PVTA Onboard Customer Survey
Northern Service Region 2016

August 12, 2016

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the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

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# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .................................................................................................................. iii

1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1

2. Survey Method ...................................................................................................................... 3

3. Findings ................................................................................................................................. 5

A. Trip Characteristics ............................................................................................................... 5

   Question 1: How long did it take to reach the bus stop? ...................................................... 5
   Question 2: How did you get to the bus? .............................................................................. 5
   Question 3: How long did it take to reach your destination after leaving the bus? ............ 6
   Question 4: Will you transfer to another bus? ...................................................................... 7
   Question 4b: If yes, which route [will you transfer to]? ..................................................... 7
   Question 5: What is the purpose of your trip? ....................................................................... 8

B. Customer Characteristics ................................................................................................... 9

   Question 6: How often do you ride the bus? ..................................................................... 9
   Question 7: What is the main reason you ride the bus? ..................................................... 9
   Question 8: Did you have another way to make this trip? ................................................ 10
   Question 8b: If yes, what (other way did you have to make this trip)? .............................. 10
   Question 9: What is Your Age? ......................................................................................... 11
   Question 10: Which of the following describes your situation best? ............................... 11
   Question 11: What is your income level? .......................................................................... 12
   Question 12: Gender ........................................................................................................... 12
   Question 13: What is your race or ethnic background? .................................................... 13
   Question 14: What languages are spoken at home? .......................................................... 14
   Question 14b: What is the language (other than English or Spanish) spoken at home? .... 15
   Question 15: How do you usually pay your fare? ............................................................... 15
   Question 16: How many cars are available at your household? ......................................... 16
   Question 17: Do you have a physical disability that prevents you from driving? ............ 16

C. System Use Characteristics .............................................................................................. 17

   Question 18: (What is the) Location Where You Usually Board (Trip Origin)? ............... 17
   Question 19: Where Will You Get Off the Bus (Trip Destination)? .................................... 18
Executive Summary

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) regularly surveys our customers to better understand their travel needs, satisfaction with service, and priorities for improvements. Customer surveys also provide important information that helps PVTA comply with laws and regulations to assure that bus service in our region is fair, equitable, and accessible.

In March and April 2016, a total 1,151 PVTA customers were surveyed on the 18 PVTA routes that primarily serve Hampshire County, PVTA’s Northern Service Region. These routes provide 37% of all PVTA rides in the Pioneer Valley. Customer satisfaction ratings are summarized below.

Figure ES-1: PVTA 2015 Southern Region Passenger Satisfaction Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent Above 80%</th>
<th>Good 78%-79%</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 75%-77%</th>
<th>Priorities for Improvement 60%-74%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Bus driving safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cost of Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Schedules easily obtainable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Driver courtesy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Personal safety at bus stops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ease of reading schedules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cleanliness of buses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Driver enforces rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service where desired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total travel time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frequency of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Condition of shelters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On-time performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages for the categories above are the proportions of 1,151 customers surveyed who rated the each category shown as either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” on a five-point scale.

These findings suggest that the PVTA is doing well with respect to safety on the bus, the cost of service and the availability of schedules. Riders were also generally pleased with the conduct of drivers, safety at bus stops and the readability of bus schedules.

The fewest numbers of riders were satisfied with total travel times of their trips, the frequency of service, the condition of bus shelters, and on-time performance. And a slightly larger proportion of riders said the cleanliness of buses should be improved, the enforcement of onboard rules by bus drivers should be better, and service should be more widely available.

Key highlights about PVTA Northern Region customers’ travel and characteristics include:

- 55% of customers ride the bus every day, and another 34% do so at least twice a week.
- The most common trip purpose is traveling to college or the University of Massachusetts (58% of all trips).
- The second most common trip purpose is commuting to work (15% of trips).
- 52% of customers said they had no other way (than PVTA) to make their trip.
- Riders who identify as white are the largest racial and ethnic group of PVTA customers in the Northern Service area (57% of riders surveyed).
79% of riders reported annual incomes of $20,000 or less, with nearly two-thirds (66%) of all riders reporting incomes at or below the federal poverty level of $11,770 per year. This is much larger than the 16.8% countywide average of people in Hampshire County who are in this income range and is likely due to the large number of students who are PVTA riders.

Customer satisfaction ratings in the 13 categories surveyed are summarized below.

*Figure ES-2: PVTA 2016 Northern Region Passenger Satisfaction Results*

These results suggest that PVTA can improve customer satisfaction in the Northern Service area by focusing on improvements to on-time performance, maintaining bus cleanliness and good shelter conditions. General network improvements, such as frequency, travel time, and service coverage areas, are also opportunities for improvement.
1. **Introduction**

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) is the largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts. Established in 1974 by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 161B, the PVTA is the agency that oversees, coordinates, and manages funds for public transportation within 24 participating member communities in the Pioneer Valley. The PVTA oversees the operation of 186 buses on a system that includes 42 fixed-routes and 4 community shuttles.

PVTA customers made more than 12 million trips on fixed route buses in FY2015. (In addition to its fixed-route scheduled service, the PVTA also manages federally required complementary ADA on-demand van service for persons who are not able to ride fixed route buses, as well as Senior Van Service, sometimes known as “Dial-a-Ride,” from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays; ridership on these services was an additional 310,000 trips in FY2015.)

The personal mobility that PVTA provides is critical for the large number of residents of the region who do not, cannot, or choose not to drive. For these people, PVTA provides essential access to places of work, medical appointments, educational opportunities, and shopping establishments.

The PVTA’s 600-square mile service area is diverse in terms of land uses and demographic composition. It is organized in two broad areas (also see Figure 1-1 on next page):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern Region</th>
<th>Southern Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 routes serving Hampshire County from garages at the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus (UMass garage) and the Northampton Industrial Park (VATCo garage).</td>
<td>23 routes serving Hampden County from the Springfield garage on North Main Street and passenger terminals at 1776 Liberty Street in Springfield and 206 Maple Street in Holyoke; and 2 community shuttle routes from garage in Belchertown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2015 ridership: 4,443,985 trips (37% of system total)</td>
<td>FY2015 ridership: 7,590,064 trips (63% of system total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities: Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Hadley, Leverett, Northampton, Palmer, Pelham, Sunderland, and Williamsburg.</td>
<td>Communities: Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke Agawam, East Longmeadow, Granby, Hampden, Longmeadow, Ludlow, South Hadley, West Springfield, Ware, Westfield, and Wilbraham. (Hampden and Leverett receive only PVTA Senior “Dial a Ride” service.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This survey focuses on customers who ride buses in PVTA’s Northern Region, which are operated by the Valley Area Transit Company (VATCo), a business unit of First Transit, a national bus operations company, and UMass Transit, a division of the University of Massachusetts Amherst Facilities and Campus Services.

