

GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT

# SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN: Survey Results and Analysis

FY 2014-15 to FY 2018-19



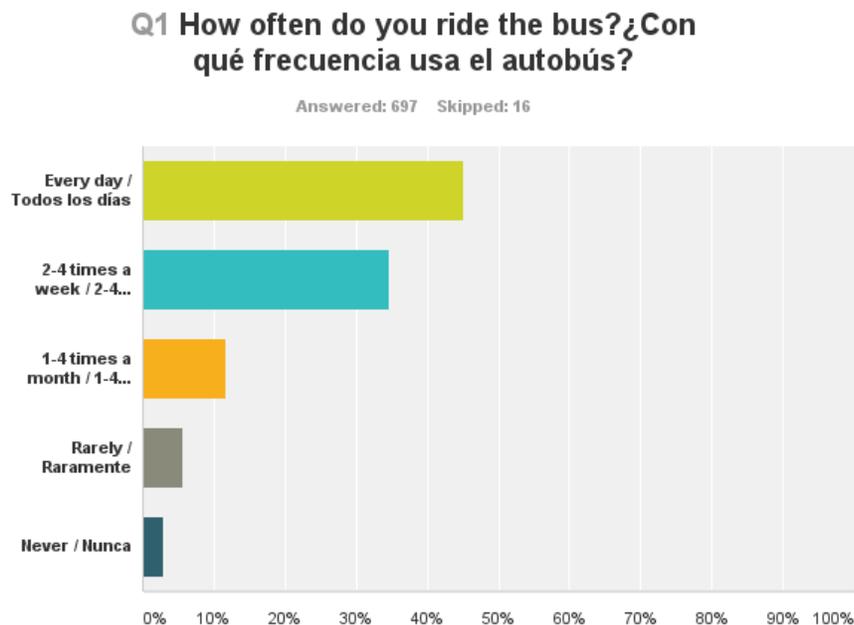
## Overview

As part of the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) community outreach process, Gold Coast Transit District (GCTD) conducted a short survey to collect information about demographics, travel patterns, bus service needs, and how passengers obtain their information. The survey was available electronically on the GCTD website, [www.goldcoasttransit.org](http://www.goldcoasttransit.org), and paper surveys were made available on buses and to community groups between early October 2014 and late February 2015. All questions and answer options were provided in both English and Spanish to receive maximum participation from riders. In total, 713 surveys were collected, 613 of them through paper surveys and 100 online. This sample size was deemed large enough to be representative of GCTD riders as a whole.

## Question 1

### How often do you ride the bus?

This question asked whether respondents rode the bus every day, 2-4 times per week, 1-4 times per month, rarely, or never. A total of 697 respondents answered this question. 45.05% of respondents said they ride the bus every day, 34.58% said they take it 2-4 times a week, 11.76% said they use it 1-4 times a month, 5.60% said they rarely take it, and 3.01% said they never ride it.



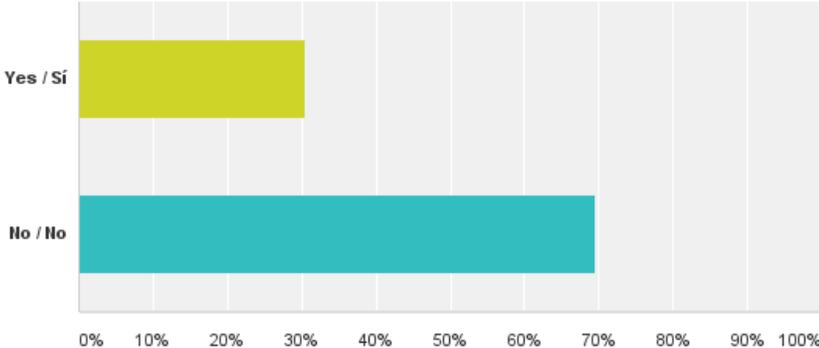
# Question 2

## Do you have access to a car?

This question is intended provide a measure of access to a vehicle. Note that access is not the same as car ownership, as a respondent could have access to a car owned by friends or family members. It should also be noted that some of the respondents said they had access to a car only some of the time. A total of 690 respondents answered this question; 30.43% said yes and 69.57% said no.

