

PARATRANSIT RIDER SURVEY REPORT 2023

April 2024

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Acknowledgements

PVTA utilized interns and staff to assist by stuffing envelopes and data entry. PVTA would like to acknowledge our interns, Nicholas Vasconcellos and Nicole Krantz for their help on this project.

Executive Summary

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA) relies on customer engagement from outreach sessions and surveys to understand the riders of the system. The Paratransit rider survey also meets an FTA requirement to obtain an understanding of the ridership through quadrennial surveys.

PVRTA sought the opinions of 1000 Paratransit and Senior Van Service riders by mail. 37.6% replied with a survey. PVRTA has a high degree of confidence with this survey. Unlike the fixed-route and non-rider surveys, the van riding population books their trips. An aggregate of that information can be used to determine the population size.

Key findings are:

- **Overall satisfaction** with the service is high. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of those surveyed are satisfied or strongly satisfied with PVRTA Van service quality and value, consistent with the 2017 Paratransit survey.
- **Areas for improvement** include ADA accessibility customer service. Both hearing and visually impaired customer service satisfaction ranked below 65%. Riders are also less satisfied with the ADA application and interview. Aspects of the trip itself are also lower in satisfaction (cost of the fare, 5-Minute advance van arrival call, on-time within the 20-Minute window, total travel time, and availability of trip times all fall around 75% satisfaction.)
- **Access to technology** continues to grow for this population. In 2017 internet access reached about half those surveyed. That has grown to 60%. Likewise, smartphone adoption has grown from 40% in 2017 to 50% in 2023. Twenty-one percent (21%) of riders would feel very comfortable or comfortable with using an app. It should be assumed that some of those would find it easier to book trips using an app instead of a call system.
- **General comments** point similarly to areas of improvement. Wait times, service span throughout the day and days of week, travel time, notifications, and scheduling were all mentioned. Technological improvements could be adopted and are known to alleviate uncertainty and many of these concerns.
- **Increasing diversity** is an important step to a more equitable system. 88% of those who answered are White alone, well above earlier results from 2011 and 2017. Eleven percent (11%) are Black or African American and 6% are Hispanic. Ages also skew older with the median age 65 years and older. Increasing the diversity of riders will better conform to the PVRTA service area.

The Van Rider profile is:

- Q3, 8. One hundred twenty-nine surveys (35%) of the surveys mailed back were associated with Springfield; (fifty-one surveys (14%) associated with Northampton and thirty-four (9%) with Chicopee.
- Q16. Two hundred eleven surveys (57%) of those surveyed were retired, another fifty-eight (16%) are medically unable to work. Fifty-six surveys (15%) are within the labor force (looking for work, working part-time and full-time).
- Q17. The median age is 65 or older. Two hundred fifty-six surveys (68%) identified as 65 or older.
- Q18. Two hundred thirty-eight (65%) are female. One hundred four (28%) are male.
- Q19, 20. Two hundred sixty-eight surveys (73%) Seventy-three percent are white. Thirty-seven surveys (10%) Black or African American, and twenty-one (6%) are Latinx/Hispanic.

- Q21. Three hundred one surveys (82%) speak English alone with fifteen surveys (4%) who speak both English and Spanish and another fifteen (4%) who speak English and Another language.
- Q22. The median household size is one, with an average of 1.66 people. Households with a size of one were represented by two hundred thirteen surveys (57%).
- Q23. The median income of paratransit and senior van rides is between 133% and 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Sixty-six surveys (24% of those who answered) held incomes below the Federal Poverty Level.
- Q1. Of the reasons they ride most two hundred eighty-eight (79%) consider riding PVRTA for Healthcare or Medical Appointments. One hundred sixty-four (45%) of those surveyed ride PVRTA for shopping trips.
- Q2. For their most recent trip, a majority or two hundred thirty-three surveys (64%) took trips for medical purposes. Seventy-six most recent trips (21%) were for shopping purposes.
- Q4. The median time from the start of the 20-minute pick up window for most recent trips was 6-10 Minutes with one hundred thirty-three trips (37%) starting within 5 Minutes.
- Q5. Fifty-three of those surveyed (15%) will take more than one round trip per day at least once a week.
- Q9. Riders have a median trip frequency of once or twice a month. One hundred thirty-two riders (36%) are weekly or more frequent riders. Two hundred twenty riders (60%) ride less than once a week.
- Q6. The median van rider takes PVRTA fixed route buses rarely, never or only take PVRTA Vans. 21% of riders take PVRTA bus routes once a week or more while two hundred fifty-eight (71%) take fixed routes less than weekly or never.
- Q7. One hundred sixty-six of those surveyed (46%) use PVRTA vans because the stop is too far from their home or destination. Eighty-six (24%) take vans because the bus takes too long.
- Q13. Van riders are most satisfied with:
 - The cleanliness of the vans
 - Driver courtesy
 - PVRTA Van service quality and value
- And least satisfied with:
 - Visual impaired customer service
 - Hearing impaired customer service
 - ADA application and interview
- And most undecided about:
 - ADA application and interview
 - Total travel time
 - On-time within the 20-Minute window.
- Q10. Without PVRTA vans, one hundred fifty-two (42%) would opt not to make their trip. One hundred fifty-seven (43%) would try to organize a ride from a family member or friend.
- Q11. a. Ninety-two of those surveyed (24%) decreased their travel during the COVID pandemic.
- Q11. b. Thirty-five responses (9% of riders), or 38% of those who decreased their travel during the pandemic did so because of COVID safety concerns. Twenty-five surveyed van riders (7% of riders) or 27% of those who decreased travel had a change in health that impacted their travel.

- Q12. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of van riders have access to the internet, while 48% have access to a smartphone. Twenty-one percent (21%) of riders would feel very comfortable or comfortable using an app to book trips.
- Through verbatim comments, PVRTA van riders were displeased most with wait times, followed by service span, fare and scheduling.

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Introduction

PVTA provided 176,976 rides through the Senior Van Service and ADA Paratransit programs.

Senior Van Service is a legacy program based on themes from the Older Americans Act of 1965 signed into law by President Johnson. The Act was reauthorized in 2020, advocating increased access to and communication about transportation for Seniors. As a legacy service, Senior Van Service PVTA does not receive support from Federal or State funding sources. This service is available to all those over 60 years old within PVTA communities.

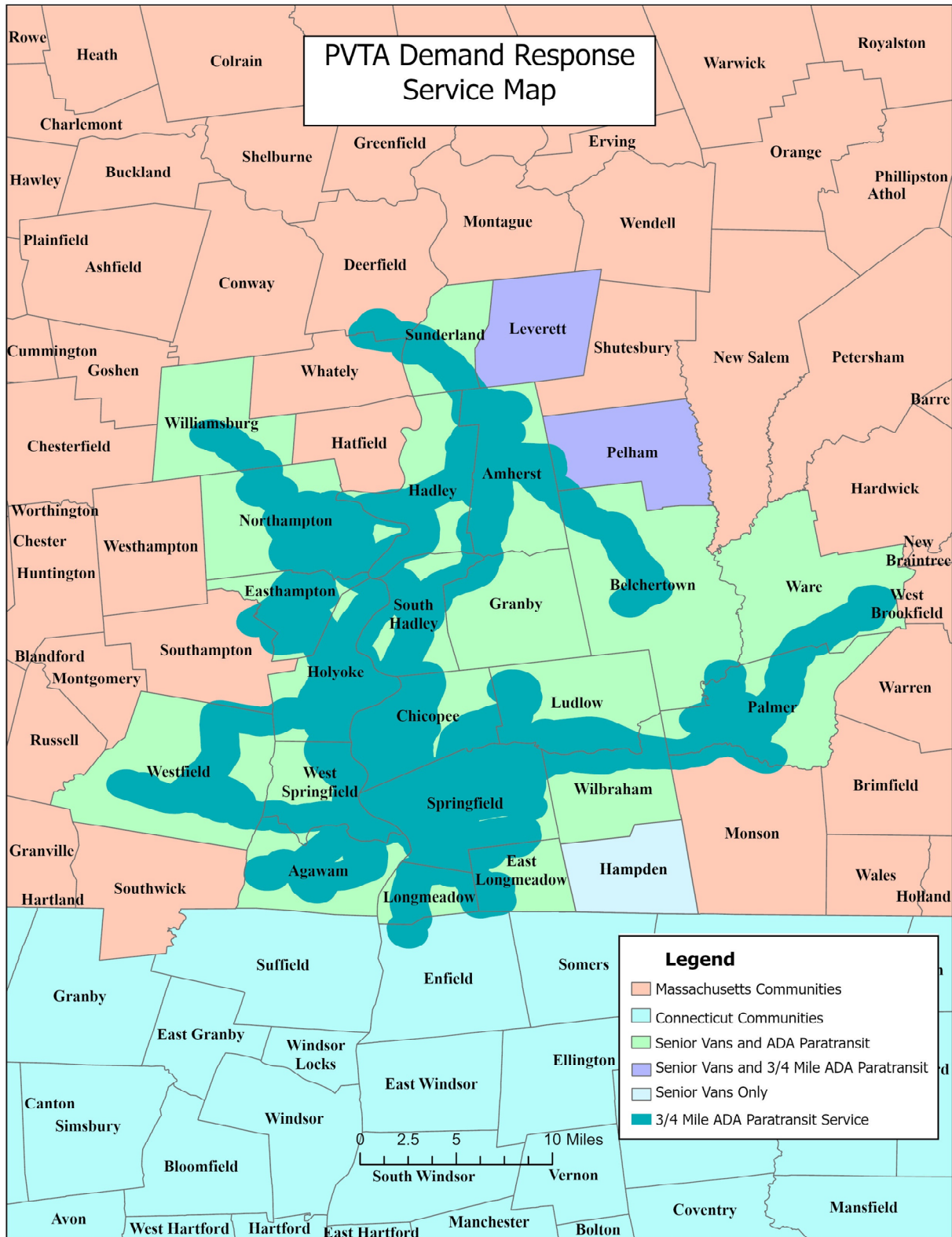
ADA Paratransit Service was established nationally through the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. FTA reimburses a portion of the contract to provide services to those who are unable to use the fixed-route bus system. ADA Paratransit includes specific eligibility requirements through Sec. 27.123 of that Act. Paratransit service is available to residents of member communities that also receive fixed-route service. Otherwise, service is provided within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of fixed-route service.

After ADA Paratransit trips are satisfied, assets are prioritized for Senior Van Service. Recently, demand for service during peak hours (afternoons) has left many seniors with few options to travel. PVTA has been able to expand Senior Van Service additional hours to offer more off-peak hours, expanding access for Seniors.

A new dynamic within demand response rides has emerged since the COVID pandemic. While 33.26% of unlinked passenger trips were made through Senior Van Service (compared to 66.74% for Paratransit) in FY 2019, Senior Van Service made up 48% of trips in FY2023. This trend has continued into FY 24 with Senior Van Service accounting for 50.08% of all trips for the first half of the fiscal year.

These services, while similar, do not include PT-1 MassHealth (Medicaid) rides or Council of Aging rides. Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) provides PT-1 rides in the region while each town decides whether transportation can be provided as a program of their Council on Aging.

Service Area Map



Methodology

PVTA sent out mailed surveys to 1000 paratransit and senior van service riders. Of those, 376 in total responded.

Respondents could choose to either complete the mailed survey and send that mailing back using a return address or respondents could complete a survey online by using the easy URL pvtasurvey.com.

Sampling Method

To receive the required responses, PVTA focused on both ADA Paratransit and Senior Van Service riders of the past 12 months. The 1,000 most recent riders were included in the survey. Client records were pulled from ADEPT in June 2023.

Some mail was returned unable to deliver.

The following equation was used to determine the sampling error for results of this survey.

$$n = \left(\frac{Z_{\alpha/2} \sqrt{p(1-p)}}{W} \right)^2$$

Variables Defined

n = minimum number of surveys required per route

z = normal probabilities value based on confidence level

α = 1 – confidence level as a percentage

p = percentage of monthly ridership per route based on total monthly ridership for all southern region routes

W = margin of error

It is estimated that PVTA has ~11,000 annual users of paratransit and senior van services at any given time. The results have a sample error of $\pm 5.1\%$.

Survey Method

This survey was conducted by mail. One mailing was necessary to receive the existing sample error. This mailing included the following items:

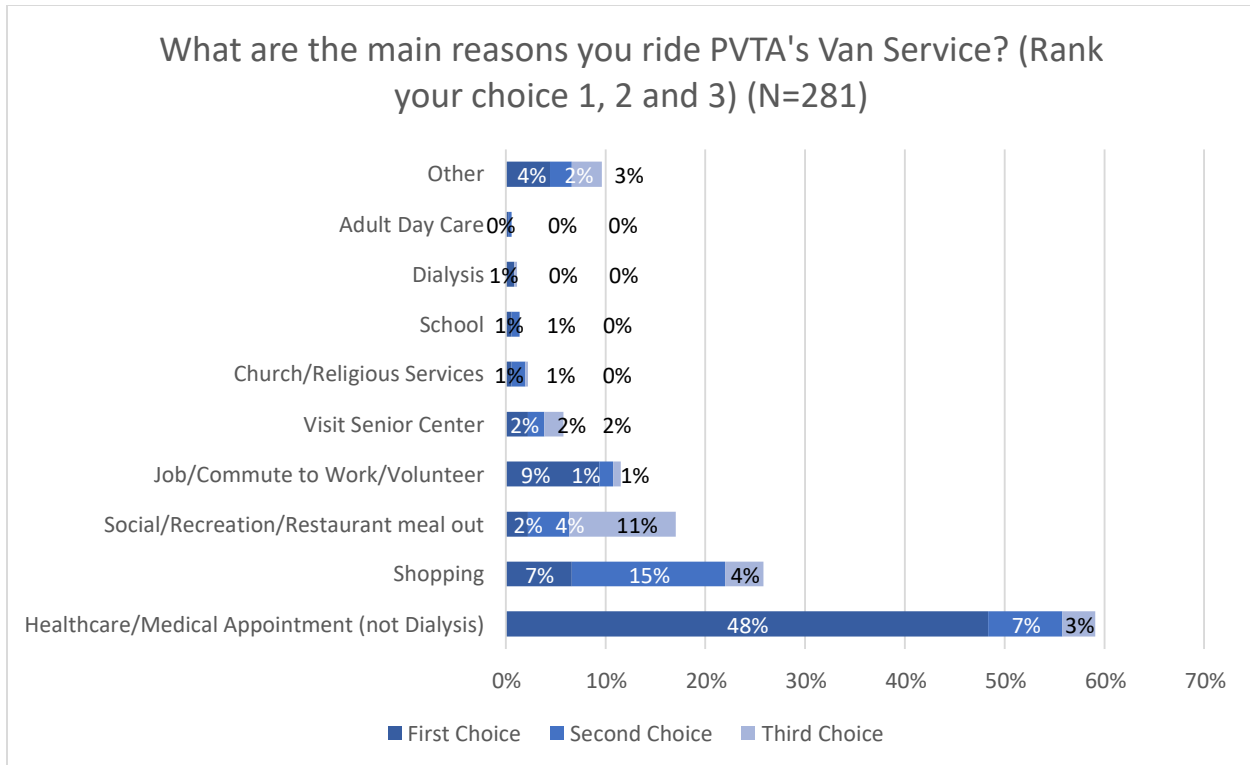
1. A cover letter from the Administrator,
2. The 2-sided 8.5" x 14" (legal sized) paper survey,
3. An addressed, stamped return envelope.