Figure 1-1: PVTA Fixed Routes and Member Communities 2016
2. Survey Method

The onboard customer survey was conducted by staff of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission during March and April of 2016 on the 18 fixed bus routes in the Northern Region of the PVTA service area (Hampshire County). Surveys were conducted on days when the University of Massachusetts and other Five College institutions were in session. Surveys were conducted throughout the day to achieve a representative sample of riders’ use patterns.

The minimum number of survey responses needed for each route was calculated on a proportional basis relative to the monthly ridership total for October 2014. Data from the month of October was selected because it is when ridership is historically at its highest level within a given year. A 95% confidence level and a ±4.5% margin of error were selected for the statistical calculation.

Using these parameters, the following equation was used to calculate the proportion of surveys required.

\[ n = \left( \frac{z^2 \alpha}{W} \right)^2 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Defined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( n ) = minimum number of surveys required per route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( z ) = normal probabilities value based on confidence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \alpha ) = 1 – confidence level as a percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p ) = percentage of monthly ridership per route based on total monthly ridership for all southern region routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( W ) = margin of error</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this calculation, the minimum number of surveys required to be conducted on each route was determined, as shown in Figure 2-1 on the next page.

The results reported achieve the 95% confidence level and ±4.5% margin of error for questions with an N of 1,151 or greater. Cross tabulations and analyses for individual routes and smaller subsets of the population sampled are provided for information, discussion, and topics for further analysis; however, it is not possible to achieve the same 95% confidence interval for individual routes as has been established for the full population.
The survey was a paper one-page form (see Appendix 2) that was given to customers by PVPC personnel wearing a “Surveyor” badge as they boarded buses traveling these routes. The survey form was printed on heavy stock so that respondents could write on it without a clipboard. One side of the form was printed in English and the other in Spanish (respondents were asked to fill out one side only). Additionally, separate survey forms printed in Russian and Vietnamese were also available. Survey personnel worked individually to distribute and collect the surveys from passengers aboard the buses. All persons boarding the bus were verbally offered a survey form. Those who chose to respond completed the form and returned it to the surveyor before exiting the bus. Surveys were administered throughout all weekday mornings, afternoons and evenings to achieve a representative sample of riders and trip purposes.
3. Findings
This section reports on the survey findings in four general categories: trip characteristics, customer characteristics, system use characteristics, and customer satisfaction ratings. The number of each question is shown as it appeared on the original survey.

A. Trip Characteristics
This section reports the findings of questions about the customer’s trip.

Question 1: How long did it take to reach the bus stop?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 min</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 min</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 min</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15+ min</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151

Question 2: How did you get to the bus?

- Walked 89.0%
- Transferred 4.0%
- Parked car or dropped off 1.6%
- Biked 3.5%
- Blank 3.6%

N=1,151
Question 3: How long did it take to reach your destination after leaving the bus?

- 15+ min: 14.2%
- 11-15 min: 14.9%
- 6-10 min: 25.4%
- 1-5 min: 43.4%
- blank: 2.2%

N=1,151
Question 4: Will you transfer to another bus?

- Yes: 11.7%
- No: 84.9%
- Blank: 6.3%

Question 4b: If yes, which route [will you transfer to]?

- N=113
Question 5: What is the purpose of your trip?

- Work: 14.9%
- Medical: 2.2%
- Shopping: 6.5%
- Other: 3.6%
- Social/Recreational: 7.7%
- College: 57.6%
- School (Grades 1-12): 4.6%
- Blank: 2.9%

N=1,151
B. Customer Characteristics
This section reports demographic and travel characteristics of PVTA customers surveyed.

Question 6: How often do you ride the bus?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First time rider</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times/month</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 times/week</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blank</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151

Question 7: What is the main reason you ride the bus?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No car</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No drivers license</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer bus</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economical</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blank</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saves time</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less pollution</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151
Question 8: Did you have another way to make this trip?

- No: 52.0% (N=1,151)
- Yes: 44.7%
- Blank: 5.3%

Question 8b: If yes, what (other way did you have to make this trip)?

- Car: 212
- Walk: 192
- Bike: 50
- Uber: 14
- Drive: 2
- ZipCar: 3
- Taxi: 2
- Borrow friend's car: 1
- Parent drives: 1
- PVTA Dial a Ride: 1
- Share ride: 2
- Skateboard: 1

N=481
Question 9: What is Your Age?

American Community Survey 2010-2014 five-year estimates of age of Hampshire County residents shown for reference and proportionally conformed to PVTA survey age groups.

Question 10: Which of the following describes your situation best?
Question 11: What is your income level?

- $50,000+: 4.2% (Hampshire County Average), 11.7% (Riders Surveyed)
- $35,000 to $50,000: 3.8%, 13.2%
- $20,000 to $34,999: 7.8%, 13.3%
- $11,770 to $19,999: 9.7%, 13.3%
- Less than $11,770: 7.1%
- blank: 5.0%

Hampshire County average income information from ACS 2010-2014 five-year estimates. ACS income categories conformed to PVTA survey categories using proportional assignment. PVTA riders N=1,151

Question 12: Gender

- Female: 56.1% (N=1,151)
- Male: 42.3%
- Blank: 1.6%

The gender ratio in Hampshire County as a whole is 53.2% female to 46.8% male (ACS 2010-2014 five-year estimates). U.S. Census does not currently report proportions of people who identify as a gender other than male or female.
Question 13: What is your race or ethnic background?

Hampshire County data is from ACS 2010-2014 five-year estimates (total population 158,080) and includes persons reporting only one race. Hispanics may be of any race, and so also are included in applicable race categories for the county estimates.