**Q2 Do you have access to a car? ¿Tiene acceso a un coche?**

Answered: 690 Skipped: 23



## Question 3

### Which routes do you ride?

This question asked which routes our passengers typically ride. This question is valuable in determining which routes are useful as a means of expanding the reach and mobility that GCTD offers. A total of 706 respondents answered this question.

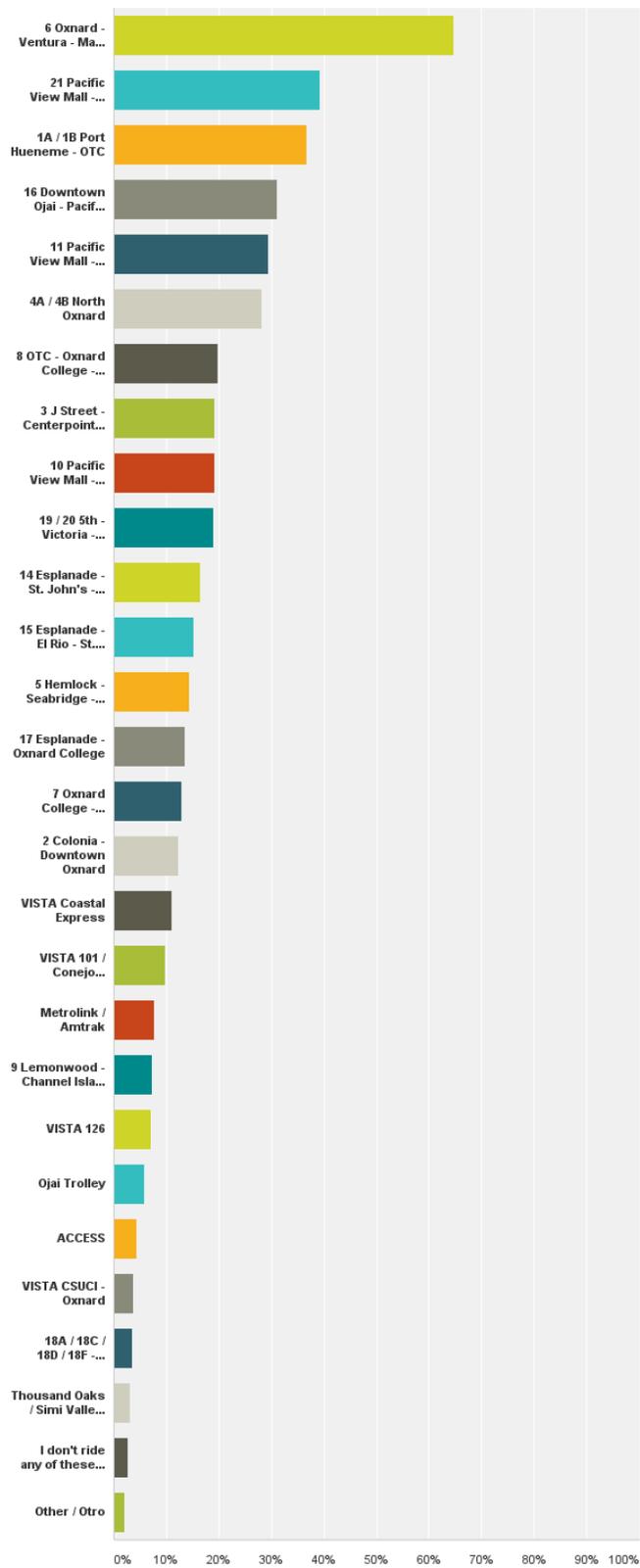
It should be noted that these numbers are not reflective of actual ridership. This question asks which routes the respondents ride without regard to frequency. Therefore, if someone rides Route 6 on a daily basis and Route 21 only once a week, both routes will be weighted evenly. Respondents can pick more than one route; accordingly the percentage reflects the percentage of overall respondents who selected a given route. The results are below.

