

GCTD PASSENGER SURVEY

A Community Outreach Tool During COVID - 19
August 2020



GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

Gold Coast Transit District implements service changes biannually (January and July) in effort to continuously improve the services and address customer concerns and feedback. This year, while preparing for the July service changes, the world was struck with a global pandemic, COVID-19. As GCTD navigated those challenges, staff had to develop new ways of communicating the long-planned service adjustments scheduled for July 2020.

In the absence of in-person community outreach traditionally conducted in advance of a service change, GCTD developed an online, bilingual survey. The objectives of the survey were twofold: 1) GCTD needed to present the changes in service and provide riders the opportunity to provide feedback; 2) Faced with the challenges brought on by COVID-19, we wanted to better understand rider concerns. It was important to know what GCTD could do to help them ride confidently, to make them feel safe on board, and what expectations they have of us upon resuming to more regular service.

A complete listing of survey questions and responses are included in the Appendix.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was offered in both English and Spanish and consisted of 21 questions. The online survey was open from June 3, 2020 to July 20, 2020, with links posted on the GCTD website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

In addition to the online survey, Customer Service Center (CSC) staff created a customer contact list made up of customers who have provided their contact information from the last three years. The three team members divided the list of 362 customers and conducted phone surveys with those that agreed to participate. As of this report, CSC staff completed 80 phone surveys, or just over 20% of those called – above the national average for telephone survey participation which is 7%, according to the PEW Research Center.

In total, GCTD collected 209 completed surveys.

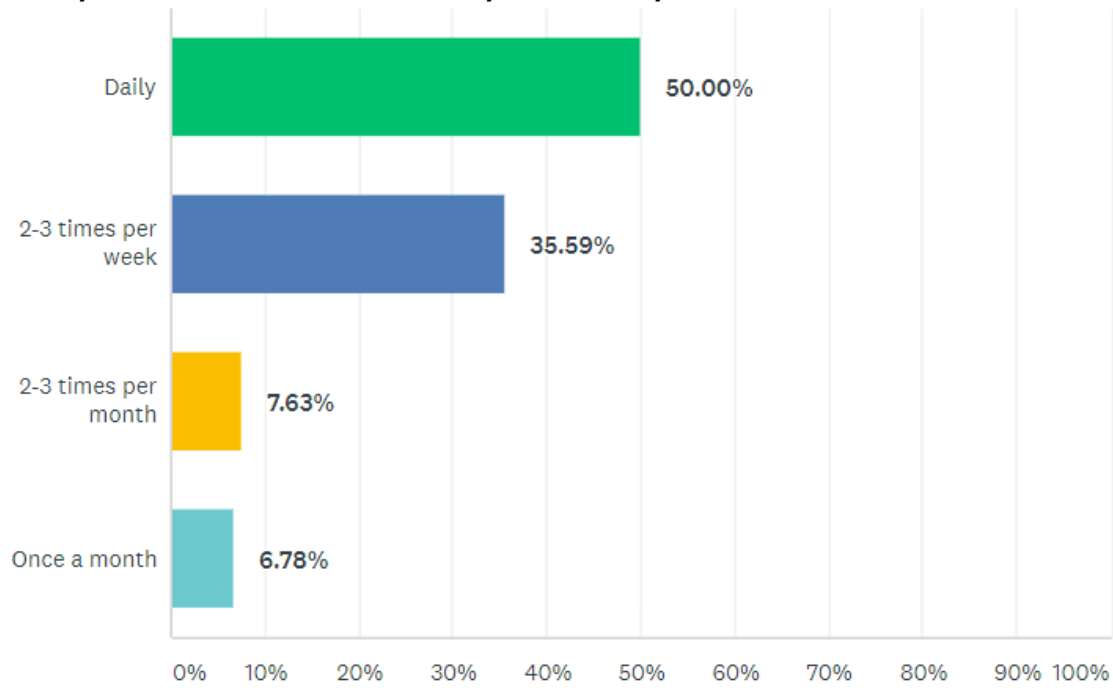
SELECTED ANALYSIS & RESULTS

The following analysis is based on select questions that illustrate three main themes: **Passenger Profile, Important Amenities While Riding During COVID** and **Passenger Feedback on the Service Changes**. A complete set of all survey questions and results are included in the Appendix.