PVTa Northern Region riders are more diverse than Hampshire County as a whole. There are far more many customers of color (at least 42.9%) than the countywide average (88.7%). The largest single racial and ethnic customer group is whites, followed by Asians (16.2%, or nearly four times the countywide proportion), Hispanic/Latino (7.5%, or almost twice the countywide average) and Black/African American (7.6%, or more than three times the countywide average).
Question 14: What languages are spoken at home?

For languages spoken, slightly more PVTA customers said they speak only Spanish at home (0.9%) than the county average (0.7%). This is consistent with the number of people who chose to fill out the Spanish language version of the survey (5 persons), versus the 1,146 who took the survey in English.

The proportion of PVTA customers in Hampshire County who speak both Spanish and English is 7.0%), which is more than double county average (2.3%). While the PVTA survey was not able to ask how well these bilingual customers speak English, the ACS data for Hampden County suggests that approximately 1,200 Spanish/English bilingual residents of the county “Do Not Speak English Well or At All,” or approximately 0.7% of all residents. Therefore, based on the greater proportion of English and Spanish speakers among PVTA riders, plus the 0.7% of residents who speak Spanish only, it is likely that approximately 1-2% of PVTA customers in Hampshire County do not speak English well or at all.
Question 14b: What is the language (other than English or Spanish) spoken at home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verdean</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangla</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farsi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaican</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haitian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepali</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=162

Question 15: How do you usually pay your fare?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash on board (full fare)</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly or monthly pass</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior or disability pass</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on board (senior or discount)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-paid (student, faculty, staff)</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blank</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151
Question 16: How many cars are available at your household?

- 3+ cars: 10.3%
- 2 cars: 13.6%
- 1 car: 34.6%
- No car: 39.6%
- blank: 1.9%

For reference, 2.8% of all Hampshire County residents do not have a car available for commuting (ACS 2010-2014 five-year estimates).

Question 17: Do you have a physical disability that prevents you from driving?

- No: 94.6%
- Yes: 2.0%
- blank: 5.7%

For reference, 10.4% of Hampshire County residents in 2014 who were not institutionalized (16,464 persons out of a total population of 158,931) had one or more disabilities, including cognitive and other non-physical disabilities (ACS 2010-2014 five-year estimates). However, some people with disabilities are able to drive; therefore, direct comparison to the responses for this question is not possible.)
C. System Use Characteristics

Question 18: (What is the) Location Where You Usually Board (Trip Origin)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haigis Mall/FAC*</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N'hampton Cntr/Academy/Ct Hse</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire College</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt Holyoke College</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boulders</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherst Center/Post Office</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith Col./JMG Hall</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Dorms*</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Village</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMass*</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherst College</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling Green Apts</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townhouse Apts</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfield*</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southpoint Dr Apts</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Arts Bldg*</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton Post Office</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squire Village</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchertown</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugarloaf Estates</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Drive</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=658 responses

Origins totaling 1.0% or more of all responses shown. UMass has multiple on-campus boarding locations, which are marked with an *asterisk and total 23.0% of all boarding locations given by riders.
Question 19: Where Will You Get Off the Bus (Trip Destination)?

Destinations totaling 1.0% or more of all responses are shown. UMass has multiple on-campus destination locations, which are marked with an *asterisk and total 55.4% of all destination locations given by riders.
Question 20: What routes do you normally use?

N=976 for 1st choice, 581 for 2nd choice, 215 for 3rd choice
Question 21: Do you use route color codes?
This question refers to PVTA’s Blue, Green, and Red route scheme, as well as the routes operated by UMass Transit that use other colors as part of the route name.

Question 22: Are you aware of the “Where's the Bus?” app?
This question refers to the My Stop app for smartphones that is available for iOS and Android devices.

Question 23: Do you use any PVTA apps?
D. Customer Satisfaction Ratings

This section reports the results of Question 24 in which customers were asked to rate their level of satisfaction for the following 13 categories of PVTA bus service:

24a. Driver enforces rules  
24b. Schedules easily obtainable  
24c. Ease of reading schedules  
24d. Condition of bus shelters  
24e. On-time performance of service  
24f. Bus driving safety  
24g. Frequency of service  
24h. Cost of service  
24i. Personal safety at stops  
24j. Driver courtesy  
24k. Cleanliness of buses  
24l. Total travel time  
24m. Service where desired

Riders were asked to respond using the following five-point scale:

1) Very Satisfied  
2) Satisfied  
3) Neutral  
4) Dissatisfied  
5) Very Dissatisfied

A response of “Not Applicable” was also available as a sixth choice. The N/A responses, along with blanks, were not included in the calculations of customer satisfaction.

Question 24 (next page) summarizes the responses for all 13 customer satisfaction categories.
Question 24: Customer Satisfaction Ratings Summary

This summary of customer satisfaction scores indicates that overall 83% of customers are “Very Satisfied,” “Satisfied,” or “Neutral” with or about PVTA service. The service categories receiving the highest ratings (combined “Very Satisfied” and “Satisfied”) were:

- Cost of Service (83%)
- Bus Driving Safety (83%)
- Schedules Easily Obtainable (81%)
- Driver Courtesy (79%)
- Personal Safety at Bus Stops (79%)
Categories with rankings in the middle range of responses given were:

- Cleanliness of Buses (75%)
- Driver Enforces Rules (73%)
- Service [goes] Where Desired (72%)
- Total Travel Time (71%)

The categories receiving the lowest ratings (lowest listed first) were:

- Frequency of Service (68%)
- Condition of Bus Shelters (63%)
- On-time Performance (60%)

**Question 25: Written Comments**

Respondents were also invited to give written comments at the end of the survey. Written comments were received on 302 of the 1,151 completed survey forms. Some comments addressed multiple topics, resulting in a total of 374 unique comments. These were grouped into 11 categories, which are shown below.

The most frequently mentioned distinct comments were requests for more frequent service, as well as service on weekends and evening, especially to Belchertown, Hampshire Mall, and between Northampton and Amherst.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Written Comments on Survey Question 25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23% Service-related suggestion (destination/origin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22% General comment: Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21% More weekend and evening service, and/or increased frequency desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% Late bus/early departure/not on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% General comment: Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% More express service desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Service to/from Hampshire Mall desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Service during non-academic periods desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Driver conduct: positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% Driver conduct: negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% Other comment not categorized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Fare-related comment or suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Overloads/bus overcrowding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Personal safety concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Comment not understandable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All written comments are reproduced in Appendix 3.
4. **Analysis**

This section offers analysis and selected cross tabulations of findings reported in Section 3.