#### Percentage of Respondents Who Ride Each Route

Route 6	64.73%
Route 21	39.24%
Route 1	36.69%
Route 16	31.02%
Route 11	29.46%
Route 4A/4B	28.19%
Route 8	19.83%
Route 3	19.12%
Route 10	19.12%
Route 19/20	18.98%
Route 14	16.57%
Route 15	15.16%
Route 5	14.31%
Route 17	13.60%
Route 7	12.89%
Route 2	12.32%
VISTA Coastal Express	11.05%
VISTA 101 / Conejo Connection	9.92%
Metrolink / Amtrak	7.65%
Route 9	7.22%
VISTA 126	7.08%
Ojai Trolley	5.81%
ACCESS	4.39%
VISTA CSUCI – Oxnard	3.68%
Route 18	3.54%
Thousand Oaks / Simi Valley Transit	3.12%
I don't ride any of these	2.69%
Other	2.12%

### Q3 Which routes do you ride? ¿Cuál de estas rutas utiliza?

Answered: 706 Skipped: 7



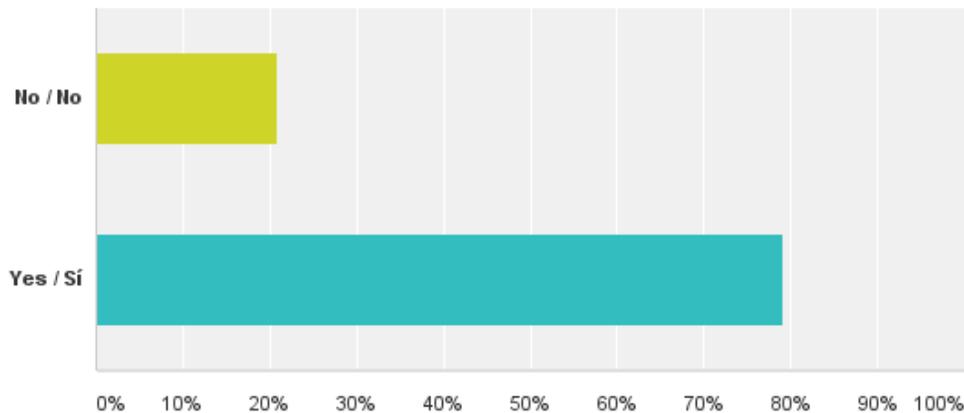
## Question 4

### Do you transfer between buses? If yes, where do you transfer?

This question was designed to give an indication of transfer utilization as well as to identify the most popular transfer points with our system. 79.10% of respondents answered yes (689 total responses). 535 of those respondents also specified where they transferred. Responses indicate that transfers are utilized by a significant majority of riders and mostly occur at expected transfer points such as the Oxnard Transit Center (OTC), Ventura Transfer Center (VTC), C Street Transfer Center (CTC), Ventura County Government Center and the Esplanade.

#### Q4 Do you transfer between buses? If yes, where do you transfer? ¿Su viaje incluye una transferencia hacia otro autobús? ¿Dónde transborda?

