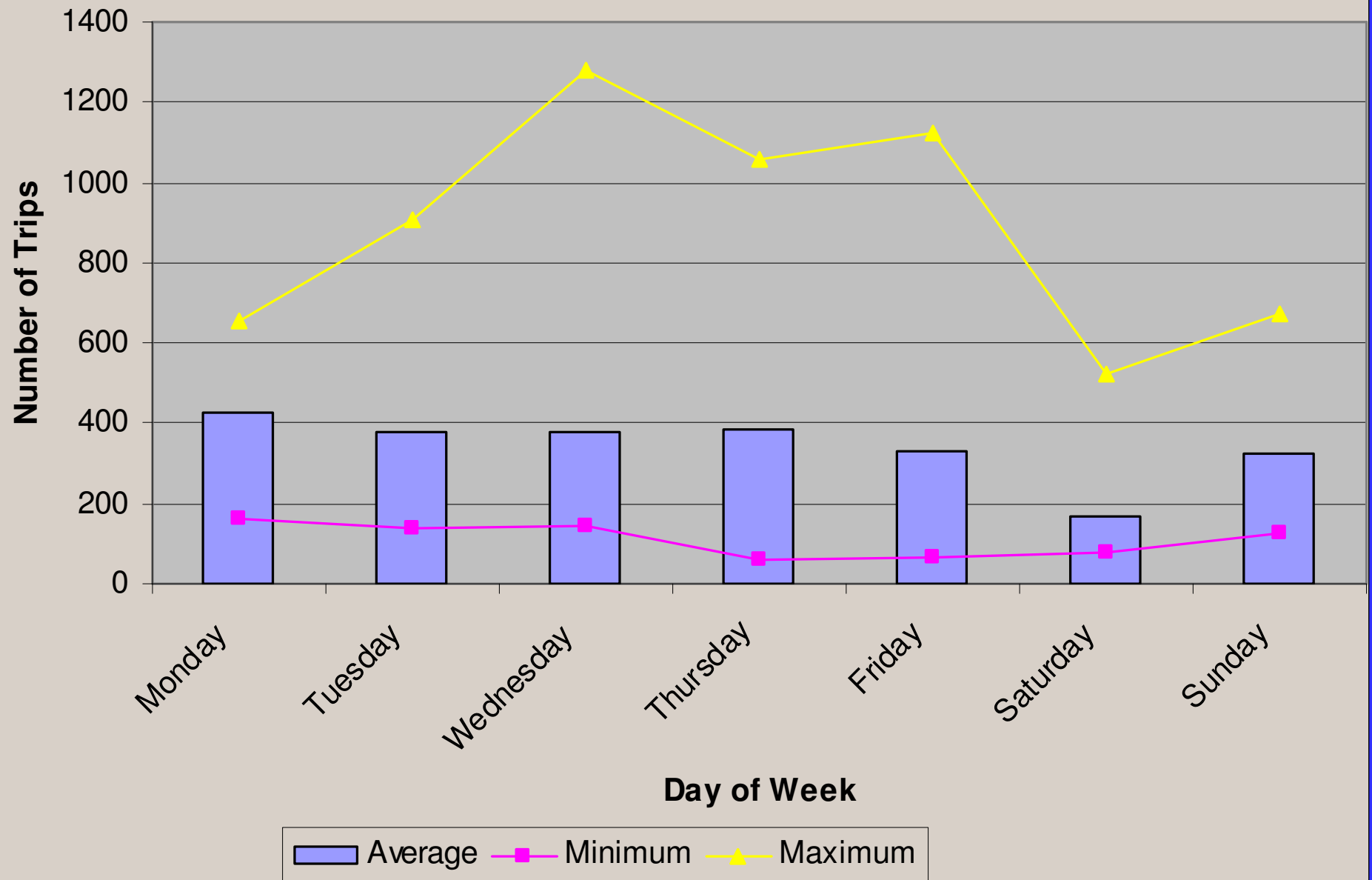
## Average Daily On-Demand Airport Trips from the Airport



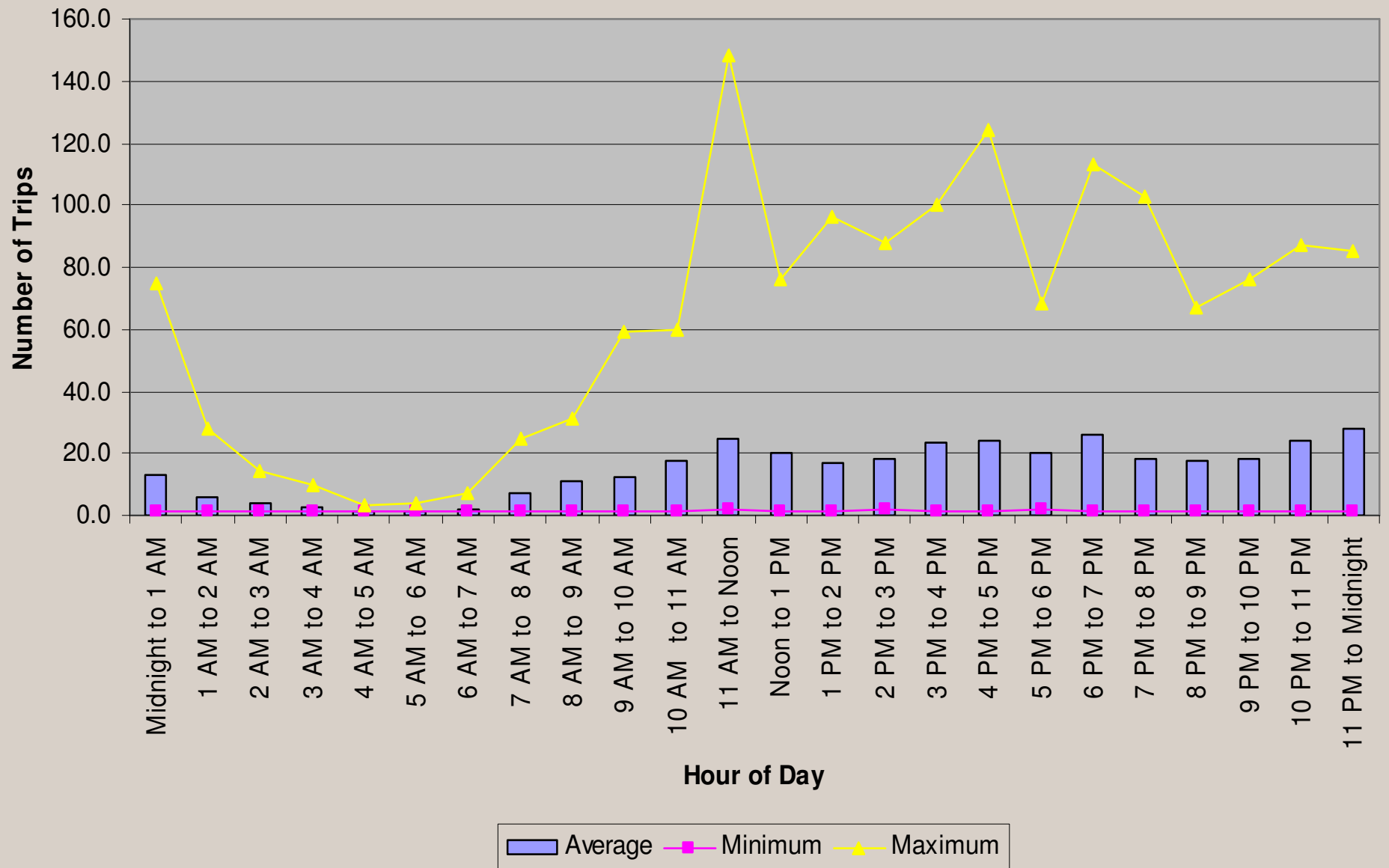
## Average Daily On-Demand Airport Trips from the Airport



