

Technical Memorandum #1

Review of Existing Services

INTRODUCTION

This initial technical memorandum prepared for the Garrett County Transit Development Plan (TDP) provides an assessment of existing transportation services in the county, with a primary focus on Garrett Transit Service (GTS). Along with the needs assessment and demographic analysis, this information will serve as the basis for development of possible service and organizational alternatives.

This technical memorandum should be treated as a draft document, and revisions will be incorporated into a version that will be included in the draft final plan.

BACKGROUND

A TDP is a planning process that should be undertaken on a periodic basis by every transit system. The TDP process builds upon and formulates Garrett County's goals and objectives for transit, reviews and assesses current transit services, identifies unmet transit needs, and develops an appropriate course of action to address the objectives in the short-range future, typically a five-year horizon. The completed TDP for Garrett County will serve as a guide for implementing service and/or organizational changes, improvements, and/or potential expansion during the next five-year period.

GTS is the public transit provider in Garrett County, and is one of the departments of the Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc. (GCCAC). GCCAC is a private non-profit agency whose mission is to improve the quality of life for people in need by empowering them to become more self-sufficient and by providing essential services in collaboration and cooperation with partners. The organization is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors selected by community and local interests.

GTS is responsible for applying for and administering all grant funds, including completing the Annual Transportation Plan (ATP) application and submitting it to the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). GTS also completes necessary reports for the public transportation program.

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An advisory committee was formed to provide input throughout the planning process, and a TDP kick-off meeting was conducted in February 2019. Participants discussed the TDP process, confirmed community outreach efforts, and provided comments on current issues, unmet needs, and possible objectives for the TDP planning process. While input from the TDP Advisory Committee will be incorporated appropriately throughout the TDP process, this discussion included the following current issues and unmet needs:

- The general population may not know about GTS service. Many people are under the impression that GTS provides specialized transportation for older adults, people with disabilities, and people with lower incomes, and is not open to the public.
- There may be a need for transportation options for younger people in Garrett County, as teenagers are waiting longer to obtain a driver's license. In addition, driver's education is no longer offered in county schools, and is now privatized. This may be in a financial burden for low-income families, and delaying young people obtaining their license.
- Some employers have expressed concerns with retaining employees which they believe are transportation related.
- A concern regarding transportation for people in addiction treatment programs was raised, however GTS was providing trips for these trips but demand decreased over time.
- The TDP process should provide the opportunity to assess trip patterns by purpose, review trip delays or times when trips are rescheduled, and evaluate any underutilized capacity of GTS services.
- GTS has considered upgrades to the scheduling system to allow notifications and online scheduling. It was noted that the system should consider utilizing a smartphone app.

GTS SERVICES

GTS is a shared-ride, door-to-door service, available to all Garrett County residents. Transportation services are demand-response through which customers call GTS in advance to schedule their rides. GTS operates Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Customers are instructed to call by 2:00 p.m. the day before for local trips, and at least three days in advance for trips outside the local area. GTS accepts reservations up to 30 days in advance, and customers may request standing reservations for recurring trips.

Beyond public transit services GTS also provides non-Emergency Medical Assistance Transportation through a contract with through the Garrett County Health Department. This transportation is designed for Medicaid recipients who have no other means of getting to their medical appointments. GTS also operates Head Start transportation and delivers Meals on Wheels.

FUNDING SOURCES

The MTA's Office of Local Transit Support administers federal and state funding for the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) in Maryland, including GTS. Through the MTA Garrett County currently receives funding through the following programs:

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 – This federal program provides funds to support public transportation services in rural areas.
- Statewide Special Transportation Assistance Program (SSTAP) – This state program provides funding for transportation services for the elderly and/or persons with disabilities.

In their FY 2019 ATP application to the MTA, Garrett County requested the following:

- \$767,967 in federal Section 5311 operating funds
- \$255,989 in state funds to support Section 5311 services
- \$722,898 in SSTAP operating funds
- \$335,955 in federal capital funds for vehicle replacement and equipment
- \$41,994 in state funds for vehicle replacement and equipment

Garrett County provides significant funding for public transportation services. The FY 2019 ATP application indicates that Garrett County will provide \$545,094 in operating and capital assistance.

In addition to federal, state, and local sources, GTS services are supported through fares collected from customers. In FY 2017 GTS collected \$204,510 from fares, a farebox recovery of 12.8% of total operating expenses.

RIDERSHIP DATA

An overview of system ridership for the last five fiscal years, broken out between Section 5311 and SSTAP program funding, is provided in Table I-1. As indicated in the ridership data GTS provided 103,076 passenger trips in FY 2018, a twelve percent increase over the previous year. However, FY 2018 ridership was still less than in FY 2016 and FY 2014.

Table 1-1: GTS Ridership Data

	Section 5311	SSTAP	Total	Change from Previous FY
FY2014	69,097	40,484	109,581	-
FY2015	59,958	41,690	101,648	-7.80%
FY2016	68,142	43,091	111,233	9.43%
FY2017	51,784	40,211	91,995	-17.30%
FY2018	57,808	45,268	103,076	12.05%

Source: Form 2a Service Performance Summaries

OPERATING AND PERFORMANCE DATA

The MTA has established performance standards for the LOTS in Maryland as a tool for monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of their services. The performance standards for rural transit services like those provided in Garrett County are provided in Table 1-1, and include:

- Operating Cost Per Hour – Total cost of operations with respect to total service hours; calculated as the time when the driver pulls out for service until the driver returns from service.
- Operating Cost Per Mile – Total cost of operations with respect to total service miles; calculated as miles from driver pull-out to driver pull-in, and includes deadhead mileage.
- Operating Cost Per Passenger Trip – Total cost of operations with respect to total ridership, calculated as each passenger boarding counted as one passenger trip.
- Farebox Recovery – Total farebox receipts with respect to total operating cost.
- Passenger Trips Per Mile – Total passenger trips with respect to total service miles.
- Passenger Trips Per Hour – Total passenger trips with respect to total service hours. The most useful single measure in that it reflects usage in relation to the amount of service provided. The majority of transit operating costs are hourly (wages and benefits), so higher values of trips per hour reflect better use of resources.

Table 1-1: MTA Performance Standards

Rural Transit Service	Revised LOTS Performance Standards		
	Successful	Acceptable	Needs Review
Operating Cost per Hour	< \$40.68	\$40.68 - \$61.02	> \$61.02
Operating Cost per Mile	< \$2.03	\$2.03 - \$4.07	> \$4.07
Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	< \$7.12	\$7.12 - \$18.31	> \$18.31
Local Operating Revenue Ratio	> 50%	40% - 50%	< 40%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	> 15%	7% - 15%	< 7%
Passenger Trips per Mile	> 0.30	0.15 - 0.30	< 0.15
Passenger Trips per Hour	> 5.0	2.5 - 5.0	< 2.5

Operating and performance data for FY 2018 for GTS is provided in Table 1-2. A review of these performance measures compared to MTA standards indicates that GTS is meeting all MTA performance measures except for operating cost per hour.