Answered: 689 Skipped: 24



#### Percentage of Transfer & Location

OTC	27.10%
VTC	30.84%
C Street Transfer Center	15.51%
Government Center	4.11%
Esplanade	7.48%
Other	14.95%

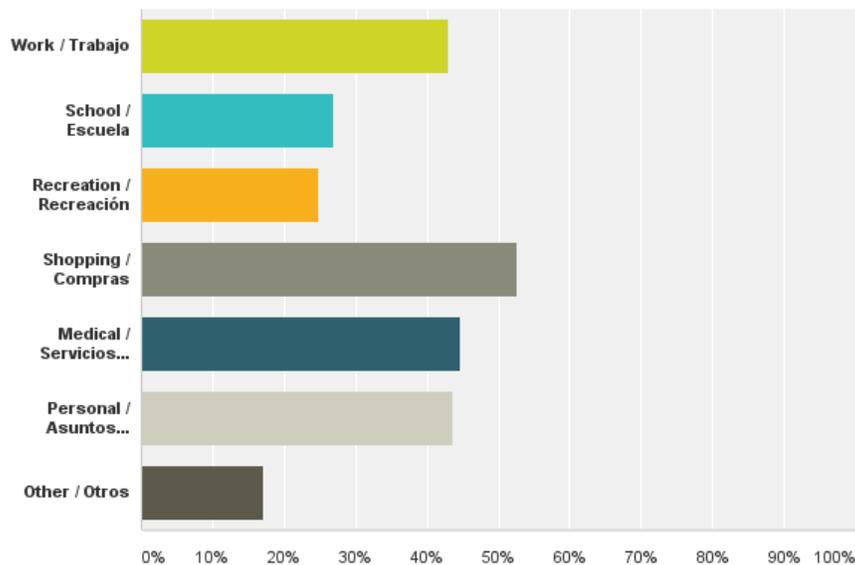
## Question 5

### What is the purpose of your transit trips?

This question inquired about the reason riders make transit trips. The results found that most respondents used transit for shopping, followed closely by work, medical, and personal trips. The outcome is likely due to the fact that most people need to shop for groceries and other necessities but are not necessarily employed. This question is not weighted based on the amount of times passengers take for a trip for a given purpose.

#### Q5 What is the general purpose of your transit trips? ¿En general, cuál es el propósito de sus viajes en autobús?

Answered: 682 Skipped: 31



## Question 6

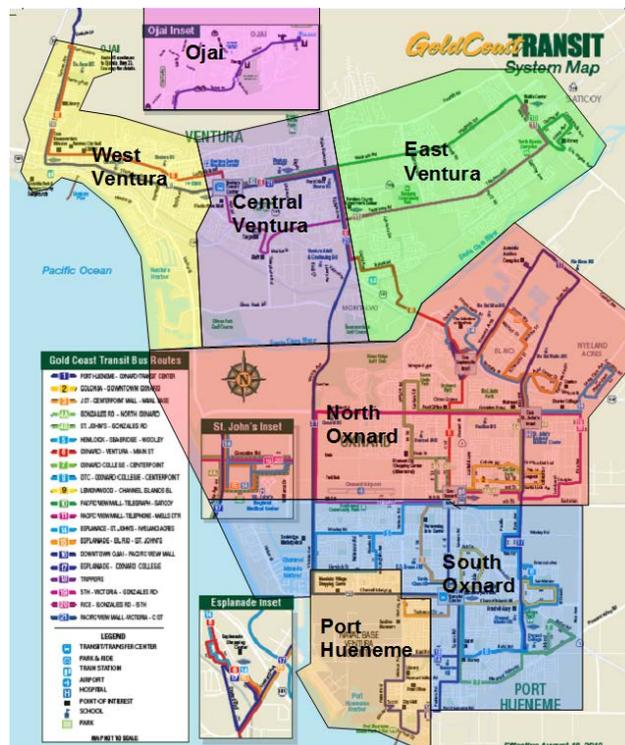
If you ride the bus to school or work, list the name of the school or place of employment.

The objective of this question was to identify the general concentration of employment and educational destinations of our riders. The respondents listed their place of employment and if possible, the location was mapped. The service area was divided into west Ventura, central Ventura, east Ventura, north Oxnard, south Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Ojai, and other. After the place of work or education was identified on a map, it was tallied in one of these categories.