## Average On-Demand Airport Trips by Day of Week



## Average On-Demand Airport Trips by Hour of Day





# User Survey Fact Sheet

- Total sent-out surveys: 683
- Total received: 135 (20%)
- Downtown Hotels (36%)
- Hotels outside of Downtown (26%)
- Assisted Living Centers (22%)
- Restaurants and Hospitals (15%)
- Provides a sampling of the opinions regarding local taxi/pedicab services in the Austin Metro area
- Questionnaires included respondent's choice of a taxi company and series of close-ended questions with attitudinal (order) choice

## "Question 1 Summary Which taxicab companies do you regularly call for service?"

### DOWNTOWN HOTELS:

Austin Cab Co.	6
Lone Star Cab	2
Yellow Cab Co.	11

### NON-DOWNTOWN HOTELS:

Austin Cab Co.	11
Lone Star Cab	4
Yellow Cab Co.	47

### COMBINED:

Austin Cab Co.	17
Lone Star Cab	6
Yellow Cab Co.	58

Other cab companies mentioned: J&G, Ace, Roy's Charter, Austin Awaits

## Non Downtown Hotels

<i>Average Wait Time</i>	
Less than 5 minutes	1
5-10 minutes	11
10-15 minutes	18
15-20 minutes	7
20-30 minutes	9
More than 30 minutes	6
<i>How would you rate taxi service?</i>	
Promptness	3.23
Answering phone	2.68
Courtesy	3.02
Driver appearance	3.06
Willingness to pick up	3.85
Handling complaints	2.71
Vehicle appearance	4.08
Fairness to customers	3.63
Credit Cards	4.13
Age of vehicles	4.02
Affordability	3.36

5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Okay; 2 = Poor; 1 = Very Poor

## Question 4 (Non-downtown Hotels)

Do you arrange airport transfers for your guests?

Survey #	Yes	No	If Yes, which companies do you use? How is the service arranged?
1	1		Super Shuttle; on-line or phone
2	1		Yellow Cab/Super Shuttle; we book the cabs online because phone calls are often not answered
3	1		Through transportation department & Guest Services department
4	1		Super Shuttle; telephone
5		1	
6	1		Yellow Cab, Super Shuttle; phone on on-line
7	1		We have our own shuttle & use Yellow Cab; Yellow Cab Austin.com
8	1		Yellow Cab, Lone Star, Super Shuttle; phone
9		1	
10	1		Super Shuttle; by our staff or guests themselves
11	1		Super Shuttle, Yellow Cab; over the phone
12	1		Yellow Cab, Super Shuttle; by the desk by phone or internet
13		1	
14	1		Yellow Cab, Super Shuttle; on-line or phone
15	1		Our own shuttle or Super Shuttle & cabs; at front desk w/our shuttle, web & phone for Super Shuttle, whichever cab company will answer
16	1		Super Shuttle, Yellow Cab, Lone Starcab; by phone
17		1	
18		1	
19	1		Yellow Cab; by phone
20		1	
21	1		Super Shuttle; by phone
22		1	We provide our own airport shuttle
23	1		Mostly Yellow Cab; phone & internet

25	1		Ace Taxi or Yellow Cab
26	1		Austin Cab; call one or two individuals who have proven customer service & fair rates
27	1		Hotel shuttle during hours; if not we schedule a pick up with the taxi
28	1		Mostly Yellow Cab; via phone
29		1	
30		1	
31		1	
32		1	Not arranged often for guests staying with us; has been arranged on occasion using various web site sources
33	1		Yellow Cab, Super Shuttle; phone or on-line
34	1		Yellow Cab; front desk agent from Hotel calls and schedules
35	1		R&R Limo, AUS-TEX Limo, super Shuttle; through the guest service department
36	1		Airport Super Shuttle or taxi
37	1		Sometimes; Yellow Cab mainly; we have a shuttle but not a driver all the time; we call or do it on-line
38	1	1	We call a taxi outside of the hours we offer our hotel shuttle
39		1	
40	1		Yellow Cab, Super Shuttle; phone or on-line
41	1		Yellow Cab, Roy's Charter, Austin Cab; phone or internet
42		1	Sometimes Super Shuttle
43		1	
44	1		Super Shuttle and Yellow Cab; on-line, by phone when possible
45	1		Super Shuttle, Yellow Cab; we call cab for guest, we provide # for shuttle to guest
46	1		Yellow Cab
47	1		Yellow Cab; Yellow Cab Austin.com
48	1		Yellow Cab; on-line or phone
	34	15	

## Question 1 (Downtown Hotels)

Which taxicab companies do you regularly call for service?