Table 1-2: FY 2018 Operating and Performance Data

FY 2018	Section 5311	SSTAP	Total
Total Passenger Trips	57,808	45,268	103,076
Total Service Miles	405,609	246,266	651,875
Total Service Hours	14,256	8,515	22,771
Total Operating Costs	\$1,176,882	\$419,078	\$1,595,960
Total Farebox Receipts	\$128,740	\$75,770	\$204,510
Other Local Revenue	\$545,928	\$151,188	\$697,116
Cost/Hour	\$82.55	\$49.22	\$70.09
Cost/Mile	\$2.90	\$1.70	\$2.45
Cost/Trip	\$20.36	\$9.26	\$15.48
Local Operating Revenue Ratio	57.33%	54.16%	56.49%
Farebox Recovery	10.94%	18.08%	12.81%
Passenger Trips/Mile	0.14	0.18	0.16
Passenger Trips/Hour	4.05	5.32	4.53

Source: Form 2a FY2018 Service Performance Summary

GTS FARE STRUCTURE

The current GTS fare structure is as follows:

- General Public (per 16 miles)
 - Oakland Area.....\$2.00
 - Customers are referred to the office for outer area fare schedule
- Disabled/Senior Citizens (age 60+)
 - Oakland Area.....\$1.50
 - Similar to the general public fare, customers are referred to the office for outer area fare schedule.
- Customers can also purchase tickets at the office or through any driver, available in \$10.00 or \$20.00 denominations.

EXISTING FACILITIES, FLEET AND TECHNOLOGY

The administration and operations offices of GTS are located in Oakland, at 225 Francis Sanders Drive. Currently vehicles are housed in a facility adjacent to the administration and operations offices. Both the administration and operations offices and the garage for the vehicles were obtained in April 2008.

In recent years GTS has received new vehicles, and therefore has a fairly young fleet. Table 1-3 on the next page provides information on the GTS fleet as of February 11, 2019. This inventory will be updated through the planning process, and serve as the basis for the capital plan that will be included in the final TDP.

GTS currently uses Trip Master by CTS scheduling dispatching software. GTS reports that they are very happy with this software, and there are no plans to change to another system. There are plans to expand the current software technology so that it will provide reminder notifications to riders shortly before their pickup time.

Table 1-3: GTS Vehicle Inventory

Vehicle Number	Status	Model Year	Make	Vehicle Type	Seating Capacity		Fuel Type	Condition (1)	Mileage (1)
					Ambulatory	Wheelchair			
185	Active	2010	Dodge	Accessible	7	0	Gasoline	Adequate	147,751
186	Active	2010	Dodge	Accessible_Van	7	0	Gasoline	Adequate	144,630
187	Active	2011	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Marginal	133,425
189	Active	2011	Dodge	Accessible_Van	4	2	Gasoline	Adequate	55,747
190	Spare	2012	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Good	119,491
191	Active	2012	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	16	2	Gasoline	Good	71,192
192	Active	2012	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Good	119,874
193	Active	2013	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Good	101,079
194	Active	2013	Chev	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Good	112,584
198	Active	2014	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	42,598
199	Active	2014	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	36,018
206	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	4,797
207	Spare	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	3,143
209	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	1,350
210	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	16	2	Gasoline	Excellent	1,612
211	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	16	2	Gasoline	Excellent	935
212	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Excellent	5,730
213	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Excellent	17,415
214	Active	2017	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	10	2	Gasoline	Excellent	12,984
215	Active	2018	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	16,861
216	Active	2018	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	12	2	Gasoline	Excellent	10,046
217	Active	2018	Ford	Bus_Light_Duty	16	2	Gasoline	Excellent	602

(1) As reported by GTS on 2/11/19; will be updated for draft final plan

OTHER AREA PROVIDERS

A variety of public transit, human service transportation and private transportation services are provided in Garrett County. This section documents and describes the transportation programs and services identified, primarily obtained through the Western Maryland Regional Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Non-Profit and Human Service Transportation Providers

Various specialized transportation programs are offered by non-profit and human service agencies in the region. This transportation is typically provided only to agency clients and for specific trip purpose, generally either medical, employment or to access agency locations.

Appalachian Parent Association, Inc. (APA)

APA aka Appalachian Crossroads, operates for the purpose of providing personnel, services, activities, programs, and facilities for the evaluation, training, employment, socialization, support, and transportation of persons who have developmental disabilities, handicaps, economic disadvantages, or are aged, to enable them to become more productive and functional members of society, to promote their quality of life, or to maintain themselves in the community. It is a private non-profit human service agency that primarily serves developmentally disabled adults in Garrett County.

The 100+ individuals served range from being profoundly handicapped to very mildly handicapped, young adults to seniors, and in good health to having complex medical needs. To meet the needs of such a diverse group, the agency provides a full continuum of services aimed at assisting individuals to have the supports necessary to live, work, and socialize in the community according to their preferences and abilities.

APA maintains a fleet of twenty-five vehicles to take people to various job sites and community events. They report that about twelve are funded through the Section 5310 Program administered by the MTA. They operate seven routes a day, serving seven residential locations.

Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.

Beyond the administration of GTS, as a private nonprofit corporation Garrett County Community Action Committee works with partners to build a stronger community and to provide services that improve the quality of life for residents in Garrett County. Its activities and projects focus on strategies that assist low-income persons to be more self-sufficient. The agency provides a variety of services for individuals, families and older adults. It also owns a number housing developments and community facilities located in different communities throughout Garrett County.

The GCCAC's Wheels to Work program assists low-income individuals in obtaining and maintaining a vehicle for the purpose of getting to and from work. It is funded by the Department of Social Services, and administered by GCCAC. Applicants must have at least one child, and be eligible for Temporary Cash Assistance through the Department of Social Services.

Garrett County Department of Social Services

The Garrett County DSS provides adoption services, adult protective services, child care coordination, Child support enforcement, family support services, food stamps, foster care services, in-home aide services, medical assistance, housing programs, social services, and temporary cash assistance.

Garrett County Lighthouse, Inc.

Garrett County Lighthouse, Inc. is a private nonprofit behavioral health organization that provides psychiatric rehabilitation services, residential rehabilitation services, residential crisis services and respite services to adults with serious and persistent mental illness in Garrett County. Residential crisis and respite services are also provided in Allegany County.

Mountain Glade Adult Medical Day Care

Mountain Glade Adult Day Care provides adult day care services in Oakland, MD. Services offered include organized daily activities in a community-based setting, transportation, meals, and professional supervision. Contact Mountain Glade Adult Day Care for more details on respite care services and rates.

Taxi Providers

The following taxi providers were identified in Garrett County:

- Deep Creek Lake – Taxi Cab, LLC.
- County Caravan, LLC

Other Private Transportation Providers

- BayRunner Shuttle - operates intercity bus service connecting Grantsville to Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal. Trips depart from the Pilot Travel Center at 3000 Chestnut Ridge Road, daily at 8:30 a.m. and every day except for Saturday at 4:30 p.m. Fares are based on the number in the traveling party. Current one-way fares are \$70 for one passenger, \$113 for two passengers, \$149 for three passengers, and \$25 for each additional passenger. Reservations are recommended but not required, and customers can take the shuttle and pay cash on the day of the trip, if space is available.
- A Touch of Class Limousines – based in McHenry, this limousine company provides luxury transportation for all occasions, including rides to regional airports.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

Regional Plans

2015 Western Maryland Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan

The Western Maryland Region includes Garrett County as well as Allegany, Washington, and Frederick counties. The plan's intent was to better organize transportation services between each regional jurisdiction to increase mobility and expand availability of services for residents in the region. Garrett County, which was analyzed along with Allegany, had the following needs identified:

- Expanded options for long distance medical transportation needs
- Vehicles better suited to the terrain
- Better marketing and education
- Additional funding opportunities
- Expanded transportation to local medical facilities
- Expanded seasonal transit options
- Better coordination of resources to meet needs

The plan offered the following prioritized strategies for Garrett County and the rest of Western Maryland to provide better and more efficient services to residents:

High priorities:

- Improve coordination of services among providers through mobility management
- Support capital projects that are created to support the needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities
- Advocate for additional funding for public transit and human service transportation
- Provide targeted shuttle services to access employment opportunities
- Acquire vehicles more suitable for remote areas of the region

The Western Maryland Coordinated Transportation Plan is scheduled to be updated in 2019.