To randomize results, surveys had no markings to indicate the rider being surveyed.

Calls were made to all paratransit and senior van service riders to complete the survey if they receive one. While the 2017 Paratransit survey required a 70% response rate, the larger mailing allowed for decreased stress on staff related to follow-up activities. This turned out to be important due to continued difficulties recruiting interns.

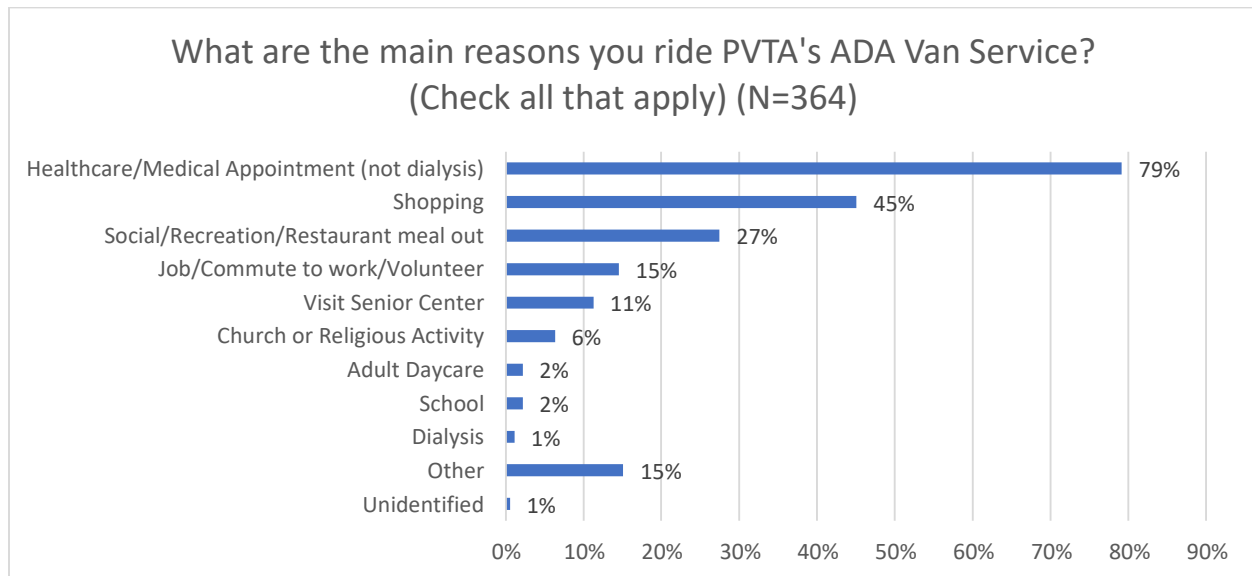
Types of Trips Surveyed

Question 1. What are the main reasons that you use PVTA's Van Service? (Please rank your choices 1, 2 and 3 next to your choice)

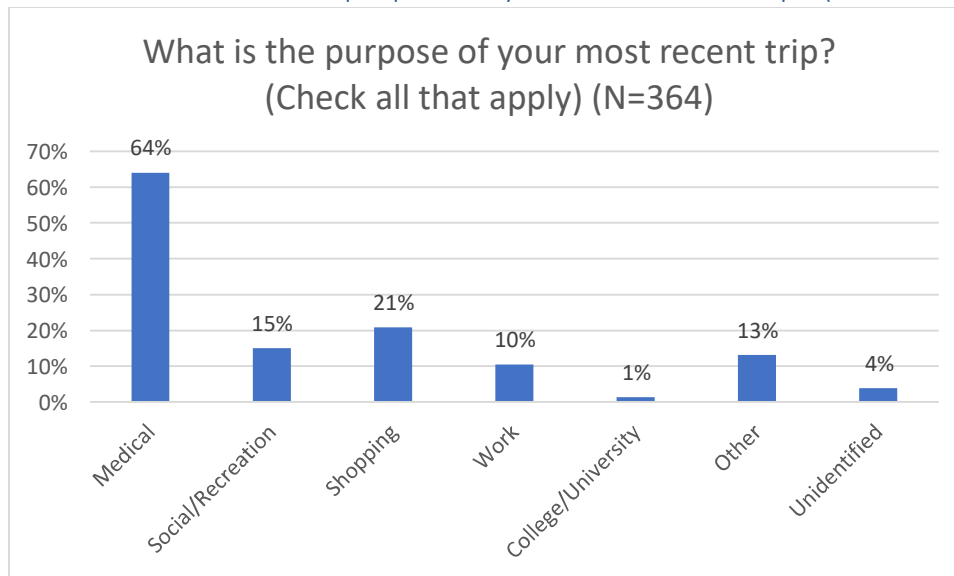


Healthcare/Medical Appointment (not dialysis) is most prevalent, followed by Shopping and Social/Recreation/Restaurant meal out. For those commuting to a Job/Commute to Work/Volunteer, the choice is a primary reason for riding PVTA's vans. Shopping is more of a secondary choice while social and recreation is tertiary.

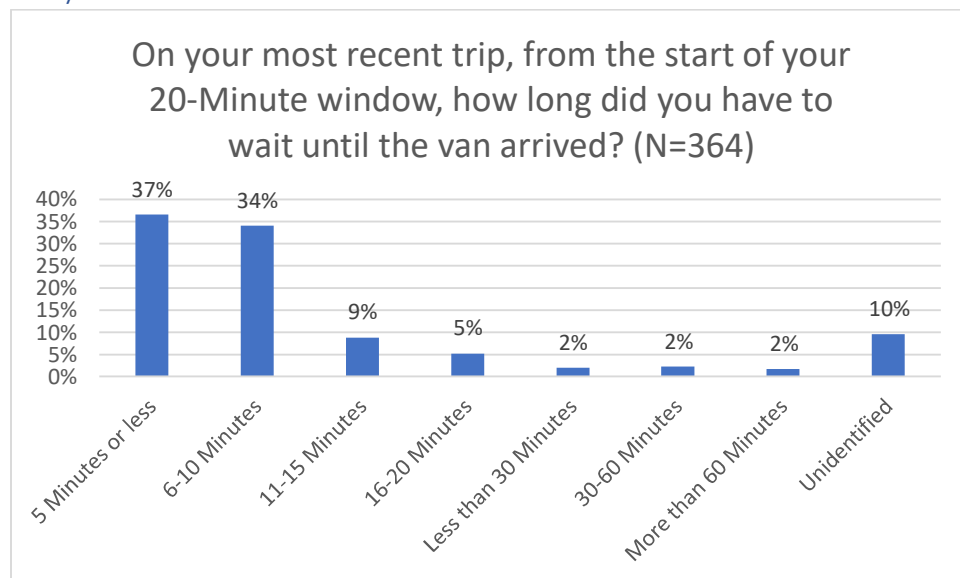
Question 1. (Count) What are the main reasons that you use PVTA's Van Service? (Please rank your choices 1, 2 and 3 next to your choice)



Question 2. What is the purpose of your most recent trip? (Check all that apply)

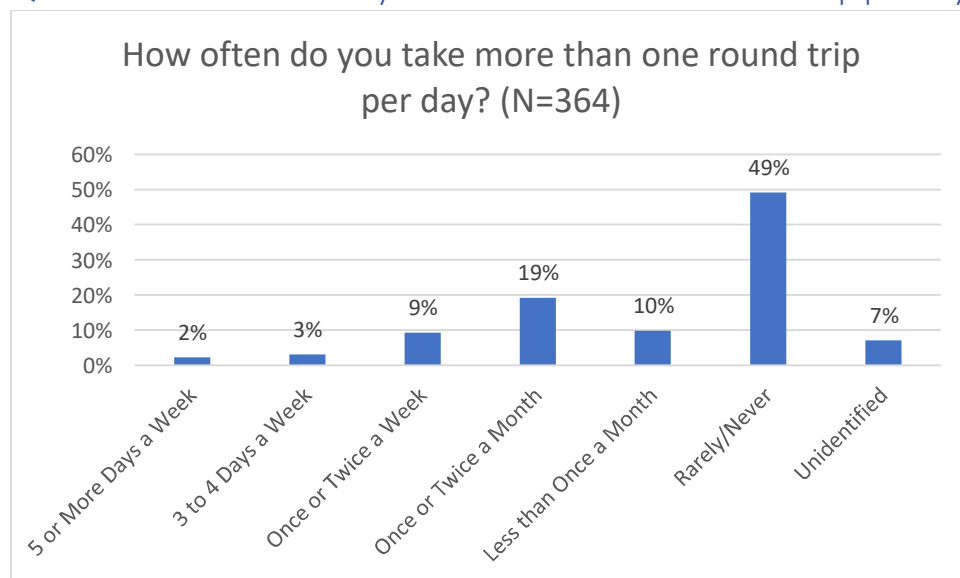


Question 4. On your most recent trip, from the start of your 20-minute window, how long did you wait for the van to arrive?



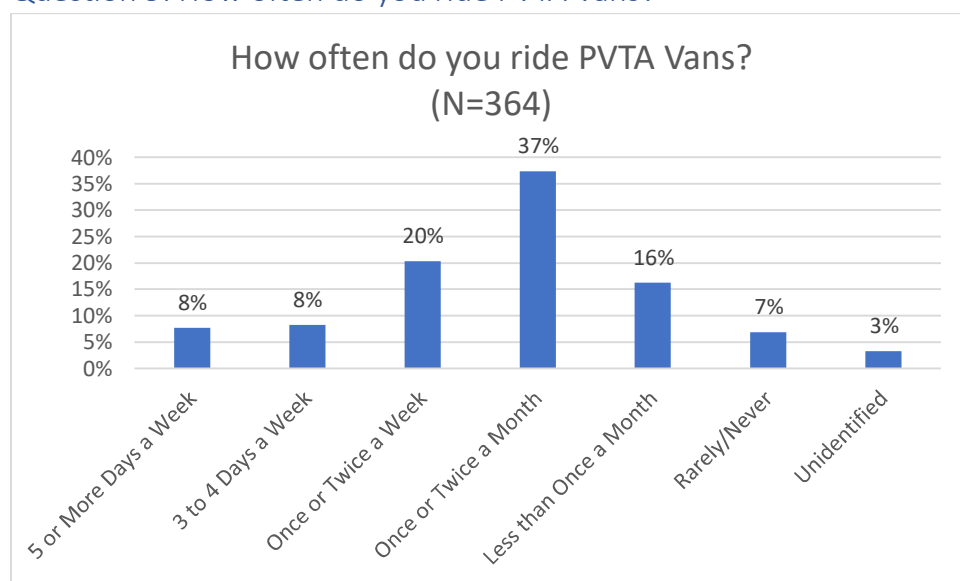
The median wait time from the start of the 20-minute window is 6-10 minutes.

Question 5. How often do you take more than one round trip per day?



One hundred twenty-three (34%) take more than one round trip per day at least once a month.

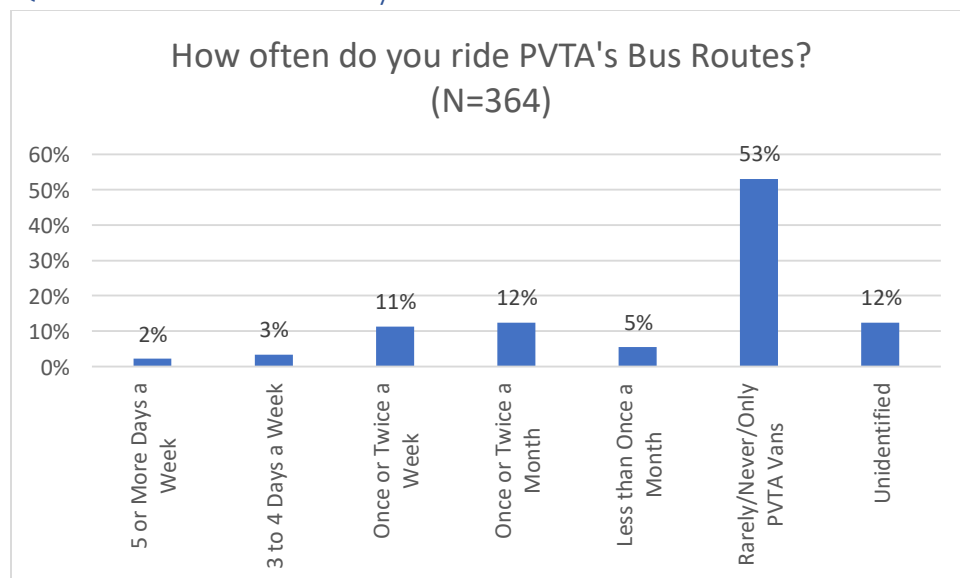
Question 9. How often do you ride PVTA Vans?



In contrast to fixed-route riders who are more likely to ride once a week or more, demand response riders are more likely to ride once a month or less.

Trip Justifications

Question 6. How often do you ride PVTA's Bus Routes?

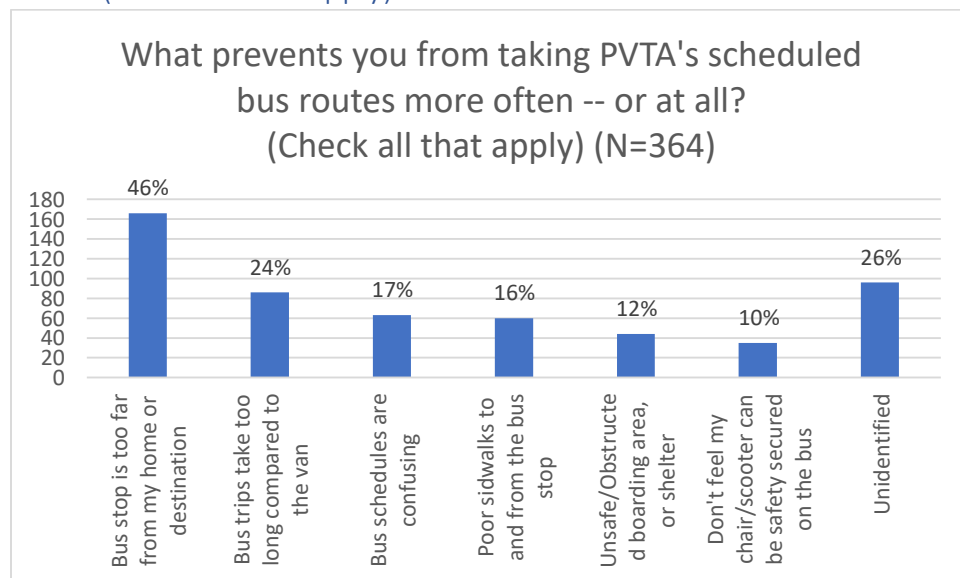


Forty-one of those surveyed (11%) and forty-five (12%) use PVTA bus routes “Once or Twice a Week” or “Once or Twice a Month”. One hundred ninety-three (53%) rarely or never use PVTA bus routes. Reviewing the 2017 ADA Paratransit Customer Survey, 81% of those who answered said they never rode PVTA bus routes. This year’s survey shows greater use of PVTA’s bus routes by the van riding population. This change may have been the result of increased education and travel training for existing van riders and a recent increase in Senior Van Service riders; senior van rides are given to those over the age of 60

no matter their mobility abilities. However, consistent with the 2017 and 2011 surveys, 19% ride regularly (in this case one or twice a week or more).

Travel Time

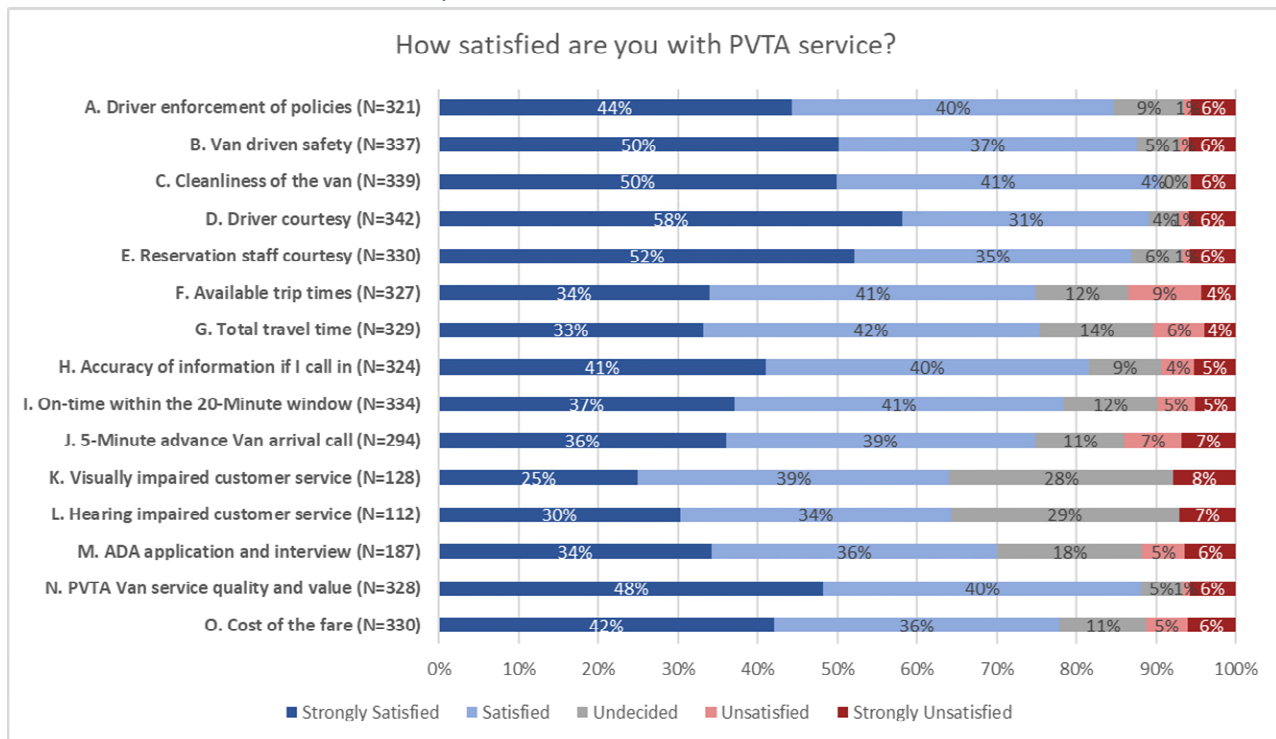
Question 7. What prevents you from taking PVRTA's scheduled bus routes more often – or at all? (Check all that apply)



One hundred sixty-six (46%) consider their bus stop too far from their home or destination. Eighty-six (24%) consider the bus trip too long compared to the vans.

Satisfaction and Utility of PVRTA Services

Question 13. How satisfied are you with PVRTA Service?¹



Most Satisfied Categories:

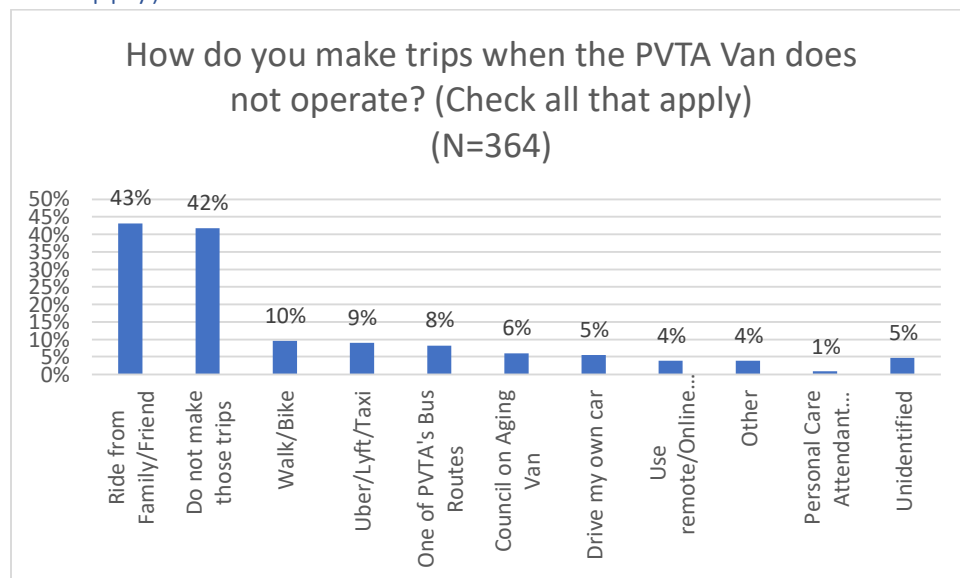
- Cleanliness of the Vans
- Driver Courtesy
- PVRTA Van service quality and value

Most unsatisfied categories:

- 5-Minute advance Van arrival call
- Available trip times
- Cost of the Fare

¹ Unidentified and Not Applicable answers are not included within this chart.

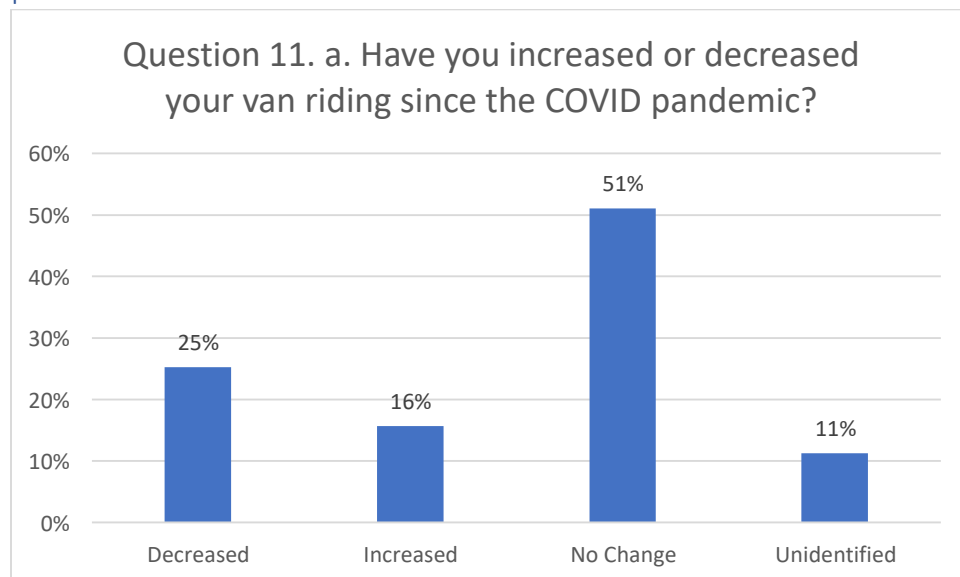
Question 10. How do you make trips when the PVRTA Van does not operate? (Check all that apply)²



There are many transportation options in the area. One hundred fifty-two (42%) of van riders, however, rely heavily on PVRTA's van services. One hundred fifty-seven (43%) would consider reaching out to a family member or friend for a ride. While there is competition between online services and PVRTA, fourteen of those surveyed (less than 4%) feel online services are an alternative to PVRTA vans.

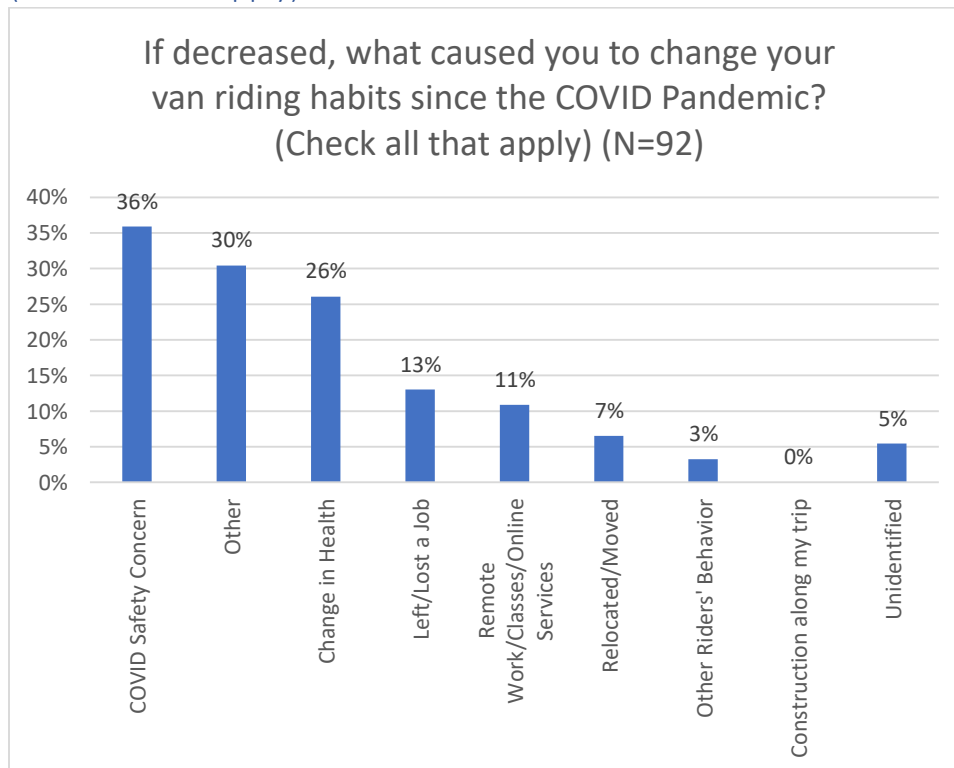
Impact from COVID on Travel

Question 11. a. Have you increased or decreased your van riding since the COVID pandemic?



² Results include coded "Other" responses. "Personal Care Attendant/Health Insurance" were added.

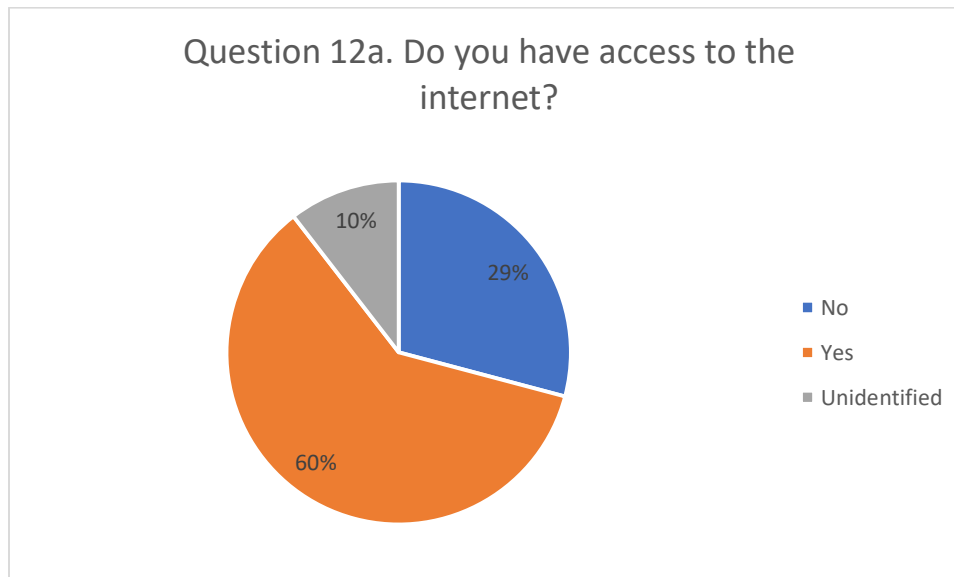
Question 11. b. If decreased, what caused you to change your riding habits since COVID? (Check all that apply)³



³ Answers are abridged for clarity. Original options include: "COVID Safety Concerns", "Other Drivers' Behavior", "Laid off/Fired/Forced Retirement", "Remote Classes", "Left a job/Retired", "Change in Health", "Relocated/Moved", "Remote Work", "Increase in Online Services", and "Construction along my trip". Additional categories from "Other" written responses are coded to existing categories and "PVRTA Service Adjustments", "New Carpool/Car Service", "Destination closed", and "Negative PVRTA Experiences".

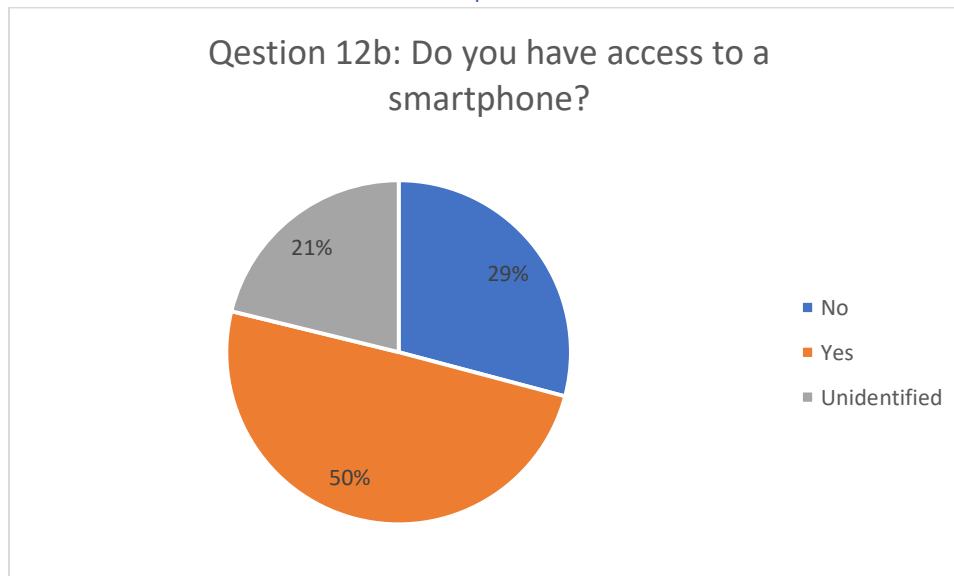
Electronic Technology Competency

Question 12. a. Access to the Internet



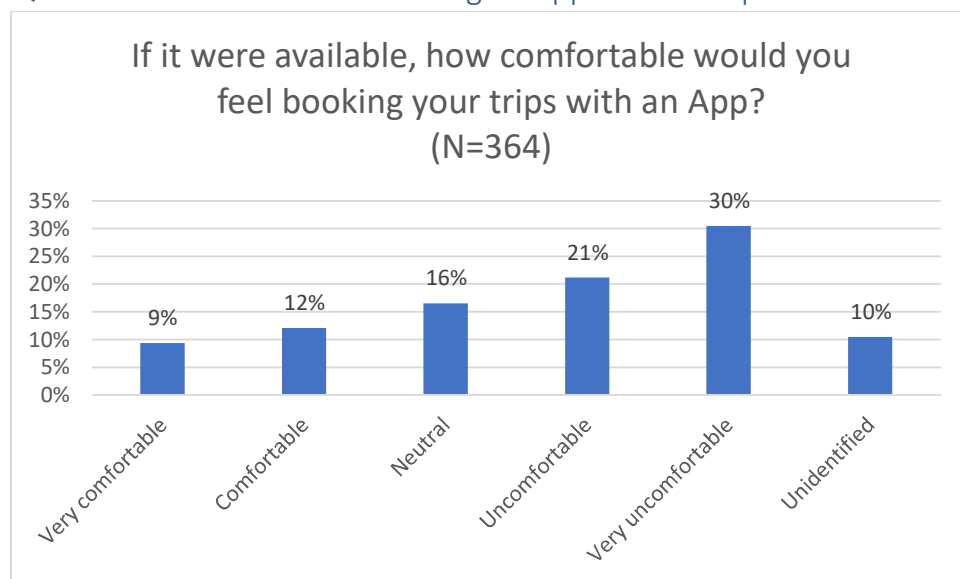
Two hundred twenty surveys (60%) of those who answered have access to the internet. This is a large increase from 2017 and 2011, where, respectively, 50.5% and 30% used the internet regularly.

Question 12. b. Access to a Smartphone

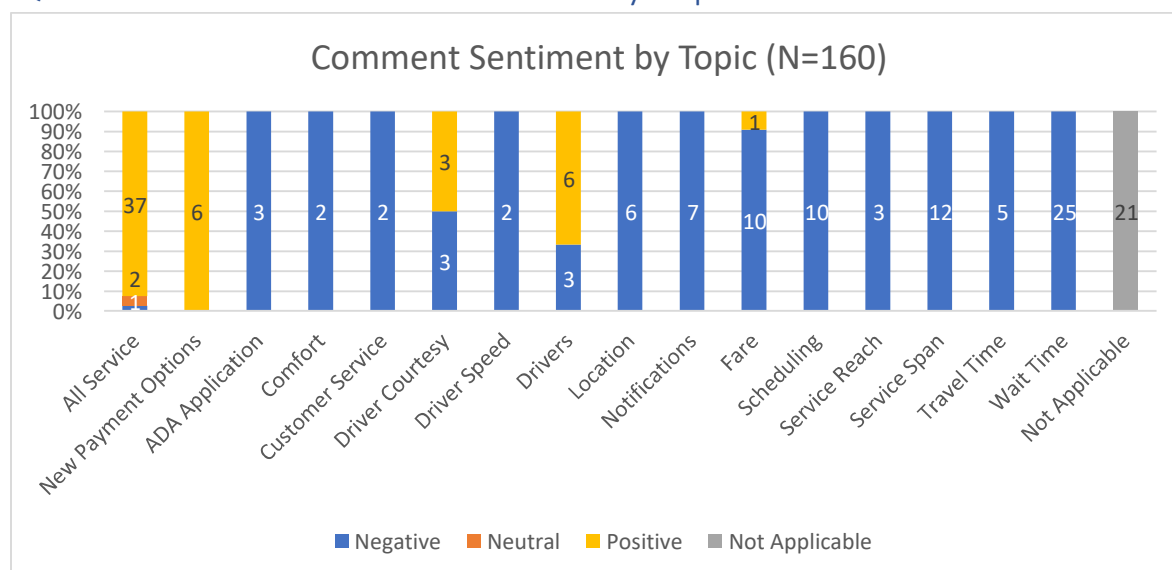


Smartphone access also expanded to 50%.

Question 12. c. Comfortable using an App to book trips

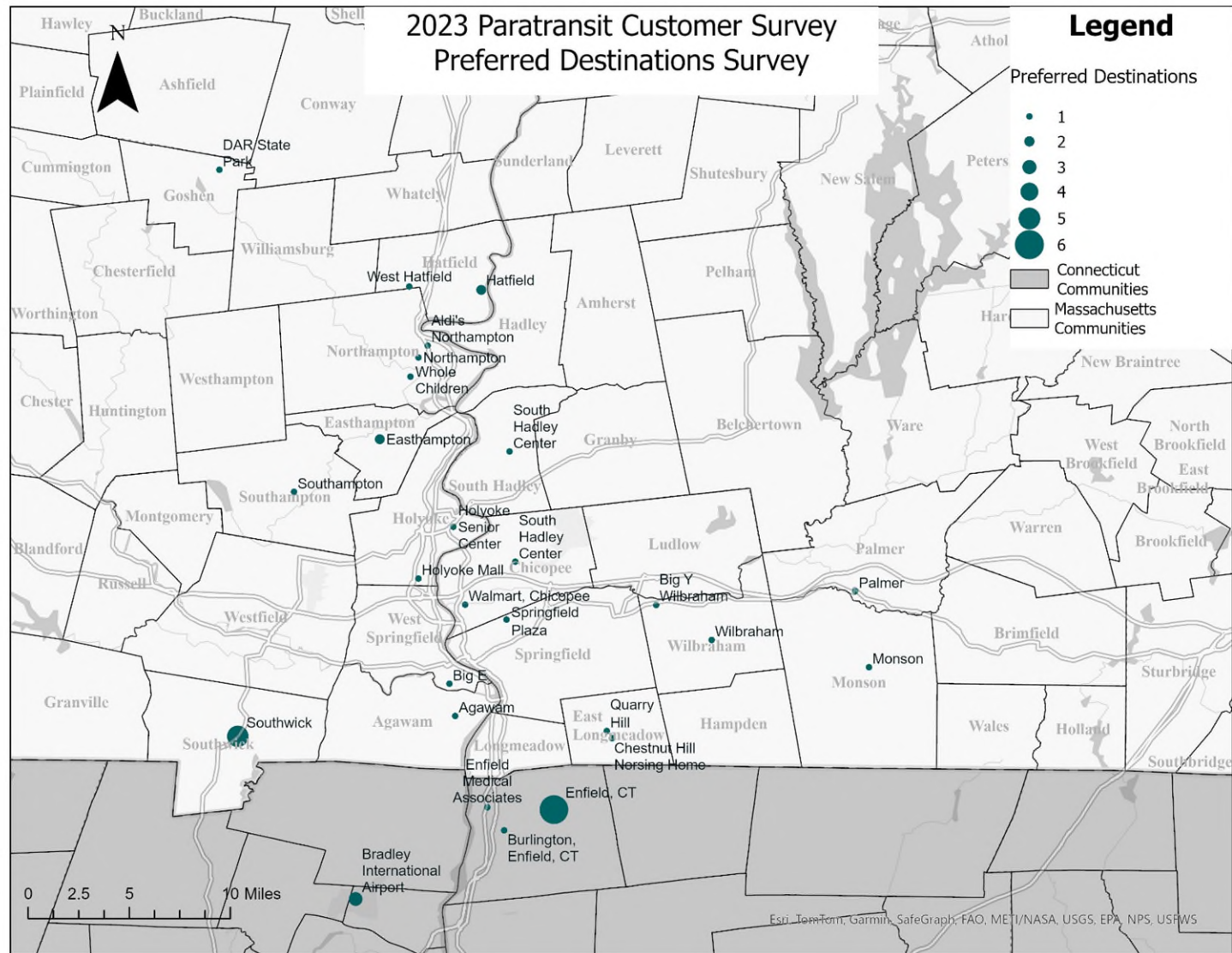


Question 15. Comment Sentiment by Topic



Fifty-five comments, making up 34% of all comments had positive sentiment. Thirty-seven comments (23%) were positive toward PVTA in general, a plurality of all comments. Twenty-five comments (16%) had negative experiences with wait times on their trip (either on the first leg or the return). 8% would prefer the vans to have later weekday service or additional weekend service. Six comments were positive toward an updated fare payment system (either credit card transactions or an App). Twenty-one comments were not relevant to the service.

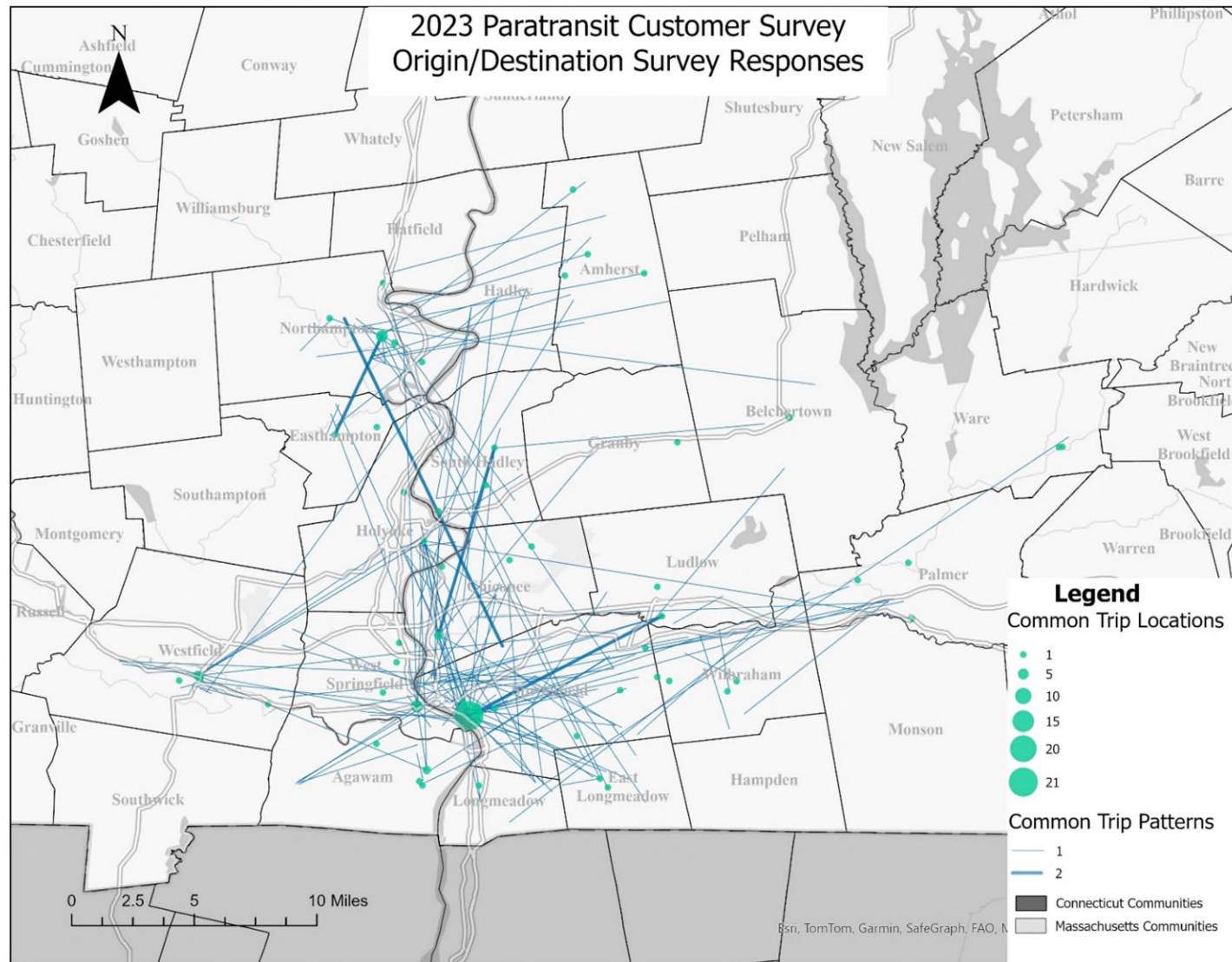
Question 14. Are there places you wish you could get by public transit?



Other areas beyond PVRTA's Services area surrounds:

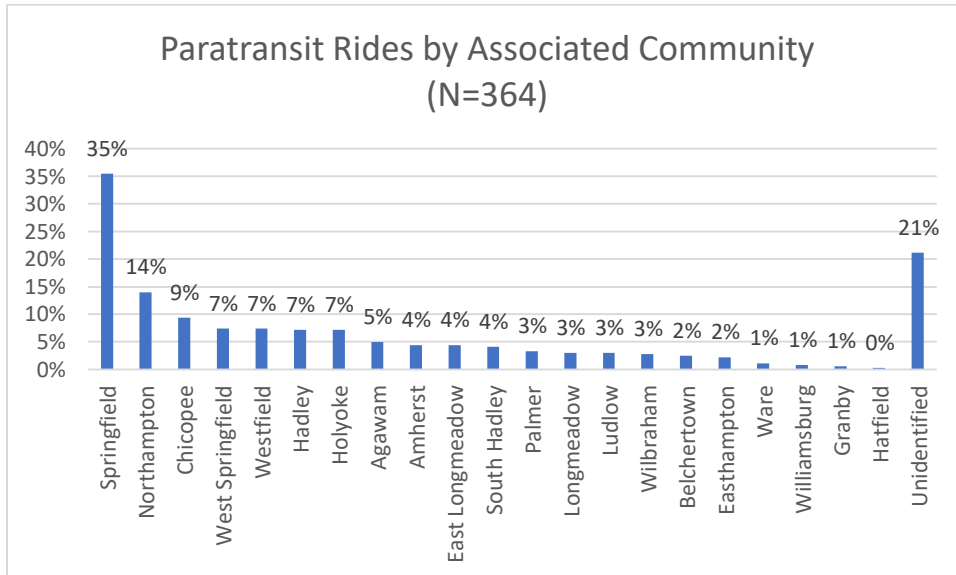
Destination	Surveyed Trips
Boston	4
Connecticut	4
Worcester	2
Greenfield	2

Question 3 and 8 Where did you start/end your journey on PVRTA vans?

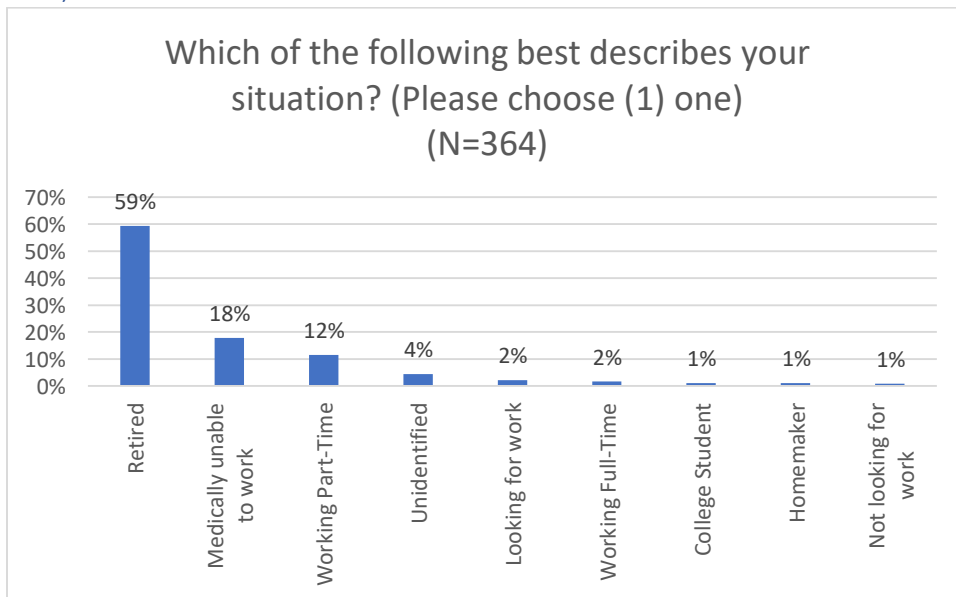


Demographics

Question 3 and 8. Where did you start/end your most recent journey on PVTa Vans?

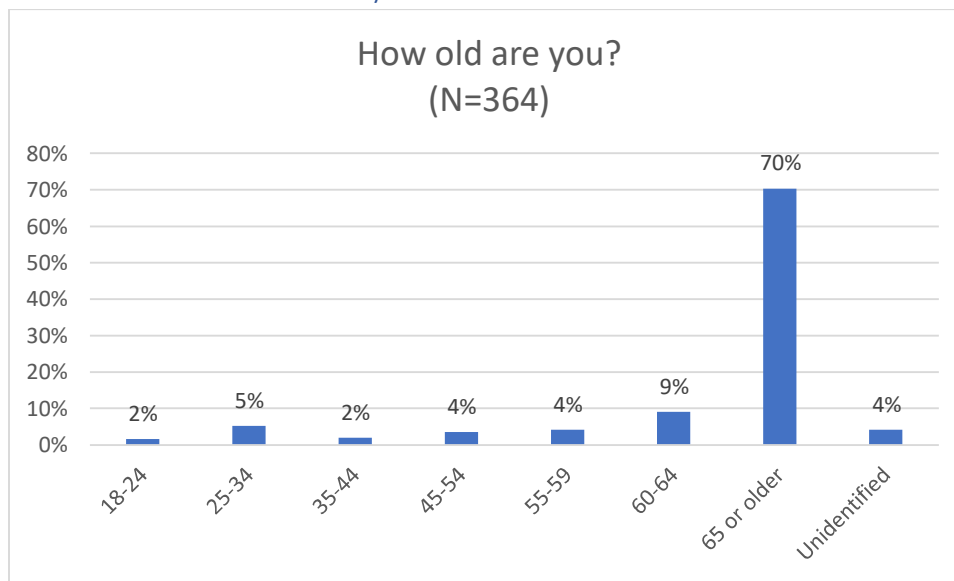


Question 16. Which of the following best describes your situation? (Please choose (1) one)



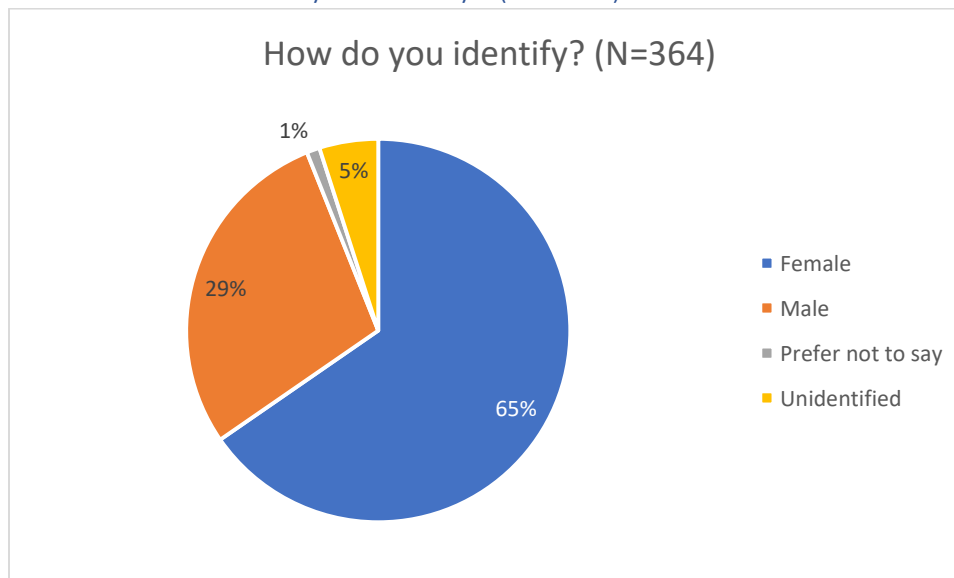
The paratransit and senior van ride population are generally retired or medically unable to work, represented by two hundred sixty-nine surveys (77%). Fifty-six (16%) are in the labor force (“Working Part-Time”, “Working Full-Time”, and “Looking for work”).

Question 17. How old are you?



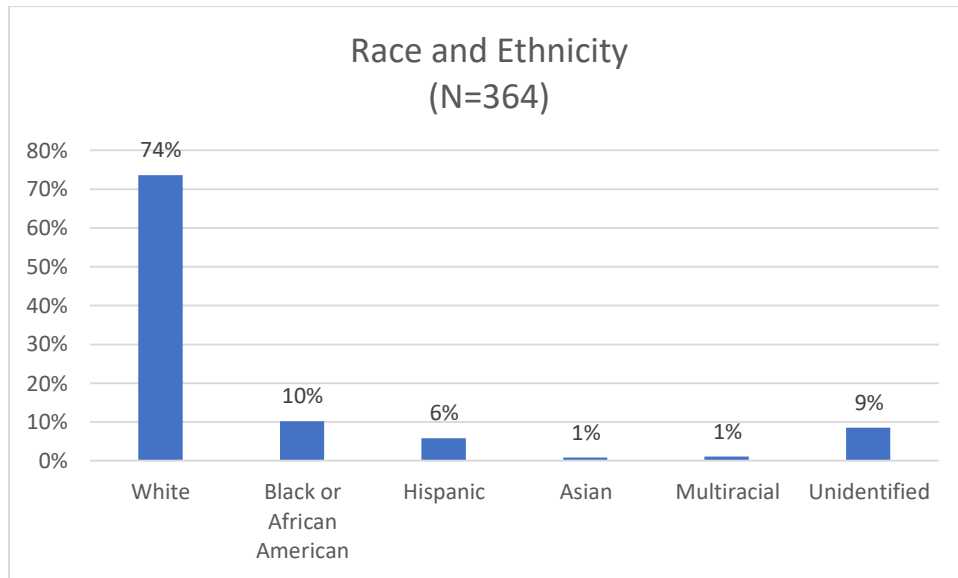
The median age of Paratransit and Senior Van Service riders is 65 or older.

Question 18. How do you identify? (Gender)

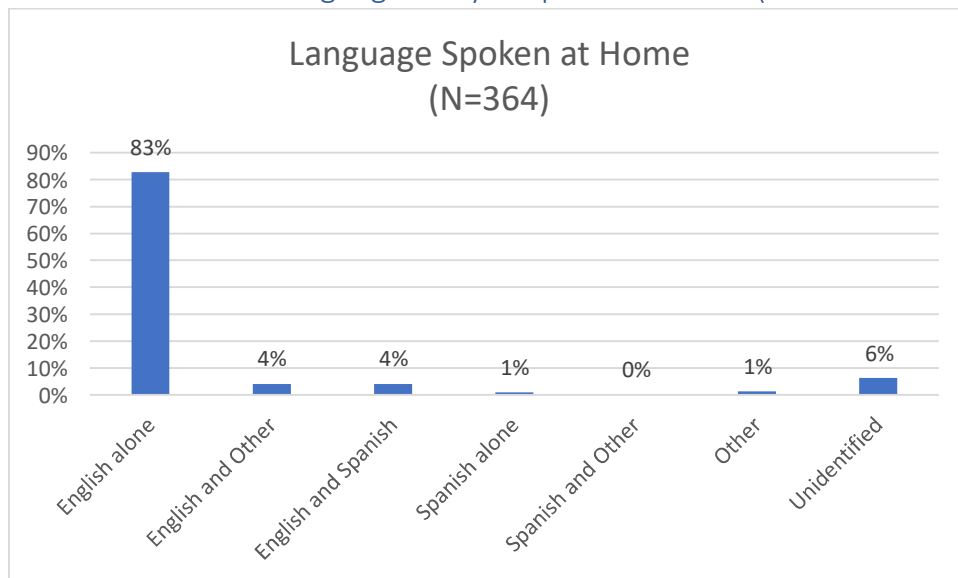


Two hundred thirty-eight (65%) of those surveyed are female, just 29% are male. This may show a shift in the gender identity of riders since 2017 (43% male, 57% female).

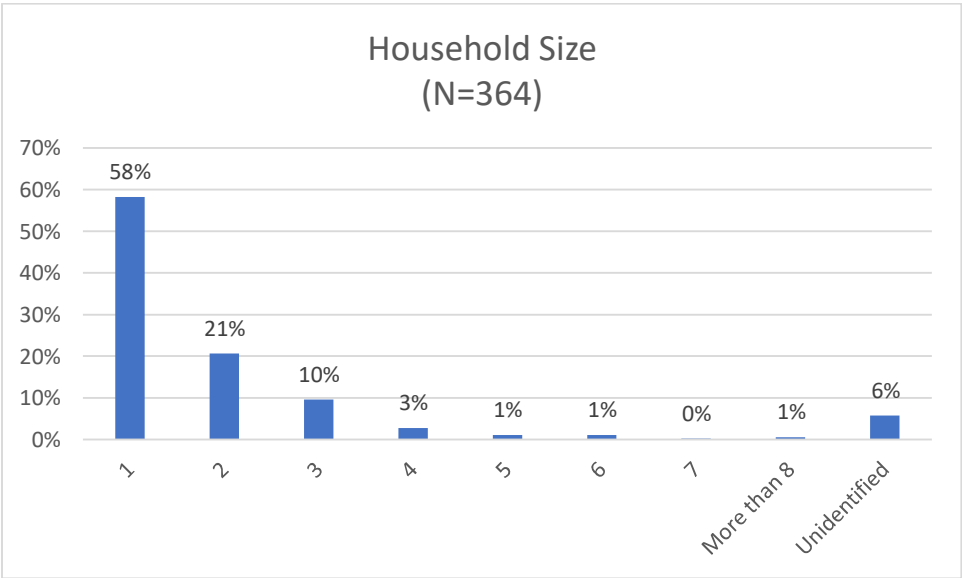
Question 19 and 20. Are you Hispanic or Latinx? What is your race? (Check all that apply)



Question 21. What languages do you speak at home? (Check all that apply)

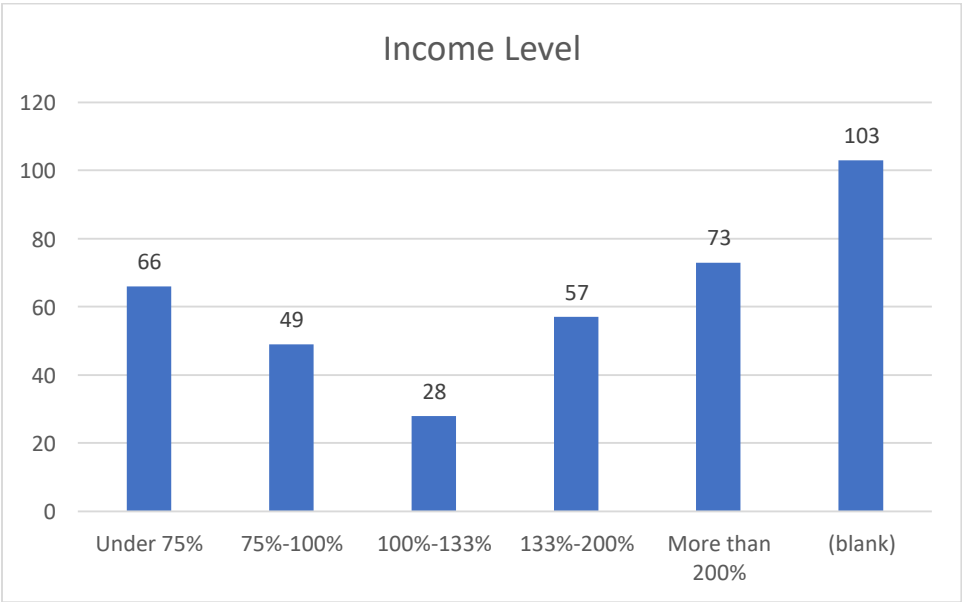


Question 22. How many people are in your family/household? (Please include your parent(s)/guardian(s) if supported in college)



Two hundred thirteen (59%) are single person households.

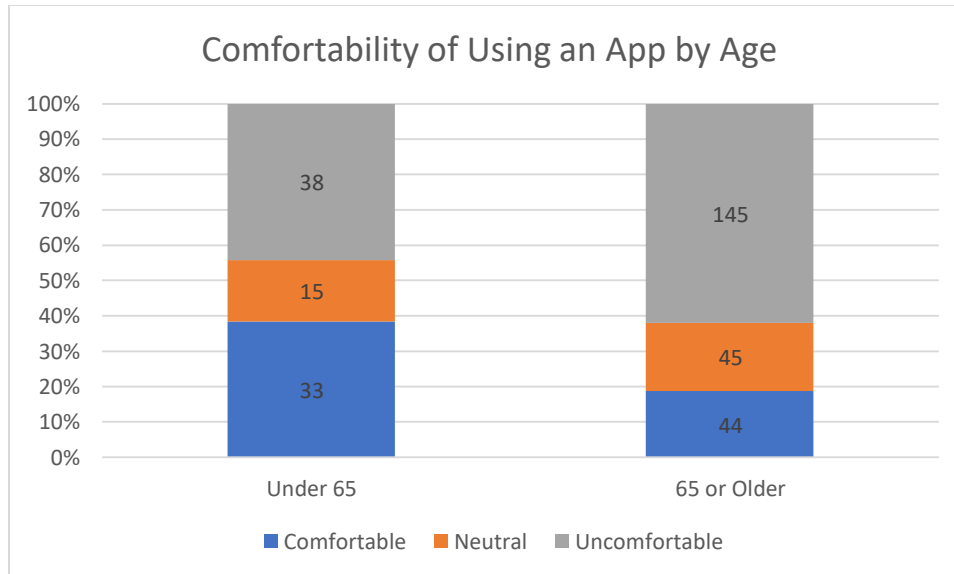
Question 23. What is the total income of all members within your household (including you)? (Please choose (1) one)



The median household income is between 100%-133% of the Federal Poverty Level.

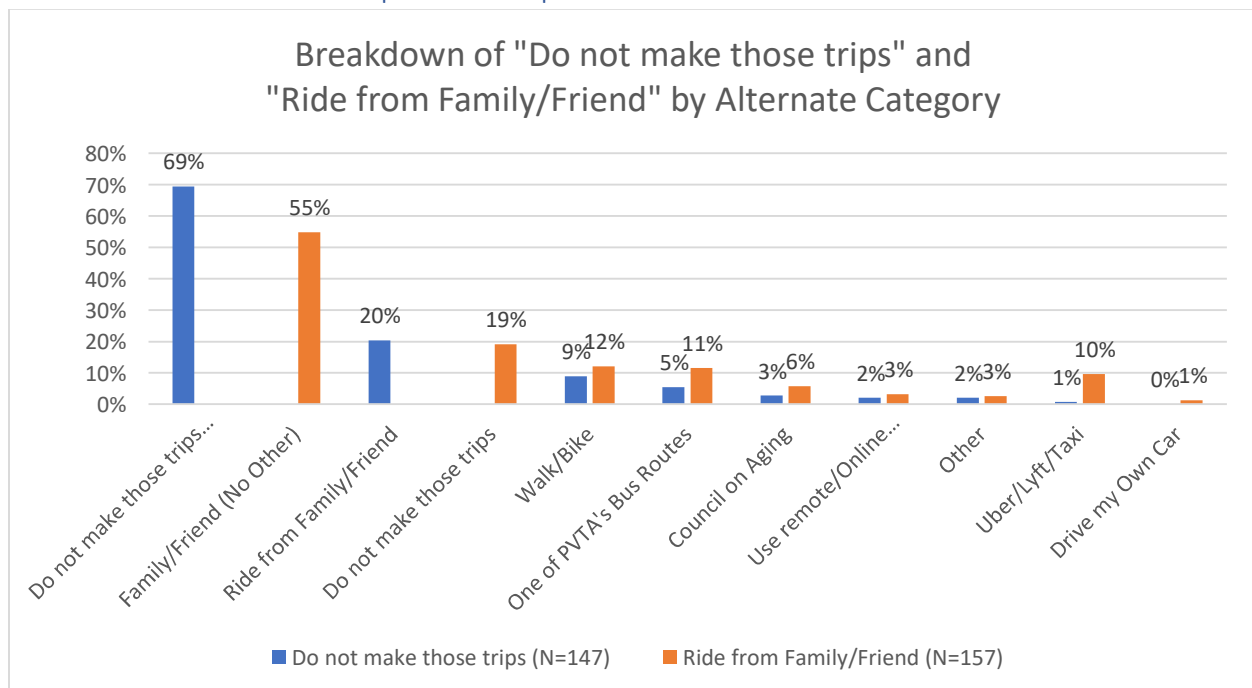
Analysis

Comfortability using an App by Age



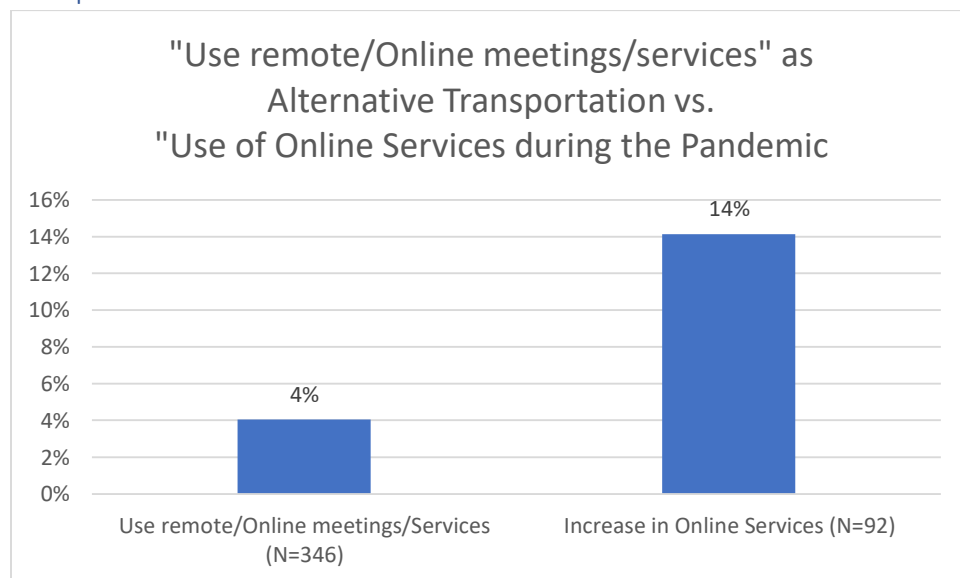
There is a statistically significant difference between older and younger riders and their comfortability using apps. Younger riders are more comfortable using App based programs.

Access to Alternative Transportation Options



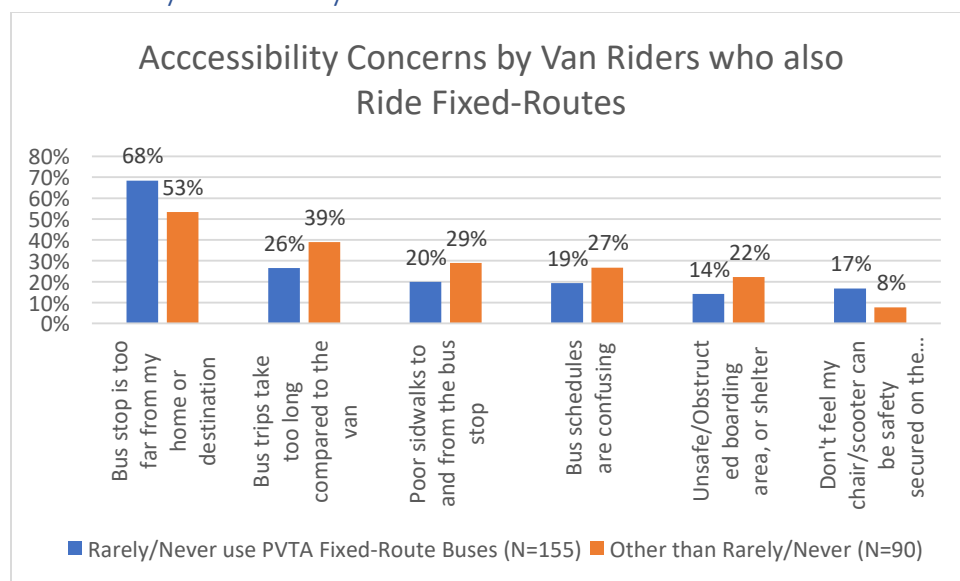
Sixty-nine percent (69%) of those who would consider not making a trip without PVRTA service do not feel they have another option. Fifty-five (55%) of those who rely on friends and family for rides outside of PVRTA services do not feel they have another option.

Competition with Online Services



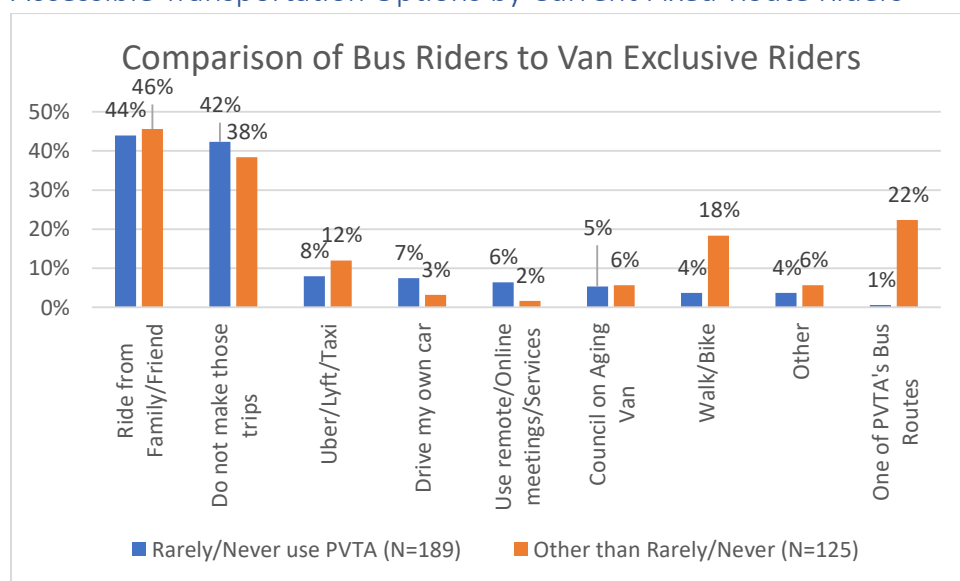
While 14% increased online services during the pandemic, just 4% currently consider remote/online meetings and services to be an alternative to their scheduled PVRTA van trips.

Accessibility Concern by Current Fixed-Route Riders



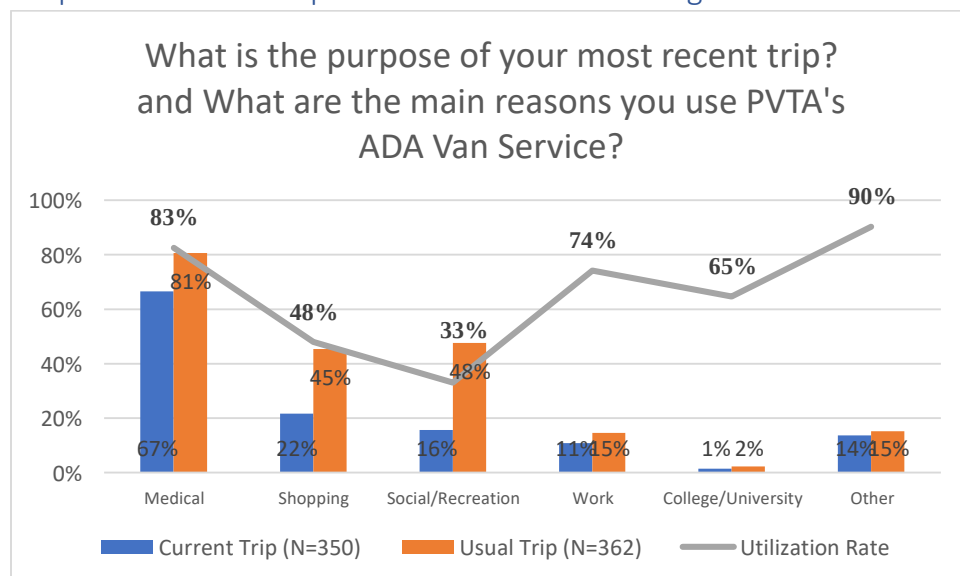
Statistics of significance: those who chose "Bus stop is too far from my home or destination" and "Don't feel my chair/scooter can be safely secured on the bus" are more likely to be non-fixed route riders while those who chose "Bus trips take too long compared to the van" are more likely to be fixed-route riders.

Accessible Transportation Options by Current Fixed-Route Riders



Of significance: remote/online meetings/services are more likely considered an option for those who do not ride fixed-routes. Walking/biking is more likely an option for those who ride fixed-routes. And as is predictable, those who ride the fixed-routes also find the fixed-routes to be an alternate option to van service. These results appear to suggest the van rider population that also rides fixed-routes are mobility able.

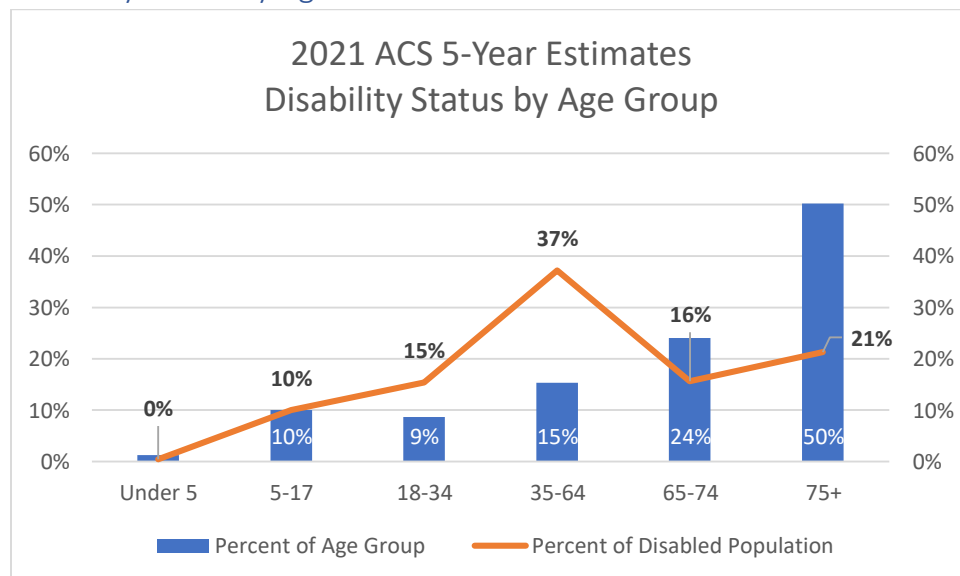
Purpose of current trip vs. Main reasons for riding⁴



⁴ "What are the main reasons you ride PVRTA's Van Service?" answers are abridged to match "what is the purpose of your most recent trip?" categories.

The utilization rate represents the difference between the most recent trip purposes and the main reasons for riding (current trip ÷ usual trip). Shopping and social/recreation appear to have the lowest utilization rates (48% and 33% respectively) but remain main reasons for riding. While the desire for shopping and social/recreation trips may resonate with riders, usage of PVRTA Vans for those purposes is less.

Disability Status by Age



While disability status could mean a range of possible conditions, some that impact mobility and others that do not, this provides a general sense of the age breakdowns. The American Communities Survey suggests 37% of those disabled are under 65 while 63% are 65 and older. 29% of van riders tend to be under 65 while 71% are 65 and older.

Recommendations and Future Study

Recommendations are based on customer feedback and trends within the data.

Recommendation	Supporting Information
Consider integrating mobile ticketing into the paratransit ride booking flow. Consider streamlined alternatives to mobile ticketing such as an automated booking phone system.	59% have access to the internet, 48% have access to a Smartphone and 21% already feel comfortable with the idea of booking trips through an App. All verbatim comments received about potential new payment options (credit card access or a mobile app) were positive toward adding those methods. Mobile app acceptance is only likely to grow as we saw with the fixed-route ridership adoption of BusPlus+. There is also support through the comments for a more streamlined booking system. 6% of all comments received relayed negative comments about the scheduling process. While many riders will take time and others may not have the ability to join

	mobile device ticketing, an integrated mobile app with an alternative system (i.e. an automated phone system) should be considered.
Consider a driver scheduling program that can adapt to real-time changes	Real-time scheduling could decrease wait times and decrease the time between customer booking and the trip itself (in-line with the FTA's September 14, 2023 Dear Colleague Letter). In total fifty-three comments (33%) were negative relating to location, trip notifications, travel times, and wait times. The customer satisfaction results show "5-Minute advance van arrival call", "On-time within the 20-Minute window", "Total travel time", and "Available trip times" all hover around 75% satisfaction. Twenty-five comments (16%) held negative sentiment toward wait times. All of these concerns can be alleviated in part by a real-time driver scheduling program.
Provide information about PVTa services alongside alternative services.	With 79% of riders taking healthcare and medical trips. Less than 1% of riders currently consider medical rides through insurance as a possibility yet 24% of those who provided their income level make below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, a threshold for some social services that include additional transportation assistance. In addition, just 6% would consider using Council on Aging vans yet 70% of those who replied to the survey were over the age of 65. Providing information could be through joint advertisements or sponsoring a regional transportation coordinator.
Consider ways to alleviate wait times using new technological advancements.	Twenty-five (16%) comments included negative sentiment toward wait times. Those included comments about the 20-minute wait window and the wait time between arriving at a destination and returning home.

Further Study

Further Study	Supporting Information
Consider studying the ability of riders to purchase and use tickets in the Paratransit System	Survey riders on the following aspects: • App-based purchases • App interactions • Online Maps • Automated phone systems
Study accessible transportation options throughout the area to better understand overlap and gaps and how PVTa can fill them.	Colleges and Universities may provide their own accessible transportation. This may impact the overall acceptance of PVTa Paratransit service. MassHealth (Medicaid) and other insurance

	carriers offer transportation to their members. Councils on Aging also offer senior transportation. Overlapping services may impact paratransit ridership demographically. Understanding the overall picture will help PVTA explain the mobility choices of those seeking accessible transit.
Study the changes in van usage by age and ability.	The survey results show that 70% of those surveyed are 65 or older. Knowing that ADA eligible riders represent a smaller percentage of the van riding population over four years, PVTA should consider reviewing potential causes for this change.

Appendix A: Paratransit Rider Paper Survey

2023 PVTA Paratransit Customer Survey

This survey is for all PVTA Van Services including complementary ADA Paratransit and Senior Dial-a-Ride

1. What are the main reasons that you use PVTA's Van Service? (Please rank your choices 1, 2 and 3 next to your choice)		
☐ Shopping	☐ Healthcare/medical appointment (not dialysis)	☐ School
☐ Job/Commute to work/Volunteer	☐ Dialysis	☐ Social/Recreation/restaurant meal out
☐ Visit Senior Center	☐ Church or religious activity	☐ Other: _____
☐ Adult day care		
2. What is the purpose of your most recent trip on PVTA Vans? (Check all that apply)		
☐ Work	☐ Medical	☐ School (Grades K-12) ☐ Other: _____
☐ Shopping	☐ Social/Recreation	☐ College/University
3. Where did you start your most recent journey on PVTA Vans? (Please answer both)		
Building/Cross Streets/Complex: _____ Town/City: _____		
4. On your most recent trip, from the start of your 20-minute window, How long did you wait for the van to arrive?		
☐ 5 minutes or Less	☐ 6-10 Minutes	☐ 11-15 Minutes ☐ 16-20 Minutes
☐ If more than 20 minutes, how many minutes? _____ Minutes		
5. How often do you take more than one round trip per day?		6. How often do you ride PVTA's Bus Routes?
☐ Rarely/Never		☐ Rarely/Never/Only ADA Vans
☐ Less than once a month		☐ Less than once a month
☐ Once or twice a month		☐ Once or twice a month
☐ Once or twice a week		☐ Once or twice a week
☐ 3 to 4 days a week		☐ 3 to 4 days a week
☐ 5 or more days a week		☐ 5 or more days a week
7. What prevents you from taking PVTA's scheduled Bus Routes more often—or at all? (Check all that apply)		
☐ Unsafe/Obstructed boarding area, or shelter		☐ Don't feel my chair/scooter can be safely secured on a bus
☐ Bus stop is too far from my home or destination		☐ Bus trips take too long compared to the van
☐ Poor sidewalks to and from the bus stop		☐ Bus schedules are confusing
8. Where did you end your most recent journey on PVTA Vans? (Please answer both)		
Building/Cross Streets/Complex: _____ Town/City: _____		
9. How often do you ride PVTA Vans?		
☐ 5 or more days a week	☐ Once or twice a week	☐ Less than once a month
☐ 3 to 4 days a week	☐ Once or twice a month	☐ Rarely/Never
10. How do you make your trips when the PVTA Van does not operate? (Check all that apply)		
☐ Use remote/online meetings/services	☐ Council on Aging Van	☐ PVTA Dial A Ride/ADA Vans
☐ Walk/Bike	☐ Walk	☐ Do not make those trips
☐ Drive my own car	☐ Uber/Lyft/Taxi	☐ Other (please specify): _____
☐ Ride from Family/Friend	☐ One of PVTA's Bus Routes	
11. a. Have you increased or decreased your van riding since the COVID Pandemic? ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No Change		
11. b. If decreased, what caused you to change your riding habits since COVID? (Check all that apply)		
☐ COVID Safety Concerns	☐ Left a Job/Retired	☐ Remote Work
☐ Other Riders' Behavior	☐ Change in Health	☐ Increase in Online Services
☐ Laid off/Fired/Forced Retirement	☐ Relocated/Moved	☐ PVTA Service Adjustments
☐ Attend classes online	☐ Other/Comments: _____	
12. a. Do you have access to the internet? ☐ Yes ☐ No b. Do you own or have access to a smartphone? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
12. b. If it were available, how comfortable would you feel booking your trips with an App?		
☐ Very uncomfortable	☐ Uncomfortable	☐ Neutral ☐ Comfortable ☐ Very comfortable

13. How satisfied are you with PVTA service?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
A. Driver enforcement of policies	()	()	()	()	()	()
B. Van driven safety	()	()	()	()	()	()
C. Cleanliness of the van	()	()	()	()	()	()
D. Driver courtesy	()	()	()	()	()	()
E. Reservation staff courtesy	()	()	()	()	()	()
F. Available trip times	()	()	()	()	()	()
G. Total travel time	()	()	()	()	()	()
H. Accuracy of information if I call in	()	()	()	()	()	()
I. On-time within the 20-Minute window	()	()	()	()	()	()
J. 5-Minute advance Van arrival call	()	()	()	()	()	()
K. Visually impaired customer service	()	()	()	()	()	()
L. Hearing impaired customer service	()	()	()	()	()	()
M. ADA application and interview	()	()	()	()	()	()
N. PVTA Van service quality and value	()	()	()	()	()	()
O. Cost of the fare	()	()	()	()	()	()

14. Are there places you wish you could get by public transit? _____

15. Do you have any additional comment you would like to make? _____

16. Which of the following best describes your situation? (Please choose (1) one)

- () College Student () Homemaker () Looking for Work () Other: _____
- () Working Part-Time () Medically Unable to Work () Not Looking for Work
- () Working Full-Time () Student (Grade K-12) () Retired

17. How old are you?

- () Under 17 () 35-44 () 60-64
- () 18-24 () 45-54 () 65 or older
- () 25-34 () 55-59

18. How do you identify?

- () Female () Prefer to self describe
- () Male () Prefer not to say
- () Non-Binary/Third Gender () Other: _____

19. Are you Hispanic or Latinx? () Yes () No

20. What is your race? (Check all that apply)

- () White
- () Black or African American
- () American Indian or Alaskan Native
- () Asian
- () Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- () Another race: _____

21. What languages do you speak at home? (Check all that apply)

- () English () French
- () Portuguese () Vietnamese
- () Mandarin () Russian
- () Cantonese () Spanish
- () Haitian () Another language: _____

22. How many people are in your family/household? (Please include your parent(s)/guardian(s) if supported in college)

- () 1 () 2 () 3 () 4 () 5 () 6 () 7 () 8 () More than 8: _____

23. What is the total income of all members within your household (including you)? (Please choose (1) one)

- () Under \$11,000 () \$25,500 - \$30,000 () \$45,000 - \$50,000 () \$90,000 - \$110,000
- () \$11,000 - \$14,500 () \$30,000 - \$35,000 () \$50,000 - \$60,000 () \$110,000 - \$130,000
- () \$14,500 - \$19,000 () \$35,000 - \$40,000 () \$60,000 - \$70,000 () \$130,000 - \$150,000
- () \$19,000 - \$25,500 () \$40,000 - \$45,000 () \$70,000 - \$90,000 () More than \$150,000

Appendix B: Verbatim Comments

I have been unable to afford PVTa handicapped van for over a year since your rates went up. \$10 average cost per trip is far too expensive for my fixed income level when there are 4 or more necessary trips per month.
i have bees satisfied with my level of service the PVTa
Van Service accuracy and friendliness on phone
when the pvta vans are running late customers should be notified.
I would really like to book my rides in an app or online.
I was recovering from a car accident & had no transportation to my appointment with my surgeon & I was also in a wheelchair. My son worked for PTVA years ago & he informed me about your van service. It was a lifesaver! I don't know how I would have gone to my appointment. I can't say enough about your service. So glad there is a service like yours.
Additional training to drivers and staffs at the dispatch office.
With eastfield Mall being shut down soon and me taking the bus every week from ware I feel it would be easy for the stop to move to the big y in wilberham. It my only mood of transportation right to to see my husband
The 5 minute advance call to let me know when van will arrive at my house is not always made regularly. Sometimes it's made but not all the time.. I missed the van because the advanced was not made.. The wait time should be increased at 10 minutes instead the current 5 minutes. I am a stroke survivor and it takes me longer to the van with my disability. Thank you
I would like the ADA van to go into CT
Van is frequently late making ma late for work
Hello. In April 2023 my usage of the para-transit bus service ended because I wasn't re-certified. I was, however, a very active rider since fall 2019. In that time I've wanted to call and voice complaints and concerns many times, but, alas, the few times I have called I was underwhelmed with the service I received when talking to anyone past the reservationists at the call center. That being said, I was always picked up, always dropped off, and there wasn't one accident, or incident, ever. Having been a driver, previous to my disability, I pay close attention to the drivers and critique them, in my head. I've never said anything. Anyway, I give you guys a B+! Not too shabby!
Person 1 for your service and the drivers are awesome
Some of the young ladies drive fast! Dont like how long you wait to go back home! Dont know why they ask how long youll be ! They come back when they can !
Transportation is not available to me on weekends or after 6:00 p.m. here in Wilbraham which is the primary reason I applied
More scheduled trips to pheasant hill village would help to alleviate feeling of isolation, especially on sunday, and, moving the bus stop across from stop & shop (side heading to springfield) on springfield st to before the crosswalk would be safer for crossing springfield st in feeding hills
I am gald to be able to access paratransit but was not happy with accessibility of eligibility application and other communication. Return rides are often scheduled well after (more than an hour) requested time. I totally appreciate the drivers and dispatchers
I like that Dial A ride expanded hours til 6 or so and expanded days to include Saturday --- very nice!! I would like another way to pay -- I used to be able to pay cash and do the round trip or all trips for that day at the start --- so either the ability to pay for all trips or round trip ... Or another method other than tickets --- some sort of "account" ... thanks
Name, Medical Condition and Address Redacted
Semi retired

My most recent driver did not follow written instructions about safety picking me up. She parked unsafely in the street, when instructions clearly state to pull into driveway.
Travel takes too long. No other use of PVRTA's Van Service but work. Rely only on PVRTA's Van Service to make trips. Would be unable to book trips with an App.
Keep up the GREAT WORK
Checked both Retired and Medically Unable to Work to best describe his situation.
I wish I'd look for ways I would go to rural places without a car, and very affordable, fares to ride.
Some drivers do not want to turn on the air conditioner in a very hot weather! There is no bus stop signal since 3 months!! Drivers don't want to stop in a safe place! In other states of the Union the fare is free. The term 'Native American' should be included in the race question. I have no income.
Would like minor holiday service in Longmeadow. Being disabled prevents taking PVRTA's scheduled Bus Routes.
App would be nice. Drivers sensitive to the pain when going over bumps in the road as my wheelchair is right over the axel. Too rigid during Covid. I don't always receive the 5-minute call.
Disappointed in long delay after van was hit in parking lot -- (no scratches!) but ended up driving me safely home happened around 2 oclock (?) home at 4:20! Longmeadow Sats are great for Church function! Thank you! Waited 60+ minutes in E Longmeadow for most recent trip. Checked both Once or twice a month and Once or twice a week for how often they take more than one round trip per day and wrote 'depends' next to it.
I have to wait 40-45 minutesto get back home, but my first pick up appointment okay.
I hate the highway! I usually just close my eyes. But overall I'm happy with the service.
Scheduling return times - sometimes (often) have pick up time a wait of 1-1.5 hours of what was requested, dispatch will make pick up sooner if there is availability (Very helpful).
Nursing home resident.
Want service also later in day.
Sometimes drivers drive too fast, put on brakes too hard.
Berkshires, but that's probably beyond your area
Stop charging elderings like me.
Very satisfied, no complaints. Especially happy to receive notice night before the van travel.
Very satisfied and like to talk to people who are on the phone.
I'm on oxygen less than 4 hours. Need pickup to destination and back in under 3.5 hours.
The Driver on Thursdays has been seen by neighbors speeding up the road after pick up. Also, don't get a call prior to pick up. Fridays driver is great - always punctual and courteous.
The courtesy of van driver and vans are very good.
pleasant.
I am very grateful to God and PVRTA vans because this type of service ensures my transportation to the different places I need to go.
Thank you very much for these services. I appreciate the hard work and courtesy.
Been taking ADA for over 20 years. No complaints, except for having to ride to other towns before going home to mine, sometimes scheduling is annoying when I need to get home.
1. The price of the trip not established. Sometime \$3 one way, sometime \$6 2. Some drivers do not know how to secure wheelchair. 3. Never received a phone call when van is late. Waited for 2 hours lost time. PVRTA Van service quality and value depends on driver.
The last time I took the PVRTA, I had to take the bus home. They told me they had no one to pick me up. Hopefully I never have to take them again.