**A. Trip Characteristics**

Walking time to reach the bus is an important aspect of customer convenience and satisfaction. The following chart shows the walk times to reach the bus stop reported by riders. For each route (left hand vertical axis) there are four bars shown: the blue bars show the proportion of riders who walked 1-5 minutes to reach the bus stop; the green bar shows those who walked 6-10 minutes, red bars 11-15 minutes, and purple bars more than 15 minutes. This analysis shows that the vast majority of bus riders can reach most bus stops for routes in the UMass area in 5 minutes or less. Riders on routes serving the Northampton area and outlying communities (Belchertown, Sunderland) tend to have longer walk times, but a majority (except for the B48 and M40) still are within a 5-minute walk of their bus stop.

**Figure 4-1: Walking Times to Reach Boarding Bus Stop By Route**

![Chart showing walking times to reach boarding bus stop by route.](image-url)
Customers’ use of transfers is also a critical aspect of trip making using PVTCA. On Hampshire County routes, the pre-paid fare arrangement for students and employees of UMass and other Five College institutions (Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, and Hampshire College) includes the cost of transfers for customers on these routes. Thus, customers on all routes in this area have an incentive to transfer among two or more routes to complete their trips.

**Figure 4-2: “Will You Transfer to Another Bus?” By Route**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>No, will not Transfer</th>
<th>Yes, will Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B43</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B48</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G45</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G46</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M40</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R41</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R42</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R44</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X98</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Routes</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,112
B. Customer Characteristics
In general, the survey findings demonstrate that the PVTA provides a vital service for people of the Northern Region and Hampshire County. Significantly, the majority of PVTA customers in this service area have no other way to get to school, their jobs, medical appointments, grocery stores and other important top destinations without bus service. Most PVTA customers can be considered “transit dependent” – that is, they do not have access to a car (39.6% vs. 2.8% county average, according to 2010-2014 ACS estimate) or they do not have a driver’s license (15% of riders, according to survey Question 7).

The top three reasons that customers gave for riding PVTA were:
- Convenience (36%)
- No car available (27%)
- No drivers license (15%).

52% of customers say they have no way, other than PVTA, to make their trips. Of the 48% of customers who had other transportation choices, these are the other modes they said would use.

Figure: How would you make your trip if you could not take the bus?

Income is also another important indicator of transit dependency. Results from Question 11 show that PVTA customers earn much less than the Hampden County average. While more than 58% of people in Hampshire County earn more than $50,000 per year (ACS 2014 one-year estimate), just 4.2% of PVTA riders in Hampshire County do. And whereas nearly 4 of 5 (79.2%) of PVTA
riders earn $20,000 or less per year, the countywide average for this income level is approximately 20%.

Analysis of income by route shows the PVTA services that are most heavily utilized by people who may be in the greatest need of public transportation (below). The routes with the greatest proportions of people earning less than $20,000 per year were the B23 (94.3%); the G3 (92.1%); and the R14 (90.9%).

**Figure 4-3: Income Level By Bus Route**

![Figure 4-3: Income Level By Bus Route](image)
The method of fare payment is relevant to PVTA’s upcoming implementation of the “Fast Break” card, which would offer additional fare payment options. The survey finds that cash on board remains the most popular form of fare payment for people of all income levels.

Figure 4-4: Type of Fare Payment by Income Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Fare Payment</th>
<th>Less than $11,770/yr</th>
<th>$11,770 to $19,999/yr</th>
<th>$20,000 to $34,999/yr</th>
<th>$35,000 to $50,000/yr</th>
<th>$50,000+/yr</th>
<th>Subtotal of all fares paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash on board (full fare)</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on board (senior)</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free/prepaid student pass</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Elderly/Disabled)</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-day or 31-day pass</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blanks</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151
C. System Use Characteristics
The routes with the largest proportions of customers who ride every day are those serving UMass and Amherst (Routes 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and M40). (It is important to remember that the vast majority of these riders are students and staff of Five College institutions, and so these routes do not operate at all approximately four months out of the year, from early May through Labor Day, and during the Winter Break.) Northampton area routes tend to have a more even distribution of customers among those who ride daily, and those who ride 2-4 times per week. Routes with a 10% or greater proportion of infrequent riders (once a week and less) are Route 45, 39, and R41.

Figure 4-5: Frequency of Use by Route

N=1,151
One other important customer use characteristic is frequency of use by trip purpose. This helps transit planners understand how often PVTA customers are depending on the bus to get them to their most important destinations.

The analysis below finds that in every category of ridership frequency, the proportion of people who are riding the bus are going to college or school. Going to work is the second most frequent trip purpose (though a distant second) in all frequency categories. Riders who use the bus less frequently (once a week or less) are more likely to be going out for social or recreational purposes and shopping. But these purposes are still outranked by college/school trips.

**Figure 4-6: Trip Frequency of Use by Trip Purpose (as percentage of frequency type)**
D. Customer Satisfaction Ratings
This section presents analyses of overall customer satisfaction ratings (Question 24) with respect to route and types of customers. Satisfaction was ranked on a 1-5 scale, shown on the chart below.

The analysis below presents overall customer satisfaction by route. There is remarkably little variation among routes, with the highest rating (X98 with an average 4.5) and the lowest rated route (Route 33 with an average 3.86). In summary, it is fair to say that the majority of PVTA customers in the Northern Service Area are satisfied with bus service.

Figure 4-7: Overall Customer Satisfaction by Route

Average Overall Satisfaction Rating: 4.10

N=1,151
Customer Disability and Overall Satisfaction
Customers with a disability had higher levels of satisfaction with PVTA’s service as compared to those who do not have a disability. The average satisfaction rating for the 2% (23 people) of survey respondents who reported a disability that prevents them from driving was 4.33 (between “4 Satisfied” and “5 Very Satisfied” on the five-point scale), versus 4.10 for all respondents.