The totals revealed that the central Ventura area was the most popular destination for nearly half of all riders heading to work or school. Ventura College, the Market industrial and the Pacific View Mall were the most popular destinations for people headed to the central Ventura area.

North Oxnard was the second most popular destination, primarily for work. Oxnard High School, Pacifica High School, St. John's Hospital and medical clinics were the main trip generators. Shopping centers in the area were also major employment destinations.

The third most popular destination was south Oxnard. The most popular destination in the south Oxnard area was Oxnard College, while the Centerpoint Mall and nearby shops were the biggest destinations for jobs in the area.



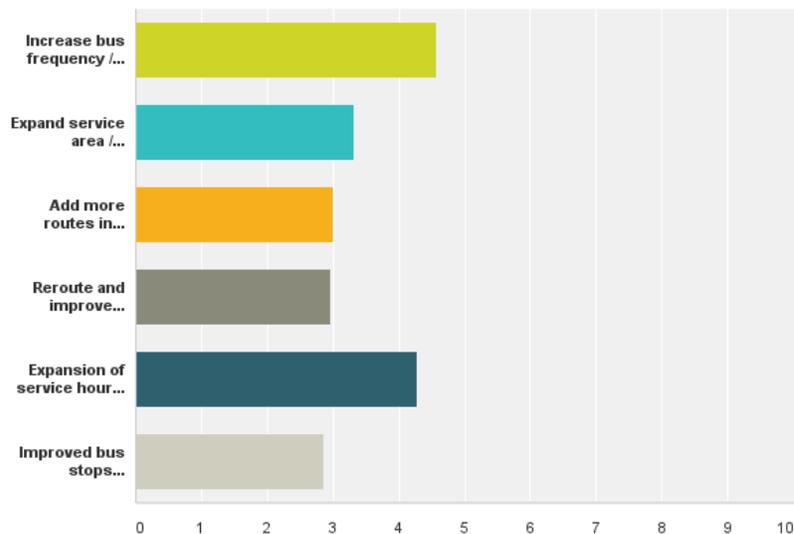
## Question 7

How would you prioritize improvement of the Gold Coast Transit system? (Place options in order of importance, with 1 being most important and 6 being least important.)

GCTD typically receives many requests for improvements to our system. However, due to limited resources, it is difficult to address every request. This question asks the survey takers to prioritize what potential service improvements are most important to them. The two most important service improvements requested were increased frequency and expansion of service hours.

**Q7 How would you prioritize improvement of the Gold Coast Transit system? (Place options in order of importance, with 1 being most important and 6 being least important. Answers will automatically be sorted in numerical order.) Por favor indique en orden de prioridad, sus preferencias para el mejoramiento del sistema de autobús (1 el más importante y 6 el menos importante. Las respuestas serán automáticamente enumerados por orden numérico.)**

Answered: 302 Skipped: 411



## Question 8

### Are there any other changes we could make to our system?

This was an open ended question intended to elicit specific improvements that could be made to the system. Answers ranged anywhere from very specific tweaks to a route to broader system wide changes such as adding express bus service. Respondents often gave more than one suggestion. These suggestions were then categorized and examined for popular requests. A total of 482 responses were given, 377 pertaining to the SRTP. The most popular categories concerned new service, increased frequency, better information and communication, extended service hours and off peak service, and safety. More detailed responses are below.

#### New Service

- Express buses between Oxnard and Ventura
- Express crosstown buses
- Service on Harbor Boulevard
- Service on Ventura Road

#### Increased frequency

- Increased frequency was requested for all routes
- Requests to increase frequency on Route 16 were particularly common

#### Information

- Better information on service changes
- Easier access to route and schedule information
- Better online and electronic mediums in conveying information
- More accurate schedule information for more stops

#### Service hours

- Requests across the board for extended hours
- Routes run until 11 p.m. or midnight (service was rarely requested beyond 11 p.m.)
- Expanded weekend and holiday service