Survey #	Austin Cab Co.	Lone Star Cab	Yellow Cab Co.	Other
1			1	
2			1	
3			1	
4	1		1	
5	1			
6	1	1	1	
7			1	
8	1		1	
9				Our doorman calls first available
10			1	
11			1	
12	1		1	
13	1	1	1	
	6	2	11	



## Questions 2-3 (Downtown Hotels)

Average Wait Time		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Less than 5 minutes	4			1		1				1				1
5-10 minutes	3								1		1		1	
10-15 minutes	3	1	1									1		
15-20 minutes	0													
20-30 minutes	2				1			1						
More than 30 minutes	0													
How would you rate taxi service?		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Promptness	3.58	3		4	2	4	2	3	4	4	4	3	5	5
Answering phone	2.85	3	2	4	2	3	2	4	1	4	2	2	5	3
Courtesy	3.31	4	5	4	2	4	1	4	3	4	4	4	3	1
Driver appearance	2.62	4	3	3	2	1	1	3	2	3	4	4	3	1
Willingness to pick up	3.85	5	5	5	2	3	1	2	3	5	5	5	5	4
Handling complaints	2.18	2	2	4	2	1	2	2	2		4		2	1
Vehicle appearance	3.31	4	3	4	2	3	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	3
Fairness to customers	3.50		4	5	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	1
Credit Cards	3.67		5	4	2	3	2	3	2	4	5	5	5	4
Age of vehicles	3.46	3	4	4	2	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3
Affordability	3.42		3	4	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3

5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Okay; 2 = Poor; 1 = Very Poor

## Question 4 (Downtown Hotels)

Do you arrange airport transfers for your guests?

Survey #	Yes	No	If Yes, which companies do you use? How is the service arranged?
1			
2		1	
3	1		R&R; phone or e-mail
4	1		Super Shuttle; call for advance pick-up
5	1		J&G Transportation & taxis; booked at front desk or direct
6	1		Super Shuttle, cab; appointment, cab line
7	1		Yellow Cab; call or by Yellow Cab on-line
8	1		Super Shuttle, cabs; by phone
9	1		First available called by our doorman
10	1		Yellow Cab, Austin Cab, Super Shuttle; by phone
11	1		Yellow Cab, J&G Citywide Express; telephone or internet
12	1		Super Shuttle, R&R; concierge call
13	1		Super Shuttle, Execucar; on-line or phone call
	11	1	

## Question 6 (Downtown Hotels)

Do you arrange shuttle, limousine, bus or van service for your guests?

Survey #	Yes	No	If Yes, which companies do you use? How is the service arranged?
1	1		Don't arrange them but frequently recommend Super Shuttle for guests
2	1		Many; by phone
3	1		R&R, Ellite; phone or e-mail
4	1		Super Shuttle
5	1		J&G Transportation, Super Shuttle; booked at front desk or doorman
6	1		Super Shuttle; by appointment
7	1		Larry Price Limo; we either call or e-mail and will promptly receive a response
8	1		Crown, R&R, Corey Limo, Sedans; by phone
9	1		Super Shuttle, Execucar, R&R limo, Mobile Jet; directly with service
10	1		J&G, Super Shuttle, A1; by phone
11	1		J&G Citywide Express; by phone
12	1		R&R, Execucar; Concierge call
13	1		Execucar, Super Shuttle, R&R; on-line or phone call
	13	0	

## Question 7 (Downtown Hotels)

Please list any comments you would like to make regarding taxicab or ground transportation services in Austin:

Survey #	
1	Yellow Cab was awful for a while; not answering calls, not picking people up, etc.; lately it seems a little better; the other cab companies take too long to pick people up; probably because they have smaller fleets
2	Some non-smoking cabs have drivers that smoke in the cabs
3	All should accept credit cards
4	Super Shuttle is clean and provides far greater service than cab companies
5	Sometimes when cabs are busy they take their phone off the hook
6	Taxi-cabs only want fares that go to the airport; most of the cab drivers get mad and rude to our guests if they are not going to the airport; also on nights that are busy, cabs decide to to take off of work
7	Yellow Cab can be very unreliable and on multiple occasions guests have waited a few hours for a cab
8	Improve cleanliness inside vehicles; better appearance of drivers in grooming and attire; hire drivers who are knowledgeable of local destinations
11	Drivers can use better knowledge of area so guests don't pay money for drivers' errors
12	Improved training for drivers so they can get to commonly asked destinations; appears to be frequent cell phone usage by drivers
13	In general most of the drivers are completely inept navigating the city; a high number are not proficient in English; a high number are rude or unwilling to provide transportation to close destinations

## Question 7 (Non-downtown Hotels)

Please list any comments you would like to make regarding taxicab or ground transportation services in Austin:

Survey #	
2	During large events or holidays, cabs will go on over 1-2 hour wait; the phone lines of Yellow Cab are very undependable
4	Special events severely strain the system with the worst case scenario having the guest call back every 15 min. to say they still want the cab; sometimes the cab companys' phone system gets overloaded to the point it won't accept calls or will automatically drop calls
6	Busy holidays it can be impossible to get a cab
7	Yellow Cab has been overall a good taxi company; my only complaint is that often guests are waiting for over 30 min. for a shuttle; the customer service reps on the phone are extremely helpful
8	There is sometimes discrimination; if a customer doesn't appear "American" they are often driven the long way to their destination and if guests are drunken this also occurs; e.g. \$80 from Parmer Lane to 6th St. is a common fee for party goers
9	Poor customer service; a cabby missed pulling up to the back door so he backed up very fast & my husband (holding our 19 month old daughter) had to dodge from getting hit
10	Taxi cabs are extremely difficult to get hold of on weekends (Fri & Sat) and especially during major events - impossible! Appearance of cab drivers is sometimes SCARY!
11	Austin Yellow Cab drivers often arrive for a guest and do not announce that they are here; if they do it is usually rudely; some wait times on a normal day way too long. During major events (SXSW etc..) extremely poor service
12	Taxi service during Austin's big events is embarrassing; our guests are shocked at the lack of drivers & wait times, not to mention cost; drivers during this time often leave without letting us know they are here, or pick up the wrong riders
15	City of Austin transportation officials changed their interpretation of city ordinances; the city officials do not work with stakeholders & preferential treatment is given by ground transportation officers to cab companies
19	More taxis for special events (SXSW, Halloween, New Years)
21	On friday and saturday nights, taxi service is terrible; long waits and phone calls are not picked up

22	Taxi drivers have a terrible attitude taking guest from the airport to the hotel; the taxi drivers feel it is too short a drive and not worth their time; they are also rude as hell to our customers
23	Since we are so close to the airport our guests often comment on how rudely they were treated by the driver because of low fare
24	Have a good service
26	A set rate for airport service would be appreciated; the cabs fluctuate between \$35 and \$55 right now
27	Please inform on-line reservations when there is an issue so that we may call to order
29	Yellow Cab's website w/hotel departure tab extremely helpful; wish there was a way to cancel/adjust cabs on-line as well
30	Getting any taxi to come to the hotel after 7pm on Friday or Saturday nights is nearly impossible; wait times are astronomical and often they just don't show up at all
31	Not enough cabs
32	Due to the low volume of work week traffic for taxi servicess, Austin cab companies frequently seem over matched during high volume event periods; Yellow Cab though occasionally noticeably backed up, is extremely reliable and fair and account for the majority of taxi service from our hotel in part due to user friendly website



33	Yellow Cab drivers are always happy to accept credit cards; Austin cab is rarely so accepting; otherwise section 3 is the same for both companies
34	During large events there are not enough taxis nor are they willing to travel "outside" the downtown area
35	Unfortunately the reliability of the taxi service in Austin has caused serious issues with missed pick ups and pushed us away from using any taxis
36	During peak times there are never enough taxis available
37	Some drivers get upset if they have to come from the airport & pick up a guest & take them back; very hard to get someone by phone; very poor service for a cab company which we give a lot of business to
38	Taxi drivers want to argue about fare in front of our guests - their customers; it's embarrassing; more prompt service from Yellow Cab when taxi is ordered on-line vs. over the phone
39	To be more prompt to pick up
41	Yellow Cab should have a way to cancel on-line; cabs often have stuff all over the front seat making it hard for parties of 4 to sit; arrival time needs to be improved
42	During SXSW & ACL it is nearly impossible for our guests to get a cab, and in my opinion is embarrassing to the city of Austin; all the other times it's great - I have no complaints about it most of the time when events aren't happening; except that I wish Yellow Cab would offer an online cancellation option; we can book on-line but if we need to cancel we have to call and by the time we get through, the cab has already shown up and the cabbie is angry with us that we didn't cancel
45	Satisfied with service; occasionally we have a driver attempt to eat at our buffet or take coffee which we report to cab company; should not be doing this
46	During busy times in Austin, specifically South by Southwest cab drivers try to rip off customer by driving out of they way & say the credit card machine is not working; very unprofessional

## Austin TAXI Service Questionnaire Results (Hospitals & Assisted Living Facilities)

### Question 1 Summary

Which taxicab companies do you regularly call for service?

#### HOSPITALS:

Austin Cab Co.	2
Lone Star Cab	0
Yellow Cab Co.	3

#### ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES:

Austin Cab Co.	2
Lone Star Cab	0
Yellow Cab Co.	7

#### COMBINED:

Austin Cab Co.	4
Lone Star Cab	0
Yellow Cab Co.	10

*Other cab companies mentioned:* Discount Cab, "pedicabs"

## Question 2 Summary

What is the average wait time for a taxicab to arrive after being called?

DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS/BARS:		%
Less than 5 minutes	2	4%
5-10 minutes	5	11%
10-15 minutes	9	20%
15-20 minutes	3	7%
20-30 minutes	25	54%
More than 30 minutes	2	4%
NON-DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS/BARS:		%
Less than 5 minutes	0	0%
5-10 minutes	3	20%
10-15 minutes	2	13%
15-20 minutes	3	20%
20-30 minutes	5	33%
More than 30 minutes	2	13%
COMBINED:		%
Less than 5 minutes	2	3%
5-10 minutes	8	13%
10-15 minutes	11	18%
15-20 minutes	6	10%
20-30 minutes	30	49%
More than 30 minutes	4	7%

## Austin TAXI Service Questionnaire Results

### Questions 2-3 (Downtown Restaurants/Bars)

<i>Average Wait Time</i>	
Less than 5 minutes	2
5-10 minutes	5
10-15 minutes	9
15-20 minutes	3
20-30 minutes	2
More than 30 minutes	3
<i>How would you rate taxi service?</i>	
Promptness	3.29
Answering phone	2.88
Courtesy	3.31
Driver appearance	3.13
Willingness to pick up	3.68
Handling complaints	2.64
Vehicle appearance	3.59
Fairness to customers	3.51
Credit Cards	3.41
Age of vehicles	3.42
Affordability	3.32

## Question 5 Summary

Please list any comments you would like to make regarding taxicab or ground transportation services in Austin:

### Downtown Restaurants/Bars:

+	-	n/a	#	Comments
	1		2	Perhaps have some preference/priority for restaurant guests; pick-up during primetimes on weekend and busy nights; also credit card acceptance should not be made begrudgingly
	1		5	Taxi service gets overwhelmed during events - ACL, SXSW, big conventions; they don't or can't adjust
	1		6	Need a cab stand; cabs stop in middle of road and stop traffic all the time; need to be parked better
	1		7	The taxi waiting for customers at the Hilton Hotel (one block away) overflow their taxi stand and consequently take away all the parking spots on our block; our customers cannot access us anymore as there are no more parking spaces
	1		9	Difficult at times when needed most of course on fridays & Saturdays
	1		10	Need for cabs available during downtown events and inclement weather
	1		11	During busy hours (weekend nights), they are easy to come by; however we have never had success in reserving a cab in advance and have difficulty on slow nights (Sunday-Tuesday) and after 1:35 am on weekends
	1		13	I think when business is slow you get prompt service; however, when it's busy some drivers refuse to do pick-up for short distances; this has happened to customers and to me personally several times; most if not all cab drivers have a problem with accepting credit cards even though it is posted on their cabs that credit cards are accepted
	1		14	Very hard to get the city to work out a cab stand for 2nd Street district; also when the city is busy, there are times every cab company is unreachable by phone
	1		16	Tend to be fewer cabs in early and slow parts of the week; which is when we usually have business travellers looking for transportation
	1		17	Most of the time we call cabs for our guests only on weekends; it's been my experience that the cab company doesn't even answer the phone and generally takes a long time for the cab to arrive if we do get through
	1		21	Yellow Cab as well as other companies are known for taking a customer if the fare is going to take too long and not allow them to get back downtown fast enough

	1		2 3	There is a cab stand across the street; calling is a waste of time because they take too long to show up; we just send guests to 6th & San-Jac Northeast corner to grab a cab
		1	2 4	Average
		1	2 8	We would love to have phone numbers to call for a pedicab pick-up; downtown area by campus and capital needs more pedicabs
	1		2 9	It's as poor a quality overall service as any city I've ever seen or witnessed
	1		3 0	Car drivers (ordinary drivers - cab drivers) need to be more aware of and patient about pedicab and bicycle riders
	1		3 2	Cabs are more willing to take in hotel pick-ups rather than us across the street
1			3 4	So far, so good
	1		3 7	The taxi cab system in Austin is atrocious and by the far the worst in any metropolitan area I've ever seen; Austin has one of the highest DUI/DWI rates in Texas that I believe is supported by the lack of public transportation; I listed the average wait time at around 30 minutes but that is only when there is nothing else going on; throw SXSW or ACL into the mix and times goes well over an hour; even then oftentimes cabs will arrive and take the first rider they see instead of calling the person that has supplied their phone number; it is very apparent that transportation was an after thought in the grand plan in a city that has grown exponentially over the years, our state capital even; this is completely unacceptable; there are so many business owners and opertors that feel this way; thank you for reaching out to our community; please let us know if we can help remedy this issue
	1		3 8	Yellow Cab is typically very hard to get hold of; their drivers hate taking credit cards; they are not very nice and usually smell of cigarettes
	1		3 9	I strongly think there should be more taxicabs available in Austin; the city is growing and there are not enough cabs or options of transportation for people going out in the downtown area; there are also inconsistencies in the times of arrival when cabs are called; sometimes they arrive very quickly and other times they take over 30 minutes; if there were more companies or more cabs available in the city, this would make things more consistent
	1		4 0	The courtesy by the dispatchers lacks at times; an estimate on time that remains accurate would be helpful

	1		4 1	Yellow Cab regularly does not answer when called for cab service; very poor
1	21	2		
4%	88%	8%		



**Question 3 Summary**  
**How would you rate the taxi service you presently receive?**

	<b>DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS/BARS</b>	<b>NON-DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS/BARS</b>	<b>COMBINED</b>
Promptness	3.29	3.20	3.2
Answering phone	2.88	3.67	3.3
Courtesy	3.31	4.00	3.7
Driver appearance	3.13	3.71	3.4
Willingness to pick up	3.68	3.80	3.7
Handling complaints	2.64	3.29	3.0
Vehicle Appearance	3.59	4.00	3.8
Fairness to customers	3.51	3.55	3.5
Credit cards	3.41	4.08	3.7
Age of vehicles	3.42	3.85	3.6
Affordability	3.32	3.77	3.5

## Comparative Analysis Other Cities

Service	Dallas	Orlando	Miami	Miami	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	San Antonio	Austin
Promptness	3.54	3.44	4.44	3.5	2.8	3.9	3.5	4.17	3.4
Answer Phone	3.61	3.77	4.77	3.9	2.9	3.9	3.3	4.36	2.8
Courtesy	3.02	3.69	4.69	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.8	4.04	3.2
Appear/Driver	2.69	3.61	4.61	3	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.68	2.8
Willingness	3.87	3.85	4.85	3.5	3.2	4.5	4.1	4.2	3.9
Handling	2.7	3.33	4.33	2.9	2.7	3.5	3.3	3.21	2.4
Appear/Vehicle	3.31	4.05	5.05	3.3	4	3.8	4.4	4.38	3.7
Credit Cards	3.25	3.62	4.62	3	3.2	NA	3.6	4.39	3.9
Fares/Costs	3.1	3.1	4.1	NA	3.5	NA		3.96	3.4

5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Okay; 2 = Poor; 1 = Very Poor

# Austin Pedicab Survey

- All Downtown Hotels
- All Restaurants within pedicab service area

## Question 1

Have you had any problems with pedicabbers, either on your property or within your establishment?

	YES	%	NO	%
Hotels:	2	14%	12	86%
Restaurants/Bars:	7	17%	34	83%
COMBINED:	9	16%	46	84%

*Question 1 Comments: 8 negative; 1 positive*

## Question 2

Have your customers/guests shared any complaints about pedicab service?

	YES	%	NO	%
Hotels:	4	29%	10	71%
Restaurants/Bars:	13	32%	28	68%
COMBINED:	17	31%	38	69%

*Question 2 Comments: 13 negative; 1 positive*

### Question 3

Would you encourage pedicab pick-up from your establishment?