Customer Race/Ethnicity and Overall Satisfaction
Overall customer satisfaction varied very little by race and ethnicity. Satisfaction ratings averaged near “Satisfied” for all ethnic groups, which Hispanic/Latino and Native American/American Indian customers giving the highest scores. Black and African American customers were the least satisfied with PVTA service (3.93 versus the 4.10 surveywide average). Persons who did not report their race gave the second highest rating (4.39).

Figure 4-8: Overall Customer Satisfaction by Race and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>3 Neutral</th>
<th>4 Satisfied</th>
<th>5 Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Isl</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/Am Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All races</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,151
Age Groups and Overall Satisfaction
Younger people in the age 18-35 category were the least satisfied group of customers by age (although their average rating of 4.0 is only slightly below the 4.10 surveywide average.

Figure 4-9: Age and Overall Satisfaction Score

- 65+ Neutral: 4.37
- 50-65 Neutral: 4.42
- 35-50 Neutral: 4.13
- 18-35 Neutral: 4.00
- 13-17 Neutral: 4.31
- Blank Neutral: 4.5

N=1,151
5. **Recommendations**

The analysis presented in Section 4 suggests several aspects of PTVA service in the Northern Region are well-regarded by riders, and several aspects can be improved.

This report offers the general recommendation that the most highly-ranked categories be viewed as benchmarks for progress toward improvement in the categories that were not ranked as highly.

The following two general recommendations and accompanying sub-recommendations are designed to aid in addressing both the immediate concerns identified by this survey, as well as the longer term goal of improving the monitoring of customer satisfaction.

A. **Recommendation 1: Address Bus Shelter Condition and Bus Cleanliness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.1: Improve Shelter Conditions</td>
<td>There are 162 shelters in the PVTA system, which is roughly 10% of all bus stops. Many studies have shown that high quality bus stop amenities, especially shelters, raise customer satisfaction and ridership.</td>
<td>Inventory existing shelter locations and conditions (complete) Identify candidate locations for new shelters (complete) Revise and improve maintenance program Work with property owners to install additional shelters</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>PVTA began a bus shelter inventory in 2015 using ridership to priorities stops to receive improvements. Funding for new stops has been secured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2: Improve Bus Conditions</td>
<td>Bus cleanliness was ranked as the leading “needs improvement” category. PVTA vehicles are cleaned every night; however, routing and service requirements typically do not allow vehicles to be taken out of service during the day to be cleaned (except in cases involving safety or biohazards).</td>
<td>On-board announcements and signs encouraging patrons to take their belongings Review bus washing frequency (interior and exterior)</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>Bus cleaning practices and resources are reviewed every month with operating contractors (UMass Transit and VATCo), and opportunities to improve cleaning efficiency are being developed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Recommendation 2: Address Service-related Passenger Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.1: Reduce total travel time</td>
<td>PVTA serves a large 600-square mile geographic area, and so the distances that some passengers travel are substantial. In other areas, time waiting for the bus during off-peak hours (when frequency is reduced) adds to total trip times. Reducing travel times for long distance trips and increasing frequency on heavily traveled routes are essential steps toward reducing total travel time.</td>
<td>Identify bus stops that can be consolidated to streamline bus service. Avoid deviations and detours in route alignments. Implement express services where possible and appropriate.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>In 2015, PVTA began a stop consolidation process in larger communities that have many bus stops. This effort will continue in the coming months and years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.2: Review on-time performance</td>
<td>Reliable service is critical to maintaining and increasing ridership, as well as improving customer satisfaction.</td>
<td>Review and revise OTP performance measures and tracking Educate public and operators about what “on time” means Coordinate with MPO’s Congestion Management Process</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>PVTA has directed the PVPC to update and improve systemwide on-time performance tracking and analysis. This improved system is being implemented in the 3rd and 4th qtrs 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.3: Improve service frequency</td>
<td>Service frequency is directly related to customer satisfaction and convenience, as well as operating costs. PVTA seeks to increase service frequency at minimal additional cost.</td>
<td>Ensure service frequency is integrated in annual service and schedule planning. Identify opportunities for increased and optimized service. Identify funding sources for increased service frequency/operations.</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>PVTA holds monthly service reviews of its operating contractors to continue to optimize bus route frequency and service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B.4: Address “Service where desired” by improving service coverage in urban areas

Certain destinations, neighborhoods, and corridors in PVTA’s service area do not receive adequate or appropriate transit for their needs. Ongoing review and planning will help better serve these areas.

Integrate customer comments, demographic information, and economic development data in annual service planning.

Med (1-2 years)

The 2014 Comprehensive Service Review of PVTA recommended focusing on improving the quality of service first on the heavily used bus routes so the greatest number of riders will benefit from investment. This has included additional service on the B48, and optimized schedules on the X98 and M40 coming in the fall of 2016.

C. Recommendation 3: Improve Driver Courtesy, Schedule Legibility and Availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.1: Emphasize Driver Courtesy</td>
<td>While most riders found driver courtesy was “good,” PVTA strives for excellence.</td>
<td>Bus driver training should include various techniques and strategies for interacting with passengers</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>PVTA Ambassador Training continues for all drivers (now in its 4th year). PVTA works closely with operating contractors to emphasize customer service policies related to drivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2: Promote increased use of bus schedule apps</td>
<td>At least 44% of customers surveyed were not aware of the “MyStop” app to which PVTA provides schedule information, and 88% said they did not use any PVTA schedule or trip planning apps.</td>
<td>Use onboard car cards to encourage riders to download and log in to the MyStop app while riding. Include MyStop logo or other info on schedules.</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>All PVTA outreach materials (websites, printed schedules, guides) now include links to PVTA online schedule info.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.3: Promote greater use of pre-paid passes and tickets</td>
<td>Customer use of pre-paid passes (in the UMass/Five College Area, for example) speeds boarding times and helps improve on time performance. Passes are also more cost effective for the customer than cash-on-board fare purchases.</td>
<td>Use onboard car cards to encourage purchases of 7-day and 31-day passes, as well as purchase of ride tickets at area locations.</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>PVTA is launching the Fast Break Card to increase convenience for fare payment. Extensive promotion of this pre-paid option will be conducted in 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.4: Promote greater use of real-time service notifications</td>
<td>Providing real-time information on service, such as delays or detours, greater reduces frustration for customers. PVTA uses FaceBook and Twitter to provide this information currently.</td>
<td>Use onboard car cards to encourage riders to “like” PVTA on FaceBook and Twitter to receive notifications in real time.</td>
<td>High (1 year)</td>
<td>PVTA will review and develop a plan to improve the use of social media to be more effective in providing real time travel information to customers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

1. List of Preparers
This report was prepared by the following staff of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission:

   David Elvin, Senior Transit Planner
   Alexander Forrest, Transit Planner
   David Johnson, Transit Planner
   Yaroslav Mayboroda, Transportation and Transit Intern

PVPC staff extends great thanks to the bus drivers and staff of UMass Transit Services and the Valley Area Transit Company for their assistance throughout the survey process. We also thank the 1,151 passengers who took the time out of their rides to fill out the survey.