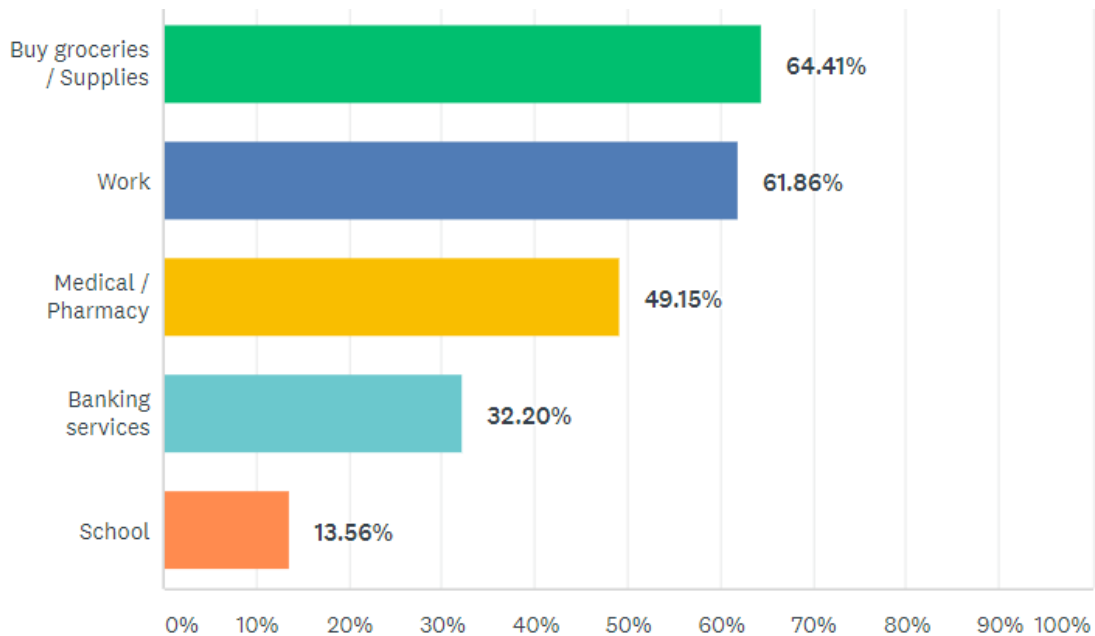
PASSENGER PROFILE

GCTD was interested in learning more about riders, including how often they ride, for what purpose, and reasons for using public transit.

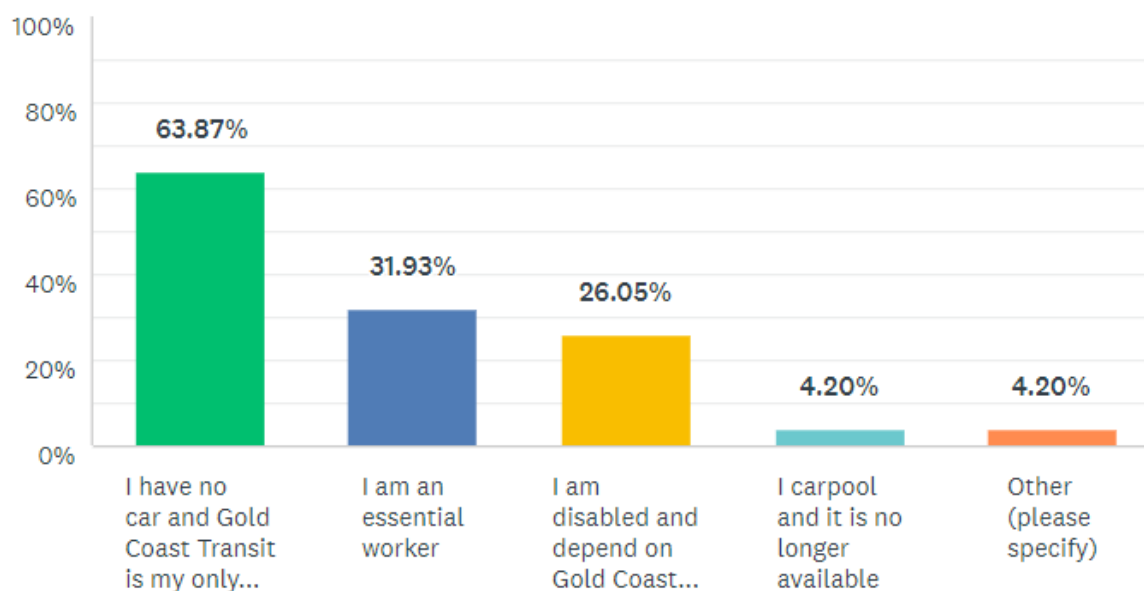
Survey Question #3: How often do you currently use Gold Coast Transit?



Survey Question #4: For what purpose do you currently use Gold Coast Transit District? (check all that apply).