#### Safety

- Better lighting
- Cameras at stops and aboard buses
- VTC safety improvements

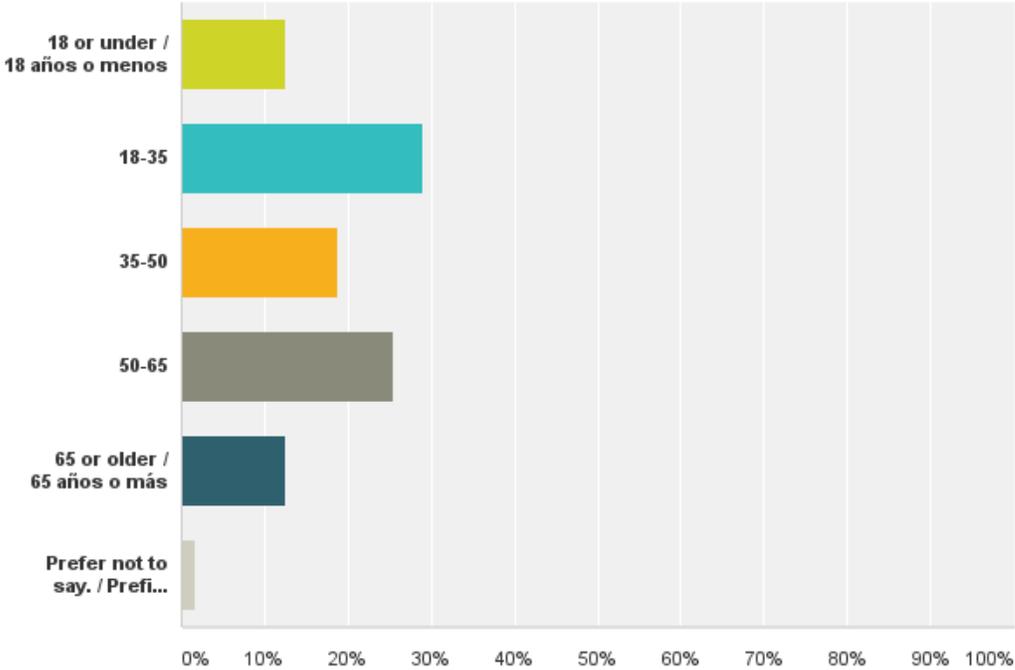
# Question 9

## What is your age?

This question was intended to give us further background on the demographic of our rider base. This sheds further insight onto the age distribution of our riders and confirms that those in the 18-35 and 50-65 categories make up the majority of our riders.