County Plans

2008 Comprehensive Plan

The 2008 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan was drafted to serve as a policy guide and framework for future growth and development in the county. The plan looks to guide planning projects for Garrett County's land use, water resources, transportation, public facilities, economic development, housing, environmentally sensitive areas, and natural resources while guiding planning efforts with a "horizon" of the year 2030. Most of the

transportation element focused on making improvements to the county's most important roadways. The plan highlights that economic growth within the Deep Creek Lake region may warrant an expansion of service to employment centers in the region. The plan also discusses the seasonal tourism and employment created by Wisp Resort, which operates a private, on-site shuttle to ease congestion near the facility. The report also identifies that an increasingly aging population will likely need to rely more on the services provided by GTS.

2011 Heritage Area Management Plan

The Garrett County Heritage Area Management Plan aimed to guide planning priorities within Garrett County's important natural and historic areas. The transportation theme of this plan includes the protection of Garrett County's Indian Trails and the National Pike/National Road and the Casselman Bridge, as well as railways and waterways.

GTS CUSTOMER SURVEY

An important task for the TDP was the administration of a rider survey to receive feedback on GTS demand response services from customers and develop a rider profile. With input from GTS staff, an onboard survey was prepared for these purposes. A copy of the onboard survey is provided in Appendix A.

The survey was administered onboard GTS vehicles from late March to late April 2019. GTS staff distributed surveys to drivers who then distributed them to riders. Overall 56 surveys were collected, and the results are discussed in the following section.

Trip Purpose Information and Use of GTS

Survey respondents were asked several questions pertaining to their trip. Riders were asked about the purpose of their trip, how often they use GTS, how long they have been using GTS services, and how they found out about GTS services.

- As shown in Figure 1-1 the majority of respondents (50.9%) were using GTS to get to and from work. Other common trip purposes were for medical (34.6%) and shopping (14.6%) purposes.
- When asked how often they used GTS, most indicated that they used GTS 4 times per week or more (30.36%) or 2-3 times per week (42.9%). The results of this question are provided in Figure 1-2.

Figure 1-1: Trip Purpose

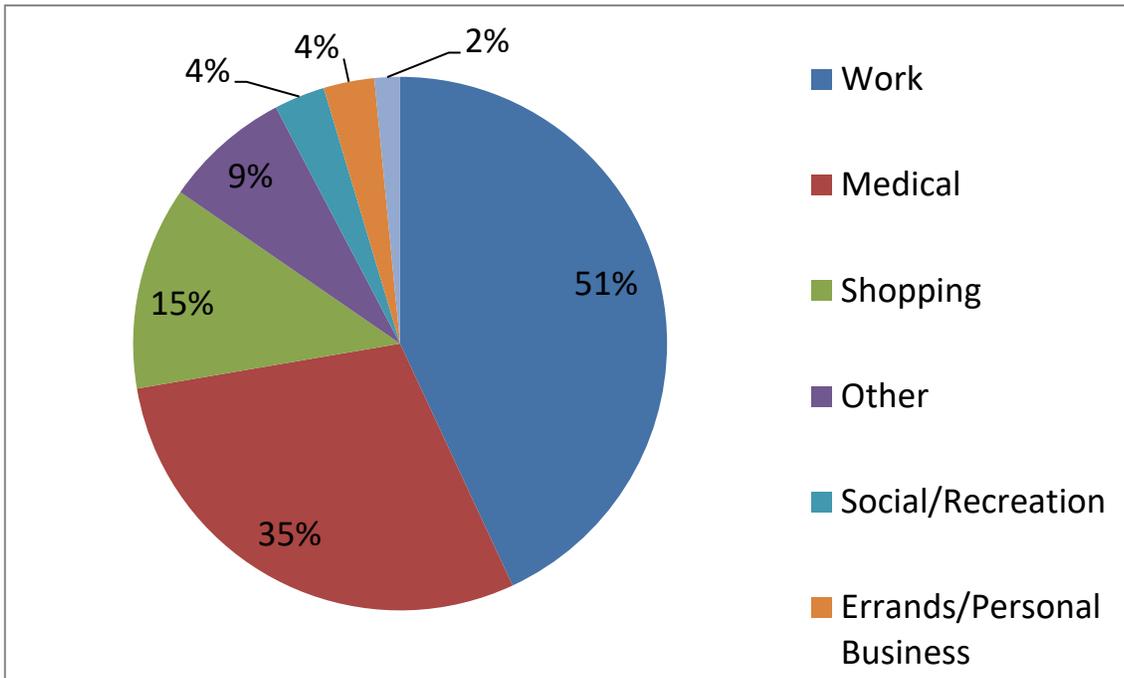
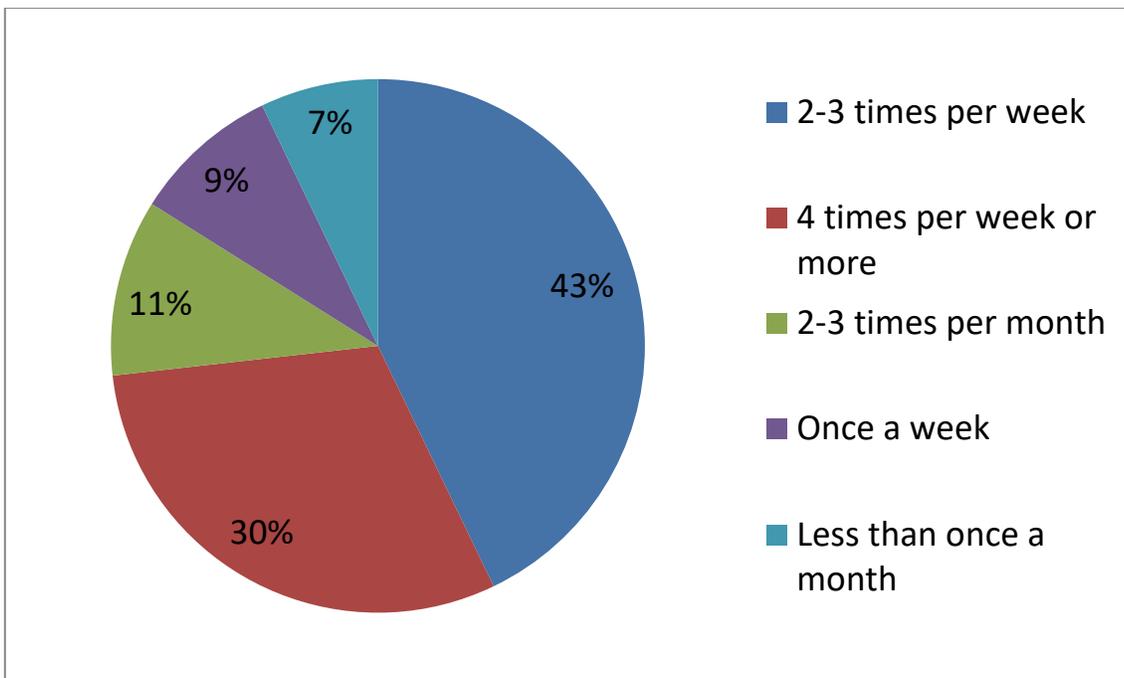


Figure 1-2: Frequency Using GTS



As shown in Figure 1-3, when asked how long they had been using GTS, most respondents stated they had been using GTS for more than 5 years (45.5%) and more than 2 years (23.6%). The majority of respondents had already known about GTS (60.7%) as provided in Figure 1-4.