Survey Question #5: Describe your current reason for using Gold Coast Transit. (check all that apply)



ANSWER CHOICES

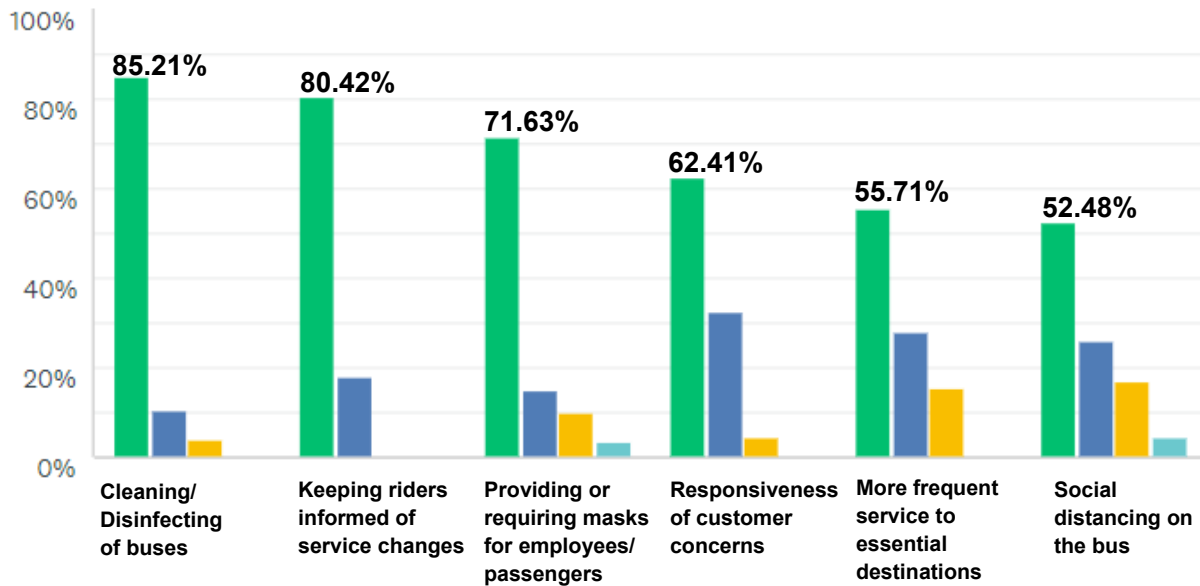
- ▼ I have no car and Gold Coast Transit is my only option
- ▼ I am an essential worker
- ▼ I am disabled and depend on Gold Coast Transit for travel
- ▼ I carpool and it is no longer available
- ▼ Other (please specify)

There are several key takeaways here. We learn that the base of these respondents are transit dependent with few, if any alternatives for travel, and use our fixed-route services on a daily basis. We also learn that they are traveling for essential trips, with the top three answers being buying groceries, going to work, or for medical needs. Additionally, 31.93% answered that they are essential workers. This information is key in understanding and better serving the needs of our passengers.

IMPORTANT AMENITIES WHILE RIDING DURING COVID

Determining the enhancements and amenities needed to increase the safety of all on board is an important step in moving our transit services forward during these challenging times.

Question #14: Rate how important are the following current and future amenities to you when riding a Gold Coast Transit Bus?



Based on this information, GCTD will continue to focus its efforts on enhanced cleaning and disinfecting activities, including the hiring of additional staff dedicated to sanitization. Secondly, since Governor’s Newsom’s mask order in June, masks have been required for employees and passengers and GCTD plans to continue complying with the state’s order. Lastly, GCTD staff will continue using both traditional and non-traditional media to communicate all changes as they occur. Information, especially in real time, has been crucial in keeping our riders informed during an ever-changing environment.