2. Sample Survey Form
Sample attached in English and Spanish versions.

3. Written Comments
Available in electronic PDF format to reduce printing cost. Print copies available upon request. Contact David Elvin at delvin@pvpc.org.
1. Need more buses going out of Belchertown
2. Service during off school schedule for working/student class
3. On B43 this week a driver told a passenger “your parents should have beat you more”
4. Being late is ok but leaving early should not be allowed
5. Please add way to pay with card or have the maching give change
6. Would love a bus that would make my trip shorter
7. Shelter at Jones Library, would be helpful for another way to pay other than exact fare.
8. Nice service fore students, some routes could be more frequent
9. I once witnessed an incident where a student had no ID and refused to pay. I was impressed by how the driver handled the situation
10. Very satisfied with PVTA service
11. Need an express to direct to Springfield. Hampshire Mall stop very inefficient
12. The number of turns the B43 bus makes around the Hamp Mall stop causes me motion sickness. I wish there were a better location for that stop.
13. Very good service. Saves me a lot of money
14. There should be no smoking signs in bus shelters - gross! Nice drivers
15. More service in summer months. Otherwise the service is the best I've experienced yet.
16. Thank you PVTA
17. One driver is rude, unobservant, abrasive and overall lacks acceptable communication/social skills
18. A lot of nonstudents use the buses and its too bad that access to buses is so based on student rather than community need
19. Holiday/no school schedules sometimes hard to find. There should be a bus from Mt Holyoke to the mall. Shelters are inadequate in winter
20. Wish buses were more frequent, on time. Wish there were more stops in general
21. Inconsistent bus times especially B43
22. Some stops have no benches! I love the PVTA and think they provide a great service to our community.
23. Some drivers are racist
24. I enjoy riding the bus - people are friendly
25. NS schedule can be difficult for people who commute to work in the PV. Sometimes I have wait 40-50 minutes for next bus. Trip takes 1 hour
26. A shelter at Amherst Health Center (towards center of Amherst) would be ideal. The shelter at Academy is wonderful!
27. It would be nice if students could go to places like Holyoke Mall and Florence for free. Also need more late night buses.
28. PVTA is a wonderful service - I appreciate it!
29. I miss my other buses all the time.
30. I would love an app that tells me exactly when the bus is arriving in real time. It seems like I should use "mystop": for that?
31. There should be more lighting at Northampton Post Office.
32. It was late by almost 15 minutes
33. Many drivers leave their buses unattended to smoke/eat and return late. Student drivers perform better than non student drivers.
34. Sometimes buses are not on time. It happened twice this week although they were not rush hours
35. Some drivers won’t wait for you, won’t stop when you ring, see you coming and leave, drive by you
36. Weekend service is not frequent enough for people without cars
37. More time and needs to have buses linked on some type of schedule/run
38. Most drivers are very nice. One skipped my stop even though I pulled the string. I live 3 miles from my job but have to take 2 buses. Takes 1 hour
39. Randomly cutting service (39) in middle of the semester made it hard to get to class on time/maintain our scheds w/school and work. Very rude
40. Bus times need to coincide with transfers better
41. Great Job!
42. Have to walk 25 mins to bus stop. $3 for day pass too much. Not enough stops in Amherst. Weekend sched is horrible. $1.50 too much $.25 transf too much
43. Keep up the good work!
44. It sucks when school is out. I like it when there is full service
45. Would like weekend/late service to Florence/Easthampton
46. Fares for students should be free during summer/winter break
47. PVTA does an excellent job at servicing the people. Thank you
Very helpful service. Bus is occasionally late but mostly blame traffic.

Weekend - no svc is problematic. I see fellow weekday passengers hitch hiking on weekends. Do something

It would be great if you can add more svc to route 45 on weekends.

Please add the PVTA from Belchertown to Holyoke Comm College. Thank you so much!

Some drivers not all have radio or music mobile devise phone too loud. Other than that all ok

Sometimes I would like to take the bus on weekends but no bus and I would love to take my daughter somewhere on the weekend

We need bus svc to and from Belchertown on weekends. I need to get to work. No car

We need service on weekends. It would be nice if you increase the frequency of buses weekdays

Excellent service! PVTA and bike paths are the best form of transportation.

Thank you very much!

The 45 needs to run on weekends and later at night. It is very difficult for people living in Belchertown to get home from Umass

Thank you good service

Great system!

I think that the buses should run 24/7

Better coordination with FRTA

Always late!

The signal light at Plumtree has been broken for nearly a year. It is very dangourous crossing Rt 116 to get home

The bus is very convenient

Some drivers drive too fast

Good service

Student drivers are great. Funding of Umass Transit should continue. We love it! Thanks!

The 46 is great! Wish there was more svc. Thank you PVTA

Need more frequent svc in summer. Grad students need to be here even in the summer time! Thanks

Had an incident once that was reported online, but no one ever got back to me.

Shelters need more seating and more space. M40 should get off Route 9 after the bridge.(too many traffic jams)

The M40 buses shouldn't have to travel Route 9 - can use back roads. The old guy w/ the B43 am leaving at 620 am is always leaving early.

I would love to get free service in summer as well (I am a grad student)

Additional M40 trips would be great.

Amherst college needs a scheduling service so we could make the M40. Pretty close to impossible

Routes 41 and B43 need to be tweaked so that I can get from HCC to Hadley at night after 630 pm

Drivers are late for first M40 run of the day

More buses with less stops from Smith Collee to Amherst

Would love express service in the evening (Saturday not useful). Concerned about cost for workers using the bus.

M40 should run all year

I enjoy riding in the M40 because it is a great way to get from Northampton to Umass quickly. I wish it ran more often.