### Q9 What is your age? ¿Cuál es su edad?

Answered: 689 Skipped: 24



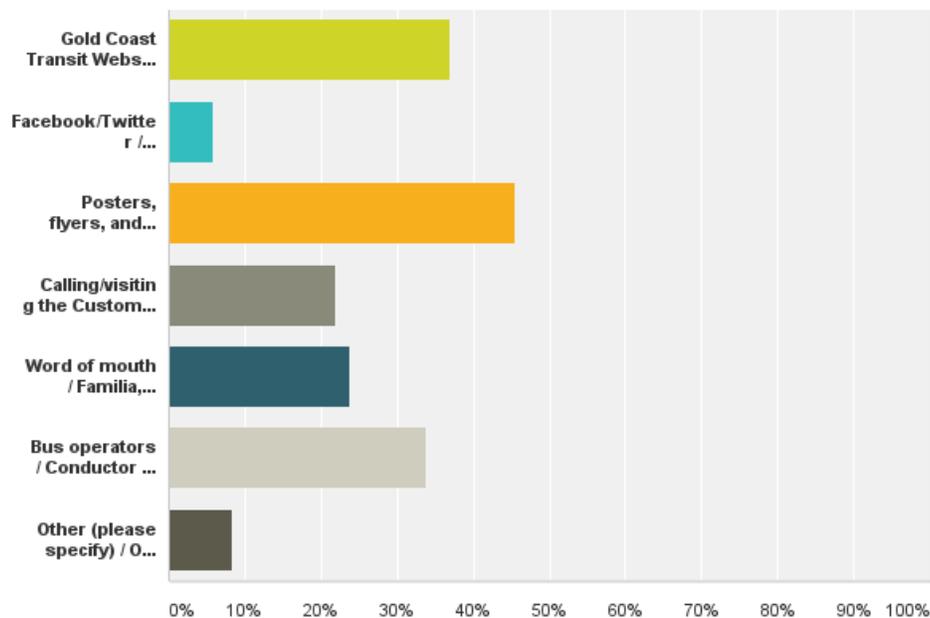
## Question 10

### How do you typically obtain information about Gold Coast Transit?

GCTD uses a variety of methods to distribute information to the public. Better understanding of the system is essential to maintaining and increasing ridership. This question was designed to see what our most effective means of communication were. The most popular means of communication are paper flyers, pamphlets, schedules, etc. available on the buses and at transit centers. Also popular was getting information from the website and asking the bus operators. Surprisingly few obtained their information from social media, despite its ability to distribute information instantaneously. This could indicate that riders get their information by means other than the internet, have a lack of availability to a smartphone, or are not aware of our social media presence.

#### Q10 How do you typically obtain information about Gold Coast Transit District's service? ¿Cómo obtiene información sobre el servicio de Gold Coast Transit?

Answered: 678 Skipped: 35



# In-Depth Survey Analysis

## Transit riders who have access to cars

Car ownership is typically the biggest factor in determining if someone will use transit, therefore it is important to dissect what elements of our transit system can entice someone with car access to choose transit.

Of those respondents that have access to a car, a surprisingly high 28.01%, said they ride the bus at least “rarely.” This indicates we have a number of riders who “choose transit” that is comparable to other large cities.

- Riders who have access to a car were much more likely to indicate they ride Route 16 (Ojai-Ventura). The popularity of Route 16 among drivers is likely because it serves as an alternative to driving 20 miles on a two lane road with a comparable time.
- Routes 4 and 5 which are relatively short, slow routes that connect residential neighborhoods to Downtown Oxnard are a less popular option for those who have access to a car to use.
- Car owners were more likely to indicate an interest in riding VCTC Intercity bus routes and Metrolink/Amtrak as they provide alternatives to longer driving commutes.
- Respondents with access to cars were also less likely to transfer buses. Longer travel times caused by transferring, along with the additional effort required by the user, are likely a cause for those with car access choosing not to ride the bus.
- One promising trend is that respondents in the age group of 18-35 and have access to cars are most likely to take the bus. This follows a greater national trend of this age group being more likely to take transit than other age groups.

## Transferring

Our survey results showed that, for the most part, existing riders are familiar with and readily utilize transfers. However, riders that do not transfer between routes use transit less frequently and 49% of these respondents had access to a car which may indicate that transfers can be a deterrent to transit use.

Route 6 is the most popular route but only 37% of these respondents indicated that they rode it. Riders who did not transfer were just as likely to use the bus for work, school or shopping. The largest age groups for riders who did not transfer was 18 and under and 18-35. Riders that did not transfer obtained most of their information online.

## Frequent Riders

Frequent riders heavily favored Route 6 over other routes and were much more likely to transfer. While respondents overall wanted more frequency and later hours, most tended to favor frequency while frequent riders, in particular, tended to prefer later service hours. The predominant age group among frequent riders was 18-35.

## Infrequent Riders

Infrequent riders overwhelmingly utilized the Route 6. 58% of respondents indicated that they rode Route 6 and 25% indicated they rode Route 16, the second highest ranked route. Infrequent riders were also more likely to use the bus for shopping than any other purpose. Increasing bus frequency was by far the most popular option for improving the system for these riders and they were more likely to get their information online than through physical media.

