



JATA Market Research Study Passenger Survey Results

Prepared for the Jackson Area Transportation
Authority (JATA)

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