	YES	%	NO	%
Hotels:	11	79%	3	21%
Restaurants/Bars:	22	59%	15	41%
COMBINED:	33	65%	18	35%

## Question 4

Does your staff recommend pedicab service as an alternative means of transportation?

	YES	%	NO	%
Hotels:	9	64%	5	36%
Restaurants/Bars:	16	42%	22	58%
COMBINED:	25	48%	27	52%

## Austin PEDICAB Service Questionnaire Results SUMMARY

### Question 5

Please list any comments you would like to make regarding pedicab service in Austin:

#### Hotels:

+	-	n/a	#	Comments
1			1	We'd love to have more pedicabs on S. Congress; though the street condition might not be ideal for them
	1		3	Need to ensure manners, etiquette and attire
		1	7	Were a little far from their main base of operations
		1	12	To #4 above "no" only because don't have way to order them at our establishment
1			13	Unique fun feature for the city
		1	14	I would encourage for the sake of experience/ however, warn about service and promptness
2	1	3		
33%	17%	50%		



## Restaurants/Bars:

+	-	n/a	#	Comments
	1		1	I have experienced the same problems as my customers. I feel the pedicabs could be an asset to downtown Austin if they were regulated, monitored & limited. Currently, we have too many & they have become a safety issue
1			3	Great service & staff
	1		6	Stop the pedicabs; lawless bunch
1			10	Awesome! Need more
1			11	We think this is a great form of transportation and should be encouraged by the city of Austin
1			14	Eco-friendly & convenient to our guests
		1	16	Needs better regulation; very novel concept & certainly has good merits as for getting less cars on the streets
		1	17	In response to #3 above - I don't think I've ever seen pedicabs in this area of town
	1		21	Just be more polite to pedestrians and other downtown traffic
	1		23	For the most part they're great, but there are so many (too many) that a good number of them are rude, shirtless, disheveled, and basically crowding the streets
	1		25	Outlaw pedicabs or make them do a true training course to get a license
1			28	We would love to have a way to contact the pedicabs when we need them
	1		31	They need to be licensed and regulated. It is a cash business and none of them pay taxes. They need to risk losing their license for offenses; there also needs to be a complaint line for customer problems. Safety is also a huge concern
	1		32	They cause traffic jams in area; do not yield to cars, consistantly cutting off cars. They should be driving in far right lane, not far left!
		1	37	This would be an unsafe alternative for our business due to location, but I fully support the efforts made in the downtown areas
1			38	Love pedicabs! Would love more of them on S. Congress

1			3 8	Love pedicabs! Would love more of them on S. Congress
		1	3 9	There isn't really a need for many pedicabs at this establishment because it's on the outskirts of the downtown area
	1		4 0	99% of pedicabbers operate illegally by requiring \$10/person fare whether you go 2 blocks or 12 blocks. Pedicabs in Austin are supposed to be tips only, but that is flat just not the case. If you do not agree in advance to the fare they will refuse service
6	8	4		
33%	44%	22%		

# Secret Shopper Reports

- Time of call: **12:01am**
- **Time it took for the taxi to arrive:** Total wait time 1 hour and 2 minutes
- 7. Overall, how was the service? Please describe your trip in detail
- *When he arrived, the driver apologized for the delay, said they were busy tonight. I told him my destination and he asked what I was out doing tonight. He was polite and friendly and interested in me. When we stopped at my destination, the meter read \$4.95, when he told me the price, it read \$5.41, so I paid him. When I objected, he said he hadn't looked at the meter when we stopped. I asked if he took credit cards and he said, "Sure" and swiped my card in the machine. He asked if I needed a receipt and I said yes. I asked for a cab receipt and he said my credit card print out was the only receipt he had for me. I punched in the amount and tip on the machine and handed it back to him. He gave me my receipt and I got out of the cab. The driver had his music on very loud and it hurt my ears.*

# Secret Shopper Reports

- Time of call: 12:02 am
- 7. Overall, how was the service? Please describe your trip in detail
- The driver asked how we enjoyed our evening and how the bar was, that it had only been open a couple of months. I asked him to tell me how the dispatch service worked, because I had been waiting for a cab for well over an hour. He said that in the central business district, on a busy night like tonight, they generally don't put the calls out, but people just flag down cabs in the street. He said that he is punched in as being in a certain zone, and the GPS system is supposed to offer him calls in his zone, to the nearest cab, but his experience with the system is that he is often pretty far away from where the customer call actually is. He said even if my call was taken by the dispatcher, he doubted it was put out into the system. At the end of the ride I asked the driver if he would take a credit card and he said he would although he said he would prefer cash.
- After I reached my destination I called Austin Cab, who said there was over an hour wait. I then called Lone Star Cab, who told me they did not have any available drivers and to call one of the other cab companies in town.
- Based on the above, I ascertained that I was not going to be able to get a cab by calling one of the cab companies, so I went home.

# Secret Shopper Reports

- **Date:** 6/22  
**Time of call:** 11:05

- a. **Time for operator to answer the phone:** \_\_\_\_\_3 rings\_\_\_\_\_
- b. **Were you scheduled for a taxi trip?** ☒x yes \_\_\_\_\_ no
- c. **If yes, time estimate for cab to arrive?** within 20\_\_\_\_\_minutes

**Q: Please describe the telephone call. Was the operator friendly?** Yes. She just asked for my location and if I was ready to be picked up. She called back in a minute and a half and said that the driver was near.

2. Note: If taxi does not arrive within stated time, please call back and ask why it has not arrived. If you have to do this, please relate response on following lines.

- **3. Time it took for the taxi to arrive:** \_\_\_\_2\_\_\_\_\_ minutes

# Secret Shopper Reports

- **7. Overall, how was the service? Please describe your trip in detail** (Please include your conversation during the ride, and the greeting and parting comments from the driver).
- When I opened the door, I said, "That was the fastest service ever!" He said, Well, that 's because I'm the best at what I do", with a laugh. This driver was very friendly and polite. He created small talk during the ride. We discussed Macy's closing down at Highland Mall and talked about the cooler weather today due to last night's rain. He was very willing to take my credit card and in parting he said, "Have an awesome day!"