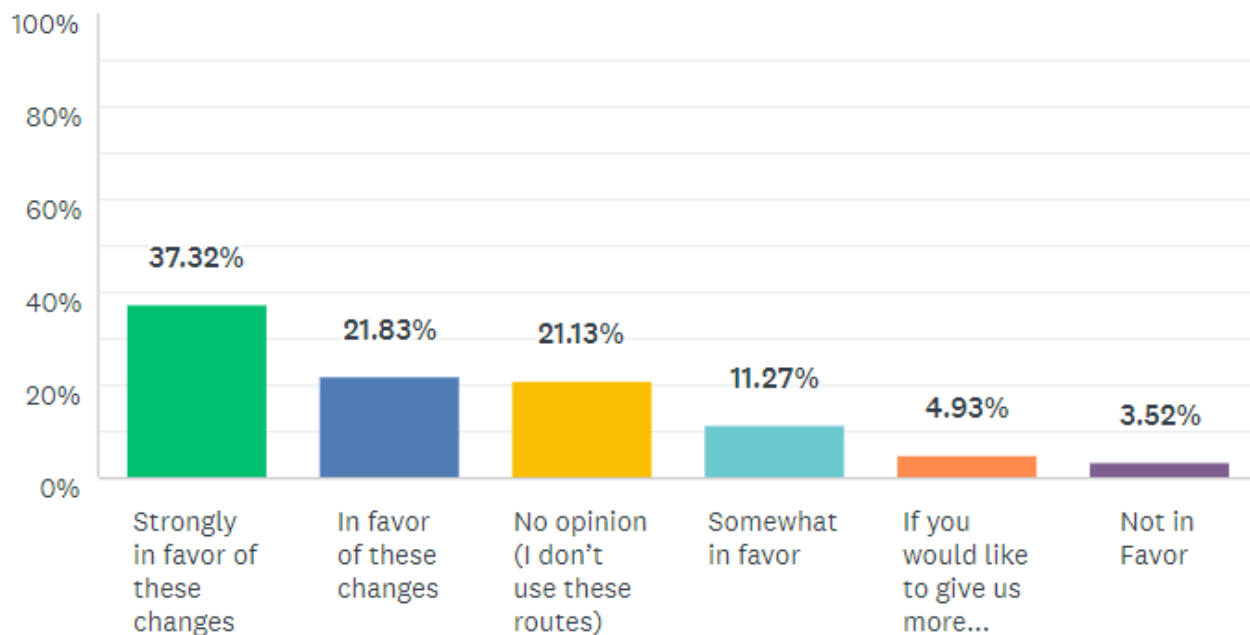
FEEDBACK ON SERVICE CHANGES

Customer feedback helps to inform the process of preparing and planning for GCTD’s biannual service changes. That feedback, along with Bus Operator suggestions, and analysis of performance indicators, is reviewed and incorporated in the planning of services and schedules. Throughout the year, GCTD hosts and/or attends several community outreach events to access customer feedback and create public awareness of upcoming changes. These efforts include hosting community meetings, presenting at neighborhood council meetings, attending community events and other such community engagement activities. GCTD began conducting public outreach meetings to promote the planned July 2020 changes in 2019 and had many plans to continue with a public education campaign in 2020 (named “More GO 2020”). However, those plans were halted with the onset of COVID-19 and the county and state’s Stay Well At Home orders.

As a result, GCTD added service related questions to this survey to gather feedback.

Question #16: GCTD is planning to make several changes to routes in July. Read the summary of changes below and tell us your opinion on how these changes will affect your use of transit. Planned changes: Adding New Route 23, along Ventura Road (connecting Oxnard College – Port Hueneme – Esplanade – The Collection) · Improve

frequency on Route 17 (along Rose Avenue) to every 30 minutes. · Bus stops consolidated on Route 1 to speed up travel times. · Consolidating Route 3 and 9 and discontinuation of segments on Teakwood and Gisler.



The graph also shows the top two responses being in agreement with the changes, while the third highest response was that they don't use the routes changing – which falls in line particularly with the low ridership numbers on Routes 3 & 9.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the survey results in the three main areas: **Passenger Profile, Important Amenities While Riding During COVID** and **Passenger Feedback on the Service Changes**, provides a good framework for understanding how to best move forward amid the fears and challenges surrounding COVID-19 in the communities we serve.

We know that we are serving a delicate customer base, consisting of seniors, disabled populations, and essential workers who are mostly dependent riders with no other transportation alternatives. This has reinvigorated GCTD's commitment to provide such a critical public service - public transit, which is a lifeline for so many.

Cleanliness is and will remain a top priority to help our customers feel safe and confident when riding. GCTD has adopted enhanced cleaning measures for its fleet and facilities and is in the process of securing dedicated cleaning staff, as we know maintaining a sanitized and safe space for our riders is a long-term commitment.

The use of masks or face covering is and will remain a requirement as long as the state's order is in place. To facilitate mask wearing, GCTD provides all employees and customers with masks if they do not have one.

Like so many, it has been often difficult to stay current with the ever-changing dynamic of COVID-19 and county and state orders. However, we have and will continue to make every effort to communicate those to the public, as respondents rated that as very important.

Lastly, the service changes have been in effect for just under a month now and have been very well received. We will continue to take the input received in the survey, especially in the written responses and review them during the planning of the next service change.