## Trends by Route

- **Route 1** – Riders were also likely to ride Route 6 and Route 21. 88% of Route 1 riders said they transfer buses. Riders were much more likely to use the route for shopping, medical, or personal reasons than work, school, or recreation. Riders are most likely to get their information from physical media.
- **Route 6** – Route 6 acts as a main trunk for people to get to their destinations to or from other connecting lines; 88% of Route 6 riders say they transfer buses. Riders are also more likely to take transit for shopping trips.
- Route 6 is GCTD's most heavily used route due, in large part, to its high frequency as well as all the places it travels to. However, because the route is so long, the average travel time on this route compared to that of an automobile can be up to five times as long. The frequency and major destinations it serves make Route 6 likely to be used by infrequent riders but also not viable alternative to the automobile if taking it for longer distances.
- **Route 8** – Route 8 riders are most likely to also ride Route 1 and Route 6. 91% of riders say they do transfer. Route 8 riders are most likely to use the route for shopping and the largest age group is 18-35.
- **Route 11** – Route 11 riders are most likely to also ride Route 6. 93% of riders say they transfer. Most Route 11 riders are traveling to somewhere in Ventura. The largest age group for Route 11 riders is 50-65.
- **Route 16** – There are as many riders who ride Route 16 2-4 times per week as there are riders who ride daily. Route 16 riders are much more likely to have access to a car than other routes. 87% of riders indicated that they transfer to other routes, with Route 6 being the popular.
- **Route 17** – Route 17 riders were much more likely to be using transit on a daily basis and were also likely to ride Route 6. 91% of passengers say they transfer buses to complete their trip

- **Route 21** – Route 21 riders were also likely to ride Route 6. 90% of Route 21 riders said they transfer buses to complete their trip.
- **VCTC Intercity Routes** – Respondents who rode VCTC Intercity routes were more likely to have access to a car. 82% of VCTC riders also said they rode Route 6. The Vista Coastal Express was the most popular VCTC route for respondents. 94% of respondents who rode VCTC said they transfer buses, most often at the VTC.
- **Metrolink/Amtrak** – Respondents who said they took Metrolink/Amtrak were more likely to have access to a car. Respondents said that they also rode the Route 6 often. 92% of these respondents said they transferred between buses. These respondents were more likely to obtain their information through physical media.

## Trends by Trip Purpose

- **Shopping** – 53% of respondents rode the bus for shopping purposes, the most popular purpose.
- **Work** – 33% of those who used the bus to get to work also had access to a car. The most popular route among these respondents was Route 6. The most common age group was 18-35. These respondents were just as likely to get their information from online sources as physical media.
- **School** – 31% of those who used the bus to get to school also had access to a car. The biggest age group was 18-35. Most of these respondents get their information from online sources.
- **Medical** – The respondents who ride the bus for medical trips tended to ride the bus less frequently. The most popular route for these trips was Route 6. 89% of these respondents said they transfer buses to complete their trip. Shopping was also a popular reason to take transit trips for those who took the bus to medical destinations. The biggest age group for these respondents was 50-65.

## Trends by Age

- **35 and under** – These age groups were much more likely to have access to a car and still use the bus than other age groups and were also much less likely to transfer. They were most likely to use the bus for work or school and most likely to get their information from online sources. According to the American Public Transportation Association's report *Millennials & Mobility: Understanding the Millennial Mindset*, Millennials were the most likely group to take transit in most situations but they tend to take transit only if it is convenient and the GCTD survey generally supported this assertion.
- **65 and older** – This age group tended to ride the bus 2-4 times a week. The most popular route was Route 6. 89% of people in this age group said they transfer buses. The most popular purpose for travel was shopping. Increased frequency was far more popular than expanded service hours for this age group. This age group reported gathering most of their transit related information about GCTD through means other than the internet.
- **35 - 65** – Responses from this age group fit the trend for overall responses.