# Secret Shopper Reports

- *Date: 6/24/2011*
- *Time of call: 10:10 a.m.*
- *a. Time for operator to answer the phone: 2+ minutes\_\_\_\_\_*
- *b. Were you scheduled for a taxi trip?    \_X\_ yes    \_\_\_ no*
- *c. If yes, time estimate for cab to arrive?  \_20\_ minutes*
- ***Q: Please describe the telephone call. Was the operator friendly? The operator was efficient, not friendly***
- *2.    Note: **If taxi does not arrive within stated time, please call back and ask why it has not arrived. If you have to do this, please relate response on following lines.** \_\_\_I called back at 22 minutes and was told the cab was 10 minutes away; the cab did not arrive. I called again at 12 minutes, was told the cab was still 10 minutes out. The cab did not arrive. I called again and was told “10 minutes.” By 11:00AM the cab had still not arrived. As it had been nearly an hour and 3 additional calls I could not longer wait.*
- *7.    **Overall, how was the service? Please describe your trip in detail**  
This was my second attempt with this company. The service was disappointing*

# Secret Shopper Reports

- Date: 6/24/2011
- Time of call: 9:00am no answer ; Called back 9:05am
- **Overall, how was the service? Please describe your trip in detail** I was told this would be a 15 minute wait, it was more than 30. The driver stated that he just got the call. I changed the location based on the length of time to arrive. The driver was not happy about this and stated that he would lose another fare because of it. He made comments about this 3 times during the ride, He took a roundabout route to the destination even though I gave him directions for a quicker route. Driving was erratic throwing me all over the back seat. I had to ask him to retrieve my walker. He was unfriendly.



# Secret Shopper Reports

- **Date:** 7/6/11
- **Time of call:** 9:01 pm
- The driver picked me up and when I told him where I was going, he said that was the first time he'd ever picked someone up at a coffee shop and taken them to a grocery store. On the way, he talked about how he often got green lights on this street, and then while we were stopped at a stop light at Oltorf, he talked about how he wasn't looking at the woman in the car next to him, he was looking at the traffic. He said he wasn't looking at her breasts, but that she was scantily clad, but he was just looking at the traffic and she thought he was looking at her. He then made a comment about how people don't know how to dress these days. I was a bit offended at what he said initially, and thought his comments were unprofessional. When it was time to pay he took my credit card payment but did seemed disappointed I was not paying cash. He said he would take the card if that was all I had. I asked him to fill out a receipt for me but he just gave me a blank receipt.

# Secret Shopper Reports - Pedicabs

- I came up and asked if he was available and he said sure. I inspected the back of the cab for the number and it was not listed. I got in and he said I was smart to inspect the cab and make sure the lights worked, most people did not do that. He asked where we were off to and I said the Driscoll. I asked him his cab number, and he said, well he was number 1. I said his cab wasn't like any of the others and asked which company he worked for. He said he owned his cab, that he was independent. I asked how business was and he said it was good when he started two years ago, hardly anyone was doing it, but now there are several companies and a lot of people working and it has really impacted his business in a negative way. He asked where I was in town from and I said I lived here, I was just meeting some people at the Driscoll. He said how amazing it was that some blocks down here the music was incredibly loud and some not loud at all. I asked him how much I owed him and he said they liked to get 5 or 10 dollars per trip. I handed him ten dollars and he said thank you. I got out of the cab and he rode away.*

# Issues facing Austin Taxi Operations

- Distorted public image of taxi industry and drivers due to well written but factually incorrect reports
- Lack of service on Friday and Saturday evenings
- Lack of double shifting of existing taxis
- Potential fragmentation of the taxi industry in Austin due to driver's desire to own their own permit
- Drivers unwilling to accept dispatch trips
- Not all taxi companies collect data on all trips
- Lack of ability to base additional permits on total dispatch, hail, and stand utilization
- Lack of ability to base fares on taxi utilization

**TTLF**

# Recommendations

- **Objectives:**

- Support Full Service Taxi Companies by continuing “Managed Competition”
- Prevent Fractionalization of Taxi Industry
- Add significant capacity for weekend and special event use

- Recommended Actions:

- Cease adding additional taxi permits by population and airport deplanements.
- Provide up to 100 new part-time company taxi permits for peak use weeks and weekend use only
- Require minimum of three dispatched trips per shift per vehicle before issuing additional permits to franchise

**TTLF**

# Recommendations (cont.)

- Require all Austin taxi companies to electronically capture and record all trips taken by their taxis.
- Require that before next franchise authorization time that all full service taxi companies dispatch calls with GPS, turn by turn instructions for the driver.
- Require all taxi companies to reach a minimum number of five trips per shift of the taxi or be required to reduce the number of taxis in their fleet.
- Link taxi, pedicab, and ELSV routes to expanded taxi stands in high volume downtown areas.

**TTLF**

# Recommendations conti.

- Base additional permits on demonstrated utilization of permit:
  - Set incremental goals for each taxi company of a 20% increase in trips
  - Allot increases in operating permits as a result of actual demand in the form of increased trips generated for drivers on a 1 for 2 basis. For each 20% increase in trips, the taxi company would be permitted to add 10% more taxis thereby allowing drivers to increase business at a rate faster than additional taxis added to the system.

## Fare Increases?

- Fuel costs presently accounted for in ordinance
- Tie fares to cost of living index – adjust every two years
- Keep 10 cent clean up fee system wide and institute a \$flat \$100 per incident fee when cab is significantly soiled as demonstrated by cab camera.

**TTLF**

# Issues facing Austin Pedicab Operations

- Lack of ability to vigorously enforce safety standards
  - Bicycle type pedicabs considered unsafe by others
  - Roadway violations are numerous by some operators

Lack of a plan to encourage consolidation of the of the pedicab industry in Austin

- Regulation of many companies is difficult
  - Grandfathering existing operators – probably necessary
  - Convincing the public that limiting new entry is in the public's best interest
- Lack of customer awareness of fares
  - Lack of uniformity of fares
    - Need to establish a uniform min. \$5.00 per passenger fare?
  - Ease of entry results in oversupplying the market

TTLF

*Driver  
works for  
Tips or  
\$60 per hour*









THIS CAB MAKES YOUR BUTT LOOK BIG.