Figure 1-3: How Long Using GTS

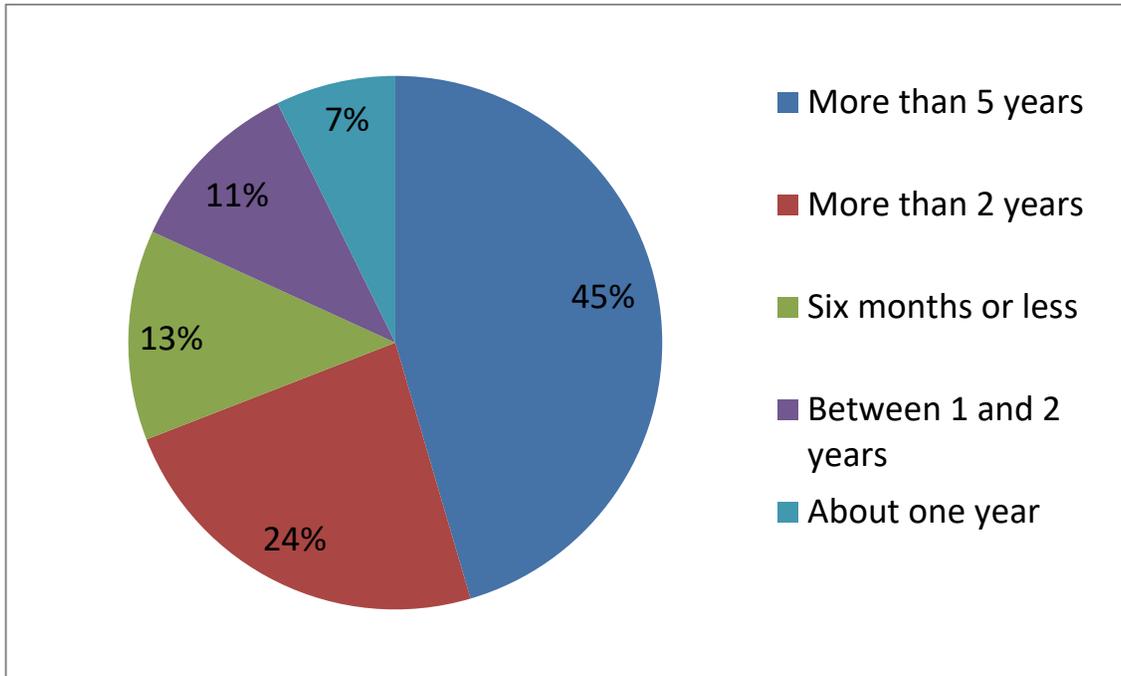
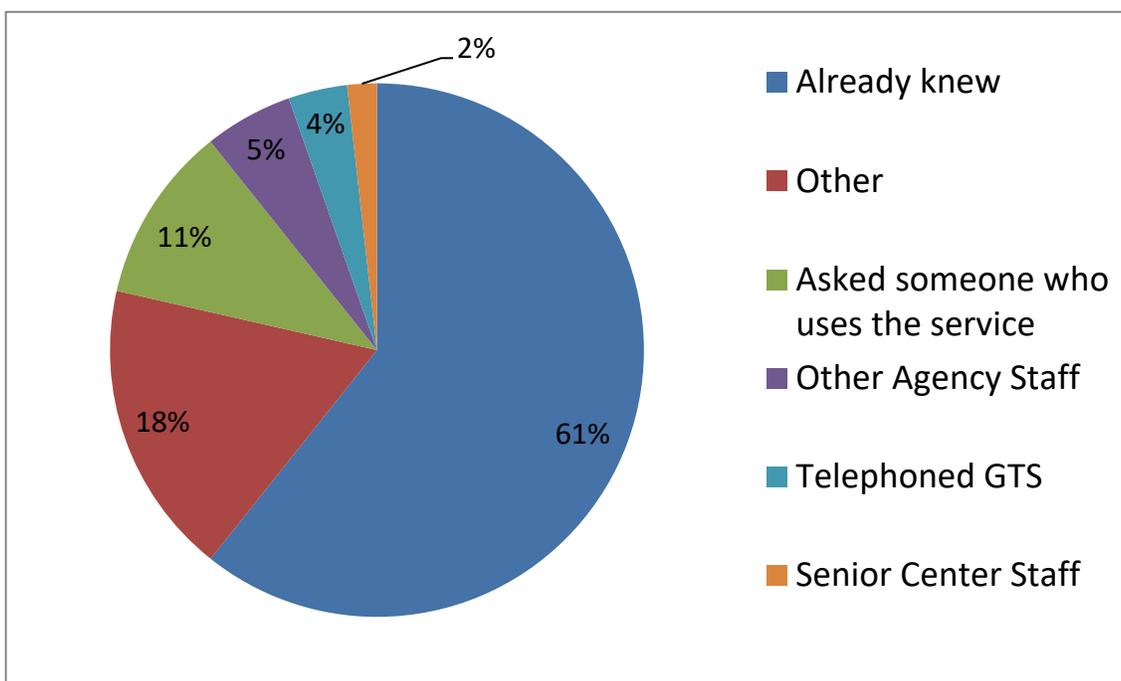