I do wish there were more express buses between Northampton and Amherst.

The PVTA provides an exceptional service. I have been a regular for over 5 years and I am very satisfied with the service.

It would be helpful if the M40 also ran between noon and 230 pm

No complaints - wish there were more express buses and that B43 didn’t make 2 mall stops

We need M40 service in the summer - please! In the winter the buses are usually overheated and when crowdeed its hard to ask driver to turn heat down

Academy of music stop is the only place around here where I have been harrasssed or propositioned. Need security. Would like a 945 M40

Need more R42 service

Great service. Drivers are helpful and courteous

Everything is great with the buses

For the most part drivers are considerate. Some buses are extremely bumpy rides.

It would be great for Nashawannuck express to run maybe 4 times a day on Sunday (or R41)

I need service past 6 pm and on Sundays

Easthampton needs a Sunday bus
96 Space inbound 42 and 44 30 minutes apart so we don’t have an hour in Florence to get into Northampton
97 I would like more buses on the weekends (Sunday morning)
98 Keep up the good work!
99 Very good service
100 Bus tracker has cut down on my stress a lot. Thank you
101 Bus should be on time always
102 I am pleased with bus service
103 Once in a while I get a rude driver other than that the drivers are great. Occassionally they run through red lights
104 Good bus line
105 Bus should run more at night. Weekly bus passes more obtainable?
106 Wish we had more buses on Sundays. Even a van so I could go to church.
107 Don’t like how the X98 runs - too much waiting. Need Sunday Easthampton Service
108 Some routes like B48 R44 need to run later in the evening for those of us who work
109 No complaints - great system
110 I’ve never had any huge issues with PVTA
111 Wish for more buses in the morning because its PACKED most mornings
112 Bus is usually on overload in the am. Letting studens know would save them from missing/being lat to class
113 Generally satisfied unless driver forgets to stop for someone
114 I love you guys keep up the good work!
115 My bus the am 8:00 is late by 15 min every single week. It is always making melate tomy 8:30 am class
116 Buses should not be able to leave stops early!
117 Thanks!
118 Bus on time/lateness does not appear on bus app for Android users
119 thanks!
120 People don’t wait for people getting off, when getting on
121 Excellent!
122 I would like if there was a bus from Puffton that stopped in Southwest
123 It think the bus system in Amherst is great!
124 Increase service frequency
125 34 and 35 not on schedule
126 Service needs to run more often on weekends if possible
127 Sometimes buses get way to crowded during peak hours.
128 More service on weekends
129 I think Zack is the best driver
130 thank you!
131 you do well
132 really need to have another bus on the 30. Puffton bus always to packed
133 Put a stop at Northam;pton Rd. I am moving and there are no stops
134 Need a stop on Northampton Rd on way to Rt 9
135 Need a stop at Northampton Rd goind toward campus
136 Would like better transfer between 33 and B43
137 The 30 is too crowded/overloaded
138 Need more wind protection in shelters
139 Please if possible try to start a bus from Belchertown to Big Y via Colonial Village - will save a lot of time for students
140 Make better judgements during peak ride times to prevent overloads and crowding. Add additional buses during peak times
141 Great company overall
142 Breaks cause issues when the schedule is on reduced format.
143 On reduced schedule weeks, service is more erratic (10 minutes behind schedule)
144 You guys do good job
145 More frequent buses during weekend would be great.
146 These buses make my commute to Umass very easy and comfortable
147 I think the B43 is not very good
148 Good service
149 PVTA buses are great but the time schedule sometimes differs from real time. Thanks
150 Couldn't be without this service
151 Usually very crowded leaving Umass campus at rush hour. The double buses are very helpful at these times
152 pretty good
153 Need more weekend trips. (Every 15 minutes) makes life easier
154 Buses occasionally do not come to the Boulders stop on time
155 Thank you
156 Go PVTA
157 My only complaint is how early service ends during the winter. Other than that you guys are great.
158 You do a great job!
159 great work guys keep it up
160 Very satisfied with service
161 Buses are too late - takes forever to get through campus
162 31 on weekends should be more frequent
163 There should be buses that take residents from the Northeast area to the Rec Center/Mullins area much faster.
164 Please extend 34/35 schedule
165 No service to Walmart or Big Y from Boulders, we need to change buses which makes 20 min travel time to 80 mins
166 Bus schedule during vacations is too reduced and a little hard to manage
167 More direct service to Walmart, Hampshire mall in Hadley and a neighboring areas would be great
168 The PVTA is convenient for my work. Satisfied
169 The bus system is one of best I have used
170 I am color blind so on #21 I have to rely on numbers only
171 Everythings perfect
172 Weekend bus frequency is too low
173 The colleges pay so students don't have to yet no one pays anyways. I see the bus pick up non-paying locals in the am they skip by stops full of students
174 Need a stop after Cliffside (7-11)
175 Bus driver drove past my stop the other day. We had to walk back from the next stop. Route 35 Sylvan
176 add service on weekends
177 I was high
178 I'll try "mystop" but as of now I would like a way to say that this is the route I'm on and if it is on schedule for stops between destinations
179 Good service! More frequent buses the better
180 Thanks for your service
181 The stop right before the Boulders has almost no lighting and drivers tend to drive around the buses when people are crossing the street Very Unsafe!
182 Buses should be more timely. They are often late. Bus shelters are often in poor condition or nonexistent
183 the reduced schedules on weekends for the 31 are too infrequent, especially for people who still need to get to work like me
184 I enjoy the service always have. Will continue to use it as long as I can.
185 cars suck. Goooo buses - wooooo
186 Last bus on 33 is too early. Please help with this
187 great for getting around to places
188 33 bus does not run after 9 pm. It is difficult to come home after that time especially from school. It is not convenient most of the time.
189 on 33 service ends too early. For people commuting home from work it is difficult to use route 33
190 only every 40 minutes. Need more buses, takes too long to get to campus
191 33 needs more buses
192 33 line - have to go all the way to north Amherst to get to campus
193 I don't love the long stop at Mill Hollow, it makes my commute 1/3 longer
194 I wish the 33 ran later at night
195 More frequent service on 33, Can you start earlier on weekends? Can you run later on weekends?