REG \$0.00

PLUS \$0.00

SUPER \$0.00

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EQUIPMENT  
INSPECTION

01



# Recommendations for Pedicab Services

- Grandfather existing operators and vehicles but give a one year moratorium on tricycle type pedicabs
- Require all new and existing pedicab operators to have a minimum of 10 vehicles in operation and have a documented plan for managing the compliance of their drivers with City pedicab operating rules
- Utilize on-street, real time police cameras to spot violators of traffic rules and issues citations immediately

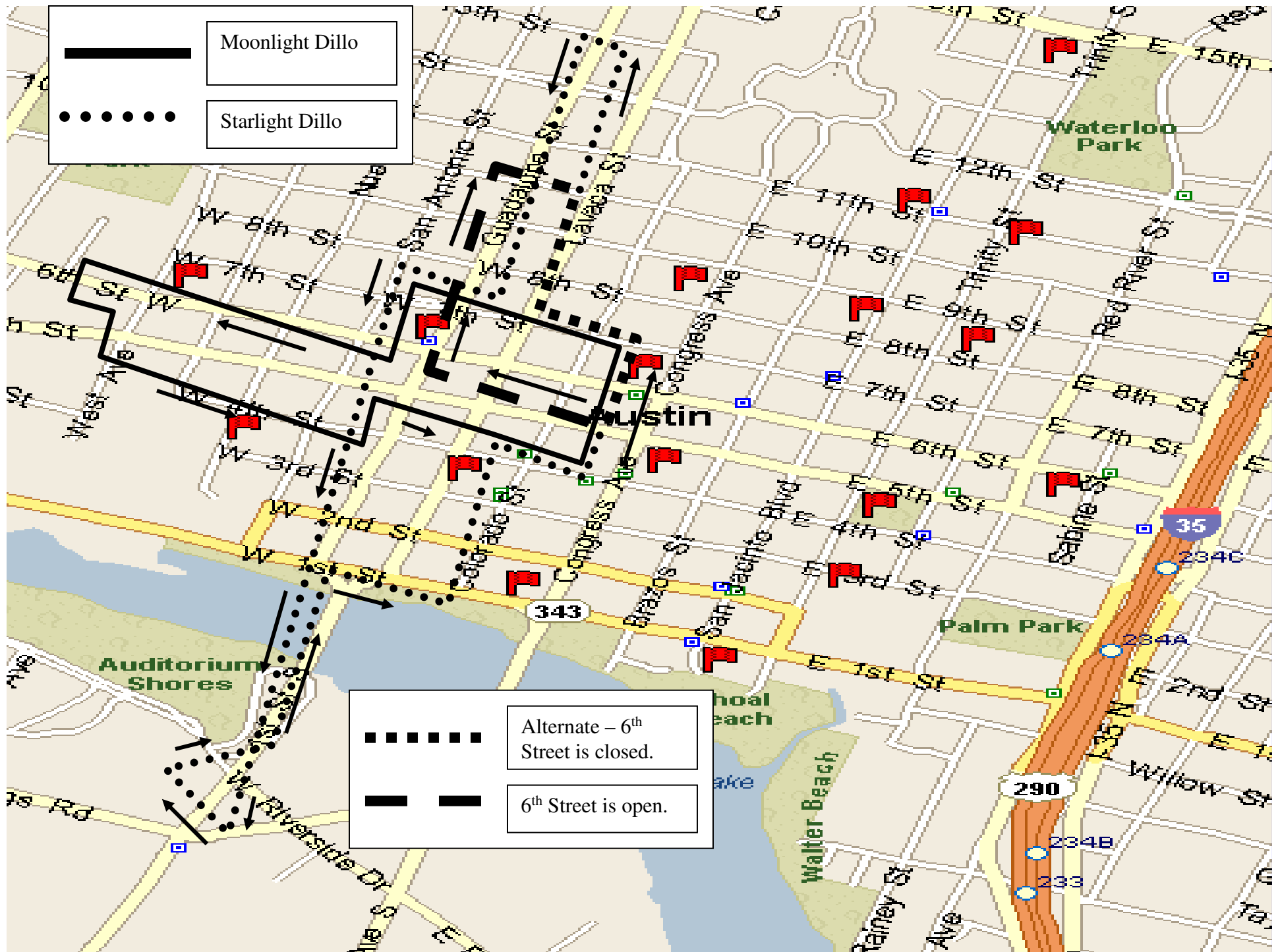
# Issues Facing ELSV's

- Past attempt at operating without authority
- Public safety & acceptance of vehicles?
  - Braking, seat belts, doors, and crash survivability?
  - However; popular due to environmental aspect
  - Utilized widely as shuttles, at beaches, and crowded urban areas as alternative to auto and taxis
  - Typically restricted to shuttle routes, downtown areas, and retirement type villages.
  - Politically and socially desirable

# ELSV Recommendations

- Regulate ELSV's within existing managed competition but go slow with pilot route and a single provider to gauge safety and acceptability of concept.
- Issue ELSV ordinance which requires significant braking and vehicle safety compliance and which directs City Transportation Department to issue a one year trial of a 5 to 10 vehicle system running on one or two routes serving major evening entertainment areas, hotels, and taxi staging areas





# Long Term Strategy

- **Maintain regulatory strategy of “Managed Competition” for all private ground transportation**
- **Utilize private taxi, pedicab, and ELSV franchises to manage City permitted drivers**
- **Operate the Ground Transportation Section of the Department on a self-supporting basis**
- **Be prepared to rotate the ability of taxis to serve ABIA on a daily basis**
- **Make greater use of on-street, late night enforcement of all taxi, pedicab, and ELSV operating requirements and regulations**

# Questions & Discussion