Figure 1-4: How Learned About GTS

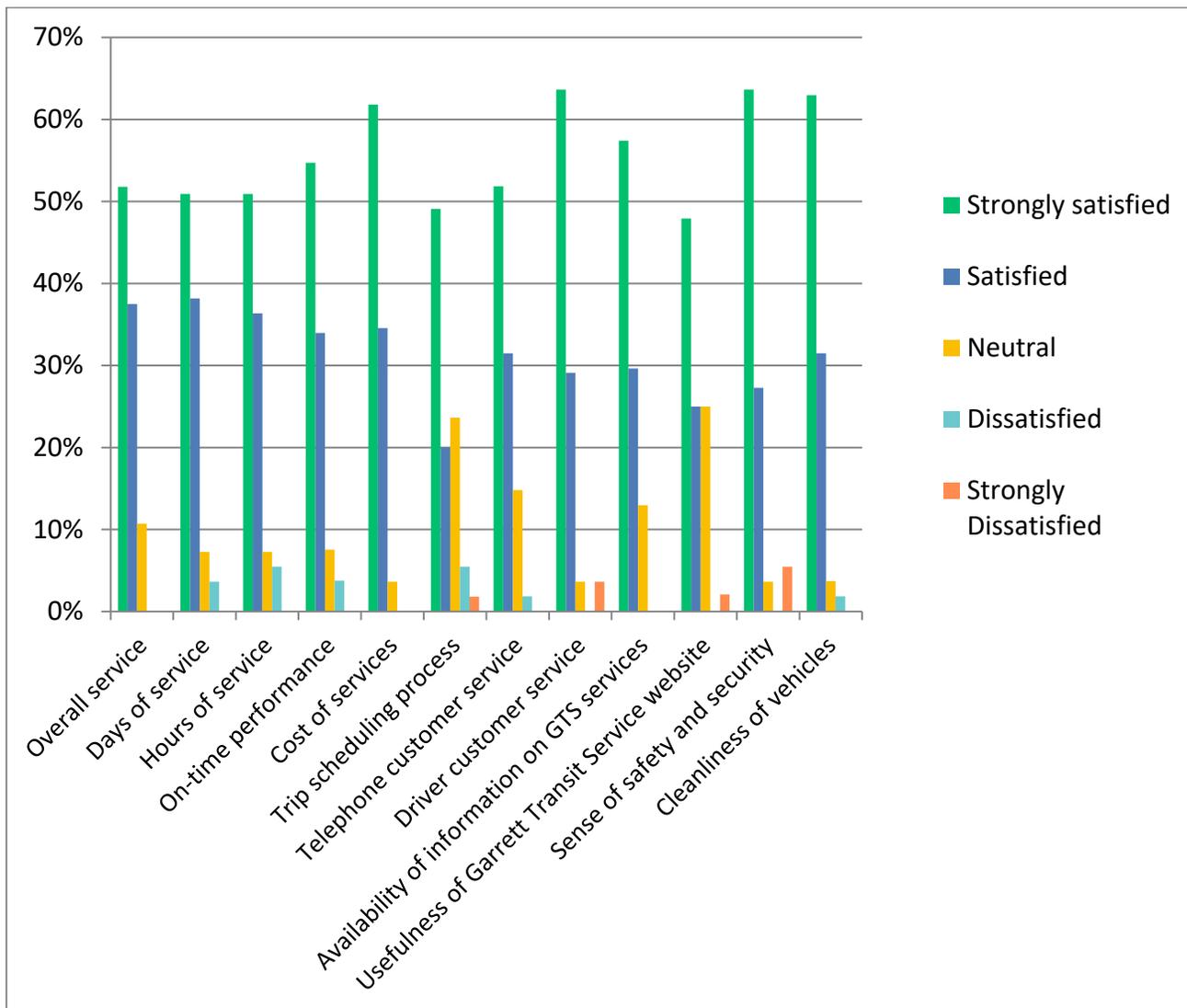


Rider Satisfaction

The survey presented several questions to determine rider satisfaction and elicit suggestions for improvement.

- Riders were asked to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of GTS services and give their overall satisfaction level. Nearly 89.3% of riders were either “Satisfied” or “Strongly Satisfied” with GTS service while 0% of riders were either “Dissatisfied” or “Strongly Dissatisfied.” Customers were most satisfied with driver customer service, the sense of safety and security, and the cleanliness of vehicles. Riders were most dissatisfied with the trip scheduling process, the hours of service and the days of services. A summary of responses can be seen in Figure 1-5.

Figure 1-5: Customer Satisfaction with GTS



- Riders were asked what they liked most and least about the service:
 - Many riders commented that aspects they liked most about GTS were its availability, convenience, and the courteousness of drivers and staff.
 - Many riders commented that aspects they liked least about GTS were the need to call 24 hours in advance to get a ride and the lack of service on weekends and in the evening.
- When asked if there were places riders needed to go that GTS does not serve, most rider feedback focused on getting to places on the weekends, rather than any specific geographic areas. Common suggestions for additional stops included Springs, PA and Cumberland, MD.

Participants were asked to list their three most desired service improvements. For many people the most desired improvements were:

- Extending evening hours
- Introducing weekend service
- Acquiring more buses and drivers to better meet demand, shortening wait times (especially in Northern Garrett)

Rider Profile

Several questions on the survey asked riders to provide information about themselves. These responses are summarized below to form the GTS passenger profile.

- As shown in Figure 1-6, many customers that filled out the survey do not have an available vehicle at their household (69.1%). 20.0% of respondents have only one vehicle available at home.
- Figure 1-7 shows that 77.8% of respondents did not have a vehicle available at home to make their trip.
- In addition, 58.1% of respondents reported that they did have a valid driver's license.

Figure I-6: Number of Vehicles Available in Household

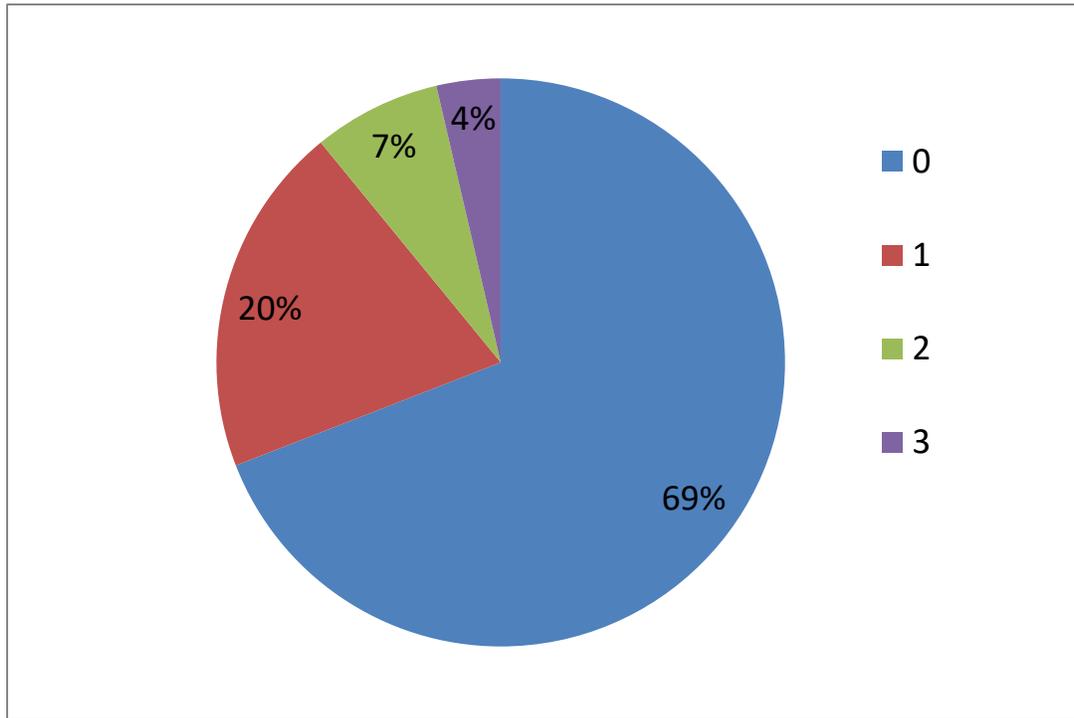
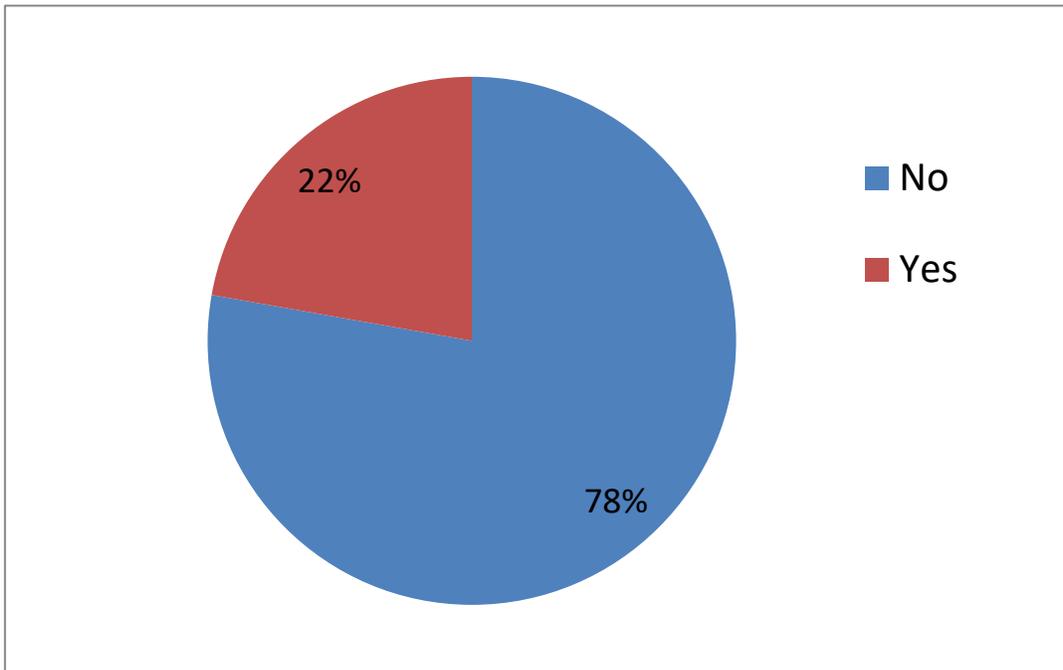