I really appreciate the rides I am able to get.
I'm very satisfied with PVRTA service.
I am very grateful for the services offered by PVRTA for seniors.
I have only took one trip so far. Some of questions will know better in the future. So far so good.
Drivers tend not to slow down on potholes. I have knee issue in pain once I am of the van.
I hate driving in Springfield, especially to Baystate Hospital, so I use PVRTA. Wish I did not have to wait 1 week to request a ride. Can you do 3 days or is that not enough time?
I love your service (No #1).
PVRTA Van Service is excellent. Drivers are save, professional. I am thank for you. God Bless you and keep you!
On return trips please do not call my home phone number because I am not home I do have a cell phone.
Yes. I have no idea how but a few months ago the drivers kept telling me I'm on their paperwork as uses a wheelchair, but I don't. I've repeatedly told PVRTA but it still says I use a wheelchair.
I enjoy the van ride, because if the van was not here I will have a hard time get around. Thank you.
No thank you overall satisfied with the service. The pickup times are too late and I have to get a ride.
This service is the best anyone could get! Excellent staff.
Hard to predict return time when at an appointment. I wish trips were more direct, e.g. a trip from S. Hadley included a side trip out Bay Rd almost to Belchertown, adding 20 min to ride.
Area
Thank everyone for their services!
Reinstate B-17 to extend to Boston Road turn around at Post Office Park because bus drivers reluctant to issue transfer from big buses (Passes - free for seniors on Tues.) for Wilbraham shuttle from Eastfield Mall. Please bring back yellow B-17 bus fixed route. Van drivers won't accept Tues free pass for seniors. Hassle to ride, unfair. Wilbraham should be free on Tuesdays for seniors!
Drivers are very polite and helpful.
The driver was to notify me when they arrived to pick me up. They didn't. I waited an additional 3 hours. Called them for follow three.
Would be wonderful if could have quick stops at the post office and dry cleaners and brought back home.
great service
I don't understand how this survey on it's own gives you any idea what my experience is like. 1) For instance, it doesn't address the uncomfortable seats and vans that feel like they have no shock absorbers. For vehicles meant to transport disables people, I'm usually in more pain and feel worse after the ride. 2) You also don't address scheduling, which more than not seems controlled by lack of drivers than client request. I have various disabilities that prevent me from being out for an extended time in certain locations. I am forced to cancel my trip if they schedule 4 hours when I request 2. 3) There should also be a level of common sense used with drivers knowing the area and if there is unnecessary back and forth. This is extra uncomfortable for me and pressure on the driver. 4) Van service should not be controlled by geographic area. Being disabled, I should be afforded transportation at night and Sundays, but not because I live in Easthampton. I should also be afforded the same discount as Northampton when traveling locally. Thank you for this opportunity to state my concerns.
Plan to use rides to the Senior Center when health allows.
On 5 minute advance call you have to press #1 for English to hear message. Doesn't make sense. I just don't answer anymore. The drivers are better than the school bus drivers I worked with.

Bus drivers are great. PVRTA Van phone for appointment to use the van very good. Don't cut service. Keep payment method.
Scheduling mistakes addresses and times. The route from pickup to destination was 5 minutes within Northampton. The van went to Sunderland before dropping me off, over 1 hr.
Please improve reservation.
I am very satisfied with the PVRTA Van Service -- and find the dispatch and van drive very helpful. Thank you for your wonderful service.
Wish I had van service on Sundays to go to church. Bring back the policy to pay round trip. I don't always have the exact fare. Maybe start accepting debit and credit cards for fare payments.
Yes. When time of pickup earlier than required and taking of last pickup longer than required.
I am very grateful for the senior van!!
Thank you for your service and May God Bless you. Every company have some issues. However, a positive attitude helps many situations. Kindness goes a long way!
Excellent aid to elderly attending MX visits.
I would love to go to my church in Long. on Longmeadow St but there is no bus route. Please shorten the time of waiting after my appt is done. I shall not need to be out for four or more hours for a 30 min appt.
With door to door service drivers need to be better educated. They more times than not don't get out of the van to help me on and off at time my mobility has been off and I have almost fallen. They should not ask if you need help, they should just do it and not be asking.
When I call to schedule rides for the week, sometimes I am told they are only booking for only 1 day, could not do the whole week.
There is no accountability when time on van is excessive. Driver left me once saying I failed to be on time... I was within 10 minutes. Still, it is a valuable resource and flaws are inevitable. For how long they waited for the van to arrive on their most recent trip, wrote 'did not arrive home until 1 1/4 hrs.
Yes I wish the van would pick my brother up on time and not make him wait over an hour at times waiting at work or at home. He does not understand time well!
I don't see the necessity of taking a passenger from a location 35 miles in the opposite direction of their drop off location just because there is a way to reach drop off location 1.5 hr or more on van is too long.
The van drivers are great. There were times I scheduled a ride and got wrong pickup time or my times got canceled without me canceling them. I need to be on time at my appointments, many times I get to them late.
I can only use the PVRTA ride Monday to Friday. I am 75 years old and sight impaired and balance is impaired. Also I have CHF.
More accurate GPS because current system is not accurate - can't locate addresses, misguided directions.
Ride time not accurate to the time you want, sometimes
Only one man was a real jerk to me -- otherwise everyone else was professional.
Van drivers listening to radio in van. Sometimes too loud. Hispanic music is inappropriate for customers - non Spanish.
I having van service for over 30 years until retirement but I was always satisfied with service. These later years some changes but nothing to report. Only on one occasion but it's life.
No Comment Excellent Service
I use the van service mainly when I get a medication redacted. The doctor's office won't let me drive myself home afterwards. The van works well.

Most of the drivers are very kind, keeping with seat belts, helping me on and off the van, and turning up the A.C. due to medical condition redacted.
Drivers are sometimes not very helpful. Also some drive too fast and go through stop signs.
excellent service
Yes on Regular Bus service a woman Person 1 is a hostile aggressive lady and scary - the way she threatens rider - She a Union Leader.
No serviced to Palmer and Ware.
The window of wait time should be lessened by 10 minutes.
The service invaluable to me. Don't know what I'd do without it! I rely on it. Thank you.
My fair is usually \$5. Payments are crazy. You only sell denominations of \$3? \$1?
Van should ride on weekends.
I wish the seats weren't pitched so far back. Plus the ride is so bumpy and uncomfortable.
I called in with a concern and got no response when I left a message.
I would like to have more option to go out of town to funerals.
I find that the 20-minute window sometimes gets me to work too early, and the doors were still locked. But I appreciate the door-to-door-assistance.
Stop overbooking appointments at the last minute with driver. I have had this done to be 4 times and has made me late to my doctors appointments, not fair to me! Please stop!
I wish it was available on holidays.
Thank you for this service.
Am unhappy about service - drivers do not read where to pick me up. They sat that I am a no show, Then I call in and transportation doesn't have anyone to pick me up for at least another hour - they don't attention to the information. PICK UP SERVICE IS VERY BAD.
Has heart issues and are legally blind so the van is appropriate and timely when family is not available. Form completed with help of wife because he is blind.
Can't take bus, use cane, very hard to get in and out.
Would like if sometimes the ADA van would stay 11:00 pm
All the drivers I get are GREAT. Please give them a raise and keep them!
Sometimes I do have to wait a long time for my return trip, and there are times when I'm on the van for quite a while, but I really appreciate being able to take the van, it's a God sent.
Since they closed the Eastfield Mall why can't the B7 go to Stop and Shop on Boston Road.
I would like to suggest that you have a menu option for dispatch so that Person 1 can be bypassed as he is going to forward the call there anyway. Also give Person 2, Person 3, Person 4, Person 5, and Person 6 a raise and give hateful Person 7 her walking papers! Hey! You asked!
For how long they waited for the van to arrive on their most recent trip,
We are most grateful and appreciative of this service. All van drivers are respectful and courteous. It is very pleasant riding with your company. Thank you for all that you do for your customers! Stroke patient. Every 5 months - medical appointment. Excellent service. Courteous drivers, feel safe. I am a patient with right side paralysis. Wheelchair bound stroke patient, 80 years old.
Would like to keep Person 1 on the Nashawannuck route. He's a great driver and personable.
Can't walk. Disabled.
I live in a senior community that used to have regular bus service but no longer has it.
I like the drivers. Cannot include other members of household. I live in shared living home.
It is a wonderful service and has made a huge difference with having the ability to go to Dr appts safely and economically. Terrific Service. Drivers very helpful and nice.

Saturday and Sunday more available please.
I consider myself fortunate that you are there! Thank you. I apologize, I can't use the computer. however, I can't think of any way you could improve. Thank goodness for being there when I need a ride from Williamsburg to Springfield. It's a lifesaver. My "eye" and I cannot thank you enough.
When I get the call to let me know the pickup time, sometimes its spoken too fast. I tried to dial back for repeat, but too late to do so. My biggest problem, most of you drivers do not know direction to get to my place of address. Your older staff do know but your newest drivers don't. My last appointment I waited for over an hour. Two of your vans went right by my place. So far, I haven't smelled any "Pot" and/or "cigarette" aroma and/or off people clothes. Knock on wood! I hate the smell of "Pot" and "cigarette" on the PVRTA Bus Routes, most of the time. I really wish the vans can go further out like West Hatfield. I don't mind paying extra fares.
If you're pleasant to the drivers - they will return the respect.
Drivers are very courteous.
This split in ride between E. Longmeadow and Holyoke. My Doctor is in Fairview Memorial Dr. The switching bus at Big Y can be over an hour wait to my Dr and it stops running by 3:30.
Walking is difficult. I depend on PVRTA Van Service to make my doctor appointments which are never over and for shopping as I do not drive.
Am treated as a valued customer. No complaints.
It would be very helpful to call and speak to a person. It would be very helpful if they would pick me up at my door.
I used the van service 4 days a week prior to COVID-19. I have not used the PVRTA Bus Routes. I have not used the van service on a regular schedule/basis but would like to resume my prior use frequency.
98% of the drivers are excellent! In 11 years, I have one young female that was not and 2 older males that were not. Legally blind.
Because of a liver transplant I am not able to take the bus.
I was very satisfied with the service. Plus, I hit the jackpot! For the first time I did not have to pay for service! Suspended during holiday season!!! Will be 91 in Aug. 2023.
Please give my highest praise and a great thank you to all my drivers!! They are the best!
Van pickup very good. But very long wait times for pickup to return home. Often an hour or more. Biggest area of improvement needed for the van service.
Having the exact change is a problem. Will like to use a credit card. It will be nice to use an app.
I've used van for 10 years, only one problem! The return time is never what I requested. Use a walker have to be picked up at home.
Senior person with a wheelchair.
Pickup none is fine. Trip back is way too long. 3 hours plus to get home!
I would like a pass ticket that would be covered by my insurance CCA.
Yes, I have a problem with van locating my address. I was late for an appointment because of it.
Would like to have drivers call when they are on the way. Some don't and I wish the new drivers would also I use a cane some vans don't pull up so I can get in.
Less waiting time for pickup on way home.
Evenings and Sundays would be nice.
Very satisfied with service. Mall once a year or not at all. Van comes on time.
As trips cost \$5 now, a \$5 ticket should be printed. ADA application is difficult - information for those living "outside the system" requires multiple conversations and documentation.
Very satisfied with service - Fortunate to have PVRTA service available.
No I have no problem with PVRTA.

Too long to come to take you home.
It would be lovely to have evening availability.
Medical condition redacted
Reservation staff - there's one man who is VERY HELPFUL and PATIENT and KNOWLEDGABLE. Older man. The younger women, on the phone speak too fast and act like answering the phone is interrupting their lives! Terrible attitude and service.
Being required to use only the "Tri town trolley" makes using the van difficult to impossible as far as where and when I can go places. This includes the grocery store.
Redacted...The process of application and the letters the ADA van transportation are very rude - the process are unfair to peoples with disabilities - Doctors sent their paperwork and ADA transportation director says didn't get it. Very disorganized. Messy.
Extended time schedule. Often medical appointments end late afternoons. Winter return in darkness, dangerous.
Return trips usually are not good - wait, wait! Want to use PVRTA Van for Church on Sunday, I try to make appt and no.
My trip into Palmer was VERY enjoyable, the female driver and I talked the whole way. However, my trip back to Chicopee was HORRIBLE. Male driver had radio very very LOUD, couldn't hear myself think. Horrible ride.
The cost should be lowered. We should be told of any major changes.
The PVRTA driver should have change or tickets for sale on the van.
Not able to take the bus.
Wish could bring folding (so little unfolded) bike on van, as the walking is harder and longer. I still am confused fasled way get to Downtown Florence. Last trip to Hadley Salv Army, didn't see a stop walked 2 miles prob past West St, with a heavy cart in SVN on dirt construction. I need one item from whole foods now only sold there and cheap! But to walk even from Walmart and then if like one before, had to go across St to Home Depot or Aldi, its too hard to get back to Walmart bus. I used to go to Trader Joes, but the parking lot walk from bus stop then bank with groceries can be a lot, if hot or cold. It's exhausting because it's a longish walk fast on bike to the shop in Northampton, which is the beginning! I also don't do well sealed up in bus when driver or passengers have extreme laundry fragrance on clothing. Bus stop lists make clearer esp confusing is why told can't get on bus Amherst common across st, but told go across st to common side and pick up on way back. No other bus says you can't get on "early" or at any stop. and if you go around block, so what, you have a seat and heat or air cond. I must have, after a long walk down rt 9, waited an hour in sun at CVS (Big Y) Amherst stop. No shade no shelter. I sat under post very close to road and night turn into CVS, unsafe because it was so hot, dangerous. The Rt 9, headed to Northampton stops are not clean and I'd like to see a list of the stops or find best strategy for fast stop Hadley shopping area and back or to Amherst (North) as far as connection times because every time, I wait in total min 2 hours and walk a lot. Thanks for excellent service. Thank you awesome people and for the stamp! For how long they waited for the van to arrive on their most recent trip, wrote 'usually pickup early and return is longer'. For how often they ride PVRTA's Bus Routes, wrote 'But to North Amherst in summer is a long trip mostly waiting or walking'. For what prevents them from taking PVRTA's scheduled Bus Routes more often--or at all, wrote 'For groceries, yes, I can take tiny bike but then not groceries.' For how often they ride PVRTA Vans, wrote '3xmonth'. Wrote 'Have car keys stolen fines and car vandalized. Stalked. Phone is hacked. I've had 3 threats. they intrude. I have senior center call for me.'
Yes some drivers ones that have not pick me up. Lots of times go to wrong address the number.
I only need for work or medical appointments.