196 Going into town - great. Going home takes too long
197 I love the bus!
198 I really wish the Puffers Pond would run later than 8:46 pm. If I stay on campus late I have to figure out a different way home
199 Frequency of 33 bus must be increased
200 More 33 buses please
201 good job so far
202 Horrible route to live on. Last bus @ 845 pm take 20-25 minutes for a 2 1/2 mile ride due to stop and Mill Hollow
203 App could be better and notice for changing schedule. Good service on holiday. Could use a later bus after 9 pm
204 The wait time at Mill Hollow is too long
205 I've been riding PVTA since I cam to Umass - I love it!
206 Schedules are difficult to read
207 I think Sylvan should get a bus on the weekend as well as it should run earlier than the regular weekend schedule
208 Shift changes should be told to people traveling before route starts. I was 15 mins late to class one day because of this
209 I use PVTA everywhere - really love it and appreciate it
210 As a user of route 45 I have stopped using the bus as frequently due to limited service times
211 34/35 needs to run on weekends!
212 In the mornings the bus leaves the second the time listed on app says it'll arrive. Should wait another minute
213 Love you PVTA
214 Bus always drives away as I walk to it
215 I wish there was a bus on Rocky Hill Rd in Hadley
216 Good student drivers. No complaints
217 Thank you for your service
218 Orchard hill bus to more frequent on weekends
219 Buses need to come on time. Sometimes they don't even come at all
220 It would be nice if bigger buses were used for the 31 route between 9 and 10 am
221 Overall a great service with friendly drivers
222 PVTA is the best. I really like the service.
223 Can there be more buses to the Hill during the day on weekends and not only at night
224 Sometimes late; effects class time arrival. 34/35 busy; make more buses for morning
225 More b43 on weekends
226 Always late! Later times on the weekends.
227 Run later and weekends
228 Run on weekends!
229 love the bus!
230 come on weekends
231 run later times and on the weekend
232 Puffers pond bus should run more often
233 Later service on weekends to admissions and from 34/35 bus!
234 more weekend service
235 I wish it offer longer night hours. B43 is really crowded sometimes and loud on Friday nights. Sometimes it can be delayed up to 20 minutes
236 Have buses going up the hill (35) be a little more frequent at night
237 Good service
238 Be more punctual! I have classes to get to on time and the buses can affect that.
239 More 34 and 35 on weekends
As an MHC student it's difficult to get to Northampton. I would really like to get to the Chicopee CVS
Getting to Smith from MHC and back is a pain because of few buses, S. Hadley and MRC - feel very irritated
Some drivers miss Hampshire College stops, some drivers are rude during winter, If I have classes at 5 colleges I am bound to be late to one of them
Increasing bus frequency on weekends would be helpful
Express service between Amherst College and Hampshire Mall/Northampton would be great!
I like buses but they should run regular when there is a holiday
Love the PVTA!
I wish there was a bus that went straight from Mt Holyoke College to Northampton/Smith college
sexual harrassment on bus
The 38 is great, I just wish it was more frequent. B43 is often late sometimes 30 minutes to an hour
Dissatisfied with 38's spring break schedule
The new schedule change of bus 39 in the middle of the semester has made it impossible for me get to class on time
It would be nice to have more destinations from Mt Holyoke College and hopefully direct buses (w/o stopping at Hampshire College)
I would really like a bus to the Hampshire Mall
I always had a pleasant experience on the PVTA. My one concern is timeliness as the bus can sometimes be late
If you could make 35 and 38 align better that would great
The PVTA works really well. However, I do wish it ran during spring break
thank you!
Sundays bus schedules for 33 and B43 took long time for the next bus to come.
satisfied
It would be helpful to have another 38 stop at Amherst College
Need solar powered shelters that not wind tunnels
Better service for the weekend
I'd like a direct line from Hampshire College to Hampshire Mall. More buses servicing Hampshire College would be convenient
Wish there was route from Hampshire Mall to Hampshire College
I often have trouble plannin to attend off campus events due to the infrequency of times. Besides that I am pleased the PVTA exists and does good job
Please resume Hampshire to Hampshire Mall or Big Y - just one place for me to do grocery shopping without transfer.
Make a route from Hampshire College to Hampshire Mall/faster route from Amherst to Hampshire Mall
The schedules of B43 and 38 don’t align so I’ll end up waiting 1/2 hour plus for the bus. 39 new schedule is very irregular
Printed schedule/service times posted at stops would be helpful. Difficult to get anywhere from South Hadley in summer
no complaints great job
Hampshire needs a regular direct route to the Hampshire Mall
a ride from Hampshire Coll to Hampshire mall is much wanted/needed
I along with the majority of Hampshire College students would greatly appreciate a route to the Hampshire Mall. I would use it all the time
There should be a bus from Hampshire college to Hampshire mall
Please have a route to Hatfield
PVTA is a good system for Umass/college students like me
Most drivers are good
good service
Need bus on Sunday at River Valley market
Better connections needed in Holyoke. Takes 3 buses to get from home to Holyoke Pediatrics use to be one
Excellent service
There needs to be more buses running on the weekend please!
Good job
The 31 needs larger buses during rush hour
Sometimes the drivers seem a little reckless when driving yet overall usually the drivers are good
Bus should run on weekends (Umass campus bus)
Never had any problems with the PVTA
288 Service very good - helpful
289 Schedule is unreliable. Bus tracker app is so inaccurate it is unusable. Great idea need better execution. Love the bus tracker for desktops
290 Very pleased with new service on B48 and R29
291 I am treated well by all drivers
292 The PVTA should take over the FRTA so that there is weekend buses going to Greenfield
293 You're a big help
294 very happy with PVTA service
295 Better connections needed between Highland in Holyoke and Mall/Holyoke Pediatrics. Used to be on bus now 3 are needed
296 I wish that schedules were available in some other machine readable format. I would also like a reloadable farecard system.
297 One driver on the B43 is rude and abrupt. He pulls into traffic before I am seated
298 The drivers are very respectful. I board the bus to a smile, hello, hows your day
299 Thank you for the green transportation and affordable too
300 There should be more shelters. Drivers should have designated routes so they know where stops are. Some newer drivers are a bit rude
301 Keep the R29!
302 Some drivers leave early. More Sunday service. Another public comment session. Springfield to Northampton express please!