Figure I-7: Vehicle Availability for This Trip



Comments

Overall 20 of the 56 respondents provided general comments at the end of the survey. Many comments reflect passenger satisfaction with GTS and particularly satisfaction with the drivers/staff.

- A respondent wrote, “I really appreciate all the drivers and the staff. They are kind and courteous and they always get me to work on time and bring me home every day and I'm glad there is a GTS. I couldn't do without them. They are all really good people.”
- Another writer commented, “I've been riding with Garrett Transportation now for over 30 years, never had a problem.”

A common complaint found in the comments sections concerned the wait times associated with return trips, especially from nursing homes. One comment stated, “Many times our nursing home has to cancel and reschedule our residents' appointments due to the long wait times. We are dropped off several hours after their appointment.”

COMMUNITY SURVEY

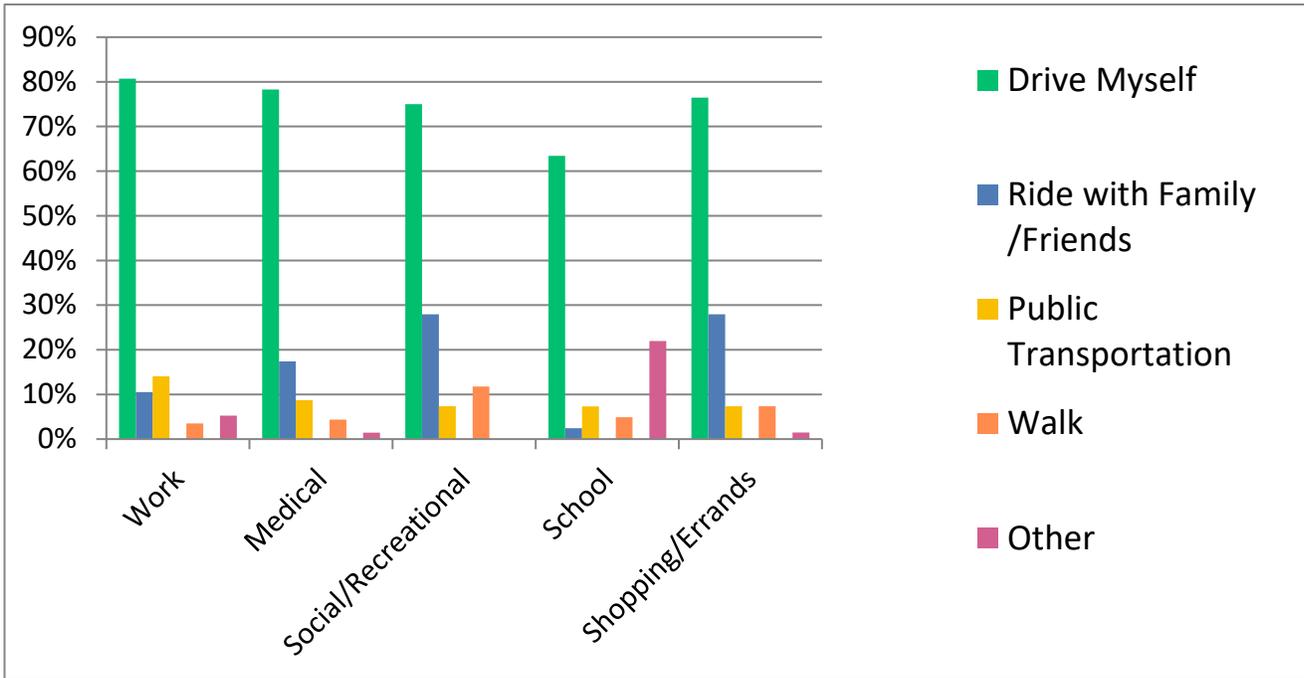
In addition to the passenger survey, a broader community survey was developed, and can be found in Appendix B. This survey provided the opportunity to gather opinions from the general public on GTS services and public transportation as a whole. The survey was distributed on-line through the GTS website, publicized through press releases and other outreach efforts. Hard copies were also available at community locations.

The survey was available until April 17, 2019, and there were 73 completed surveys at the end of this period. Key results are summarized in the following section.

Use of GTS

Respondents were asked to select their primary mode of transportation for work, medical, recreational, school, and shopping trips. For each type of trip, respondents were most likely to drive themselves. Public transportation was most commonly used for work trips, with 14.0% of respondents indicating that it was their primary mode of transportation for such trips. Across all five trip purposes, an average of 8.9% of respondents used public transportation as their primary mode of transportation. Figure 1-8 further summarizes the primary mode of transportation for survey respondents.

Figure 1-8: Primary Mode of Transportation by Trip Purpose



Respondents were then asked if they were currently aware of GTS services, to which 80.8% of respondents answered “yes”. When asked if they currently used GTS, 14 (19.2%) respondents answered “yes”. Those who answered “yes” were then asked how often they used GTS. All but 1 respondent used GTS more than once a month, with four (28.6%) using GTS 2-3 times per week.

Respondents who do not use GTS were then asked to select the reasons why they don’t use GTS services. The most common reasons were limited hours of operation (33.3%), needing their car for work or school (25.9%), and not knowing if the services were available (25.9%). 27.8% of respondents selected “Other” and gave another reason for not using GTS. Most of these reasons cited limited service hours and the lack of availability of buses and/or drivers. A full summary of responses can be found in Figure 1-9 on the next page.

Figure 1-9: Reasons for not Using GTS

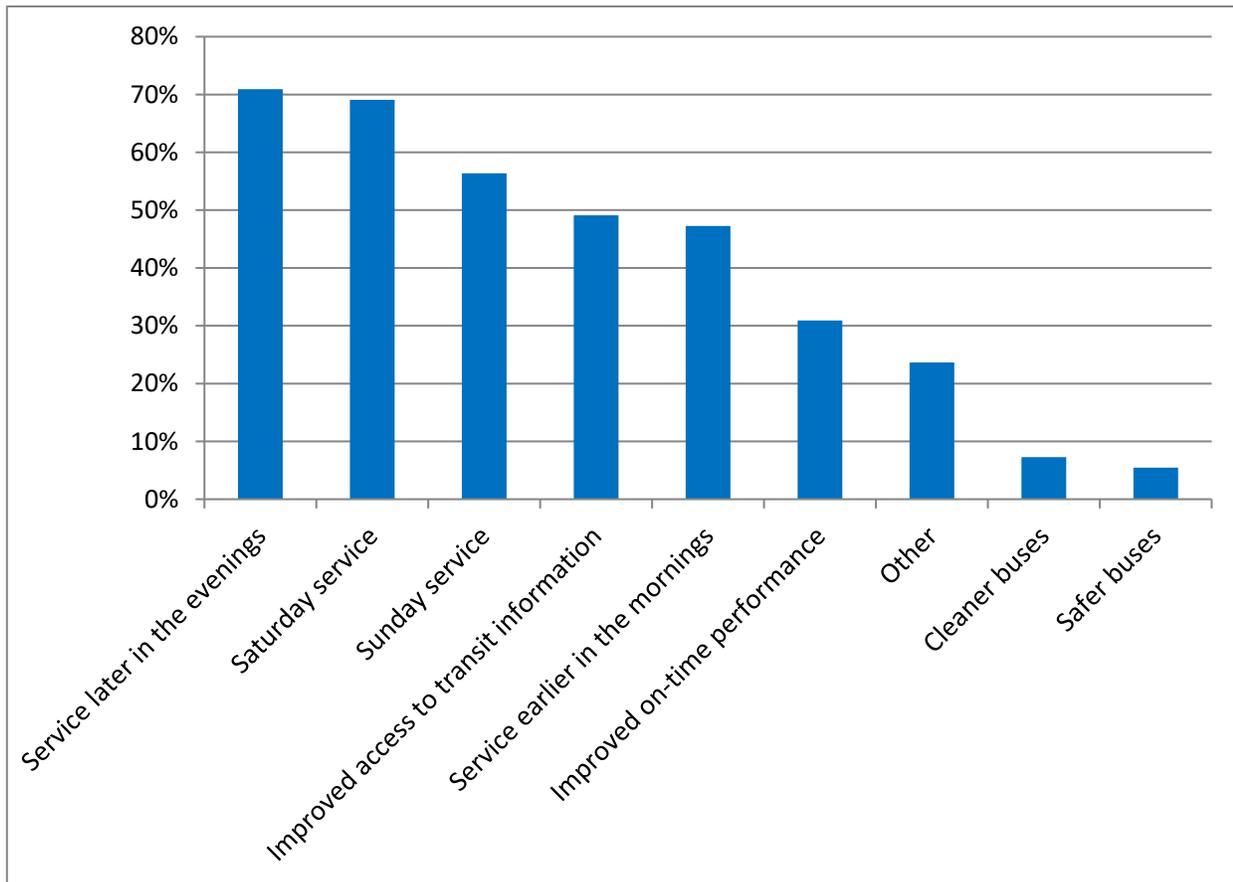
Reason	Percent of Respondents
The hours of operation are too limited.	33%
Other	28%
Need my car for work/school.	26%
Don't know if service is available.	26%
Have to wait too long for the bus/van.	22%
Need my car before/after work/school.	19%
Need my car for emergencies/overtime.	15%
Buses/vans are unreliable/late.	13%
The fare is expensive.	11%
No service near my home/work/school.	7%
Trip is too long/takes too much time.	7%
I have limited mobility/hard for me to use the bus.	4%
The bus/van is uncomfortable.	4%
It might not be safe/ I don't feel safe.	0%

When asked if they would consider using GTS if they offered a service that met their travel needs, 77.2% of respondents answered “yes”, and 85.7% of respondents think there is a need for additional or improved public transportation in Garrett County.

Respondents were then asked if they thought there was a need for regional services connecting Garrett County to locations outside of the county. Respondents were asked specifically about services from Oakland to Cumberland and Oakland to Morgantown, WV. Respondents could also write in a regional service that was not listed. 69.4% of respondents wanted service from Oakland to Cumberland, and 71.4% wanted service from Oakland to Morgantown.

All respondents were then asked what other improvements they thought GTS needed to make. The most desired improvements were an extension of service days/hours; 70.9% of respondents wanted service later in the evenings, 69.1% wanted Saturday service, and 56.4% wanted Sunday service. Full results are shown in Figure 1-10.

Figure I-10: Desired Service Improvements



Demographics of Respondents

Respondents were also asked about their access to private vehicles, age, employment status, household income, and race/ethnicity. Some notable findings from these questions include:

- Most respondents (85.1%) had a valid driver’s license
- A plurality of respondents had at least one working vehicle in their household
- Each respondent indicated that they were over the age of 18
- 44.8% of respondents were 26-55 years old
- Most respondents were either employed full time (37.31%) or retired (37.31%)
- 27.9% of respondents had an annual household income of \$75,000 or higher, while conversely 16.4% of respondents had an annual household income of less than \$14,999

EMPLOYER SURVEY

An on-line survey, found in Appendix C, was available for employers in Garrett County to provide input for the TDP. The Chamber of Commerce distributed links to the employer survey via email. Six employers, representing over 100 employees completed the survey. The six agencies that responded are listed below.

1. Cornucopia Cafe
2. DCL Home Services
3. Harvest Moon Catering & Grill
4. Keystone Lime Co. Inc.
5. Western MD Consortium
6. Winner's Circle

Many agencies that participated in the survey are public and non-profit agencies, serving people who rely heavily on public transportation services. Employers were asked which communities their employees came from. Employers indicated that they had staff from Accident, Friendsville, Grantsville, and Mountain Lake Park.

Employers were also asked to estimate what percentage of their employees used each type of transit. Of the three employers who answered this question, two of them reported that 100% of their employees drove alone to and from work. The other respondent reported that 80% of their employees drove themselves, while the other 20% carpooled to work.

Employers were asked to describe the shifts their employees work. Three employers answered this question, and indicated that their first shifts began at 5:00 a.m., 6:00 a.m., and 7:00 a.m. with end times at 4:00 p.m. or noon. Only one employer provided information about more than 1 shift. This employer's second shift was from noon-5:00 p.m. and their third shift was from 5:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Employers were then asked whether they offered any employee transportation programs. One company indicated that they had company cars. One employer answered that some employees had issues getting transportation to work and/or childcare. Two employers stated that reliable transportation is an issue when hiring and retaining employees.

One employer stated that "bad roads" were an impediment to an employee's transportation to work, and they suggested that they "fix roads". One employer said "a lot of people have transportation issues", and believed that providing "easier access to GTS or public transport" could be a feasible solution.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

In addition to the survey process individual interviews were conducted with the following stakeholder agencies and organizations:

- Appalachian Crossroads
- Garrett County Chamber of Commerce
- Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management

The following section provides a summary of the input received through these interviews:

- There is a need to change the perception that GTS services are open only to specific population groups.
- The impact of GTS services should be highlighted, as some county residents may feel that there is not a need for public transportation.
- Transit needs to be affordable and used by a greater number of people, but to do so will require expanded services and more options.
- It would be helpful to have a connection between Public Transportation and Bikes/ Trails. It was noted that people should be able to use public transportation for recreational purposes as well other trips.
- Bike racks on GTS buses should be considered.
- Consider locations in Friendsville, McHenry, and Oakland where there are parking areas as possible connections with transit.
- Utilize special events as possible introduction to using GTS; Farmers Market and Autumn Glory were noted.
- Biggest barrier to employment transportation is GTS hours, as many people that may use service are employed on the weekends and during the evenings. In particular since the county is a big recreation area there are always employment needs.
- Long trips on the bus may be a reason why some people do not use GTS.
- Pickups and drop-offs being either too early or late were noted, and some potential users of GTS services may need more structure such as central pick up location with specific times that serve as some sort of feeder service.

- From an employer perspective the biggest issue is finding workers. Younger people may be more prone to using public transportation, however there has been an issue attracting them to live in the county and consider available jobs.
- A McHenry to Oakland loop would be helpful, with these possible destinations:
 - McHenry Plaza
 - Market Square
 - The Fort
 - Traders Landing
 - Honi, Uno, with Cinemas across the street
 - Dry Dock Plaza
 - Glendale Road -Duchess Silver Tree
 - Walmart
- Service on the weekend, at least on Saturday, with service at least until part of the evening.
- Consider some seasonal service, i.e. a winter route for skiers incorporating Wisk into Oakland.
- Tourists are coming from areas with public transportation, and Uber and Lyft services are not feasible. Consider partnership with private providers.
- Consider separate website for GTS, not one under GCCAC. This may help with marketing and helping people understand the services.

Appendix A

On-Board Customer Survey

Thank you!

Appendix B

Public Opinion Survey



Garrett Transit Service Public Opinion Survey

Garrett Transit Service is currently conducting a Transit Development Plan. The purpose of this study is to develop a five-year plan for public transportation services in Garrett County. An important task for this effort is to solicit input from residents concerning transit needs. This survey is one method that is being used to obtain this important public input. Individual survey responses will be kept confidential, and will not be identified by the name of the respondent.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the following brief survey!

1. Please use the table below to indicate your current **primary** mode of transportation for the following trip purposes. Check the boxes that correspond with how you **usually** travel for these typical daily trips.

<i>Trip Purposes:</i>	<i>Modes:</i>						
	Drive Myself	Ride w/ Family/ Friends	Public Transportation	Bicycle	Walk	Taxi	Other
Work							
Medical							
Social/ Recreational							
School							
Shopping/ Errands							

- Are you aware of the public transportation services that are provided by Garrett Transit Service?
 Yes No
- Do you currently use Garrett Transit Service?
 Yes No *(If you checked "No", please skip to Question #5.)*
- If yes, how often do you use?
 4 times per week or more Once a week Once a month
 2-3 times per week 2-3 times per month Less than once a month
- If not, why not? *(Please check all that apply):*
 No service near my home/ work/ school. The bus/ van is uncomfortable.
 The fare is expensive. Don't know if service is available.
 I have limited mobility/ hard for me to use the bus. Buses/ vans are unreliable/ late.
 Need my car for work/ school. The hours of operation are too limited.
 Need my car before/ after work/ school. Have to wait too long for the bus/ van.
 Need my car for emergencies/ overtime. It might not be safe/ I don't feel safe.
 Trip is too long/ takes too much time. Other: _____
- Would you use public transportation services in Garrett County if there was a service that met your travel needs? Yes No

Over, Please ⇨

7. Do you think there is a need for additional or improved public transportation in Garrett County?
 Yes No (*If you checked "No", please skip to Question #11.*)
8. If you checked "Yes" for Question #7 above, please indicate *where within Garrett County* (i.e., areas/ towns) there is a need for additional or improved public transit services?

9. Please indicate if you think there is a need for additional intra-regional services between Garrett County and other jurisdictions within the region?
 Oakland and Cumberland Oakland and Morgantown, WV
 To/ from: _____ No need for additional intra-regional services
10. Please indicate what other improvements you think are needed to Garrett Transit Service (*Check all that apply*):
 Service later in the evenings Service earlier in the mornings Saturday service
 Sunday service Improved on-time performance Cleaner buses
 Safer buses Improved access to transit information
 Other: _____
-
11. Please indicate your zip code of residence: _____
12. Do you have a valid driver's license? Yes No
13. How many working cars/ trucks/ SUVs/ motorcycles are in your household?
 0 1 2 3 4 or more
14. Please indicate your age group.
 Under 12 years old 18-25 years old 56-64 years old
 12-17 years old 26-55 years old 65 years old or older
15. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? *You may check more than one.*
 Employed, full-time Student, full-time Unemployed Employed, part-time
 Student, part-time Retired Homemaker Other
16. What is your annual household income level? *Please check only one.*
 \$14,999 or less \$30,000 - \$44,999 \$60,000 - \$74,999
 \$15,000 - \$29,999 \$45,000 - \$59,999 \$75,000 or higher
17. How would you classify yourself?
 African American Caucasian Native American
 Asian Hispanic/ Latino Other
18. Please provide your comments regarding the need for improved public transportation in Garrett County.

Please return this survey to the survey box, or mail to: KFH Group, 4920 Elm Street, Suite 350, Bethesda, MD 20814. Questions? Please call 301-951-8660.

Appendix C

Employer Transportation Survey

3. How do your employees currently get to work? Please estimate a general percentage for each mode listed below.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Car -- drive alone: _____% | F. Walk: _____% |
| B. Car -- carpool: _____% | G. Bicycle: _____% |
| C. Employer vanpool: _____% | H. Motorcycle: _____% |
| D. Garrett Transit: _____% | I. Other: _____% |
| E. Taxicab: _____% | |

4. What are the shift times for your employees and how many employees work each shift?

- Shift 1: _____ a.m. / p.m. - _____ a.m. / p.m. # of Employees: _____
- Shift 2: _____ a.m. / p.m. - _____ a.m. / p.m. # of Employees: _____
- Shift 3: _____ a.m. / p.m. - _____ a.m. / p.m. # of Employees: _____

5. Does your company offer any type of employee transportation programs? (Such as an employer shuttle or carpool/ vanpool program, etc.)

Yes: _____ No: _____

If yes, please describe: _____

6. Have your employees indicated that transportation to work is a problem for them?

Yes: _____ No: _____

7. Is transportation to childcare a problem for any of your employees?

Yes: _____ No: _____

8. Do you as an employer feel that transportation to work is an issue in hiring and retaining employees for your work site?

Yes: _____ No: _____

9. Please describe any employment transportation problems or issues that you have encountered as an employer:

10. Please provide any suggestions that you may have to improve transportation in your area, specifically for work purposes:

Thank you!

Completed employer surveys may be either faxed to (301) 951-0026 or mailed to:

KFH Group, Inc.
4920 Elm Street, Suite 350, Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 951-8660

Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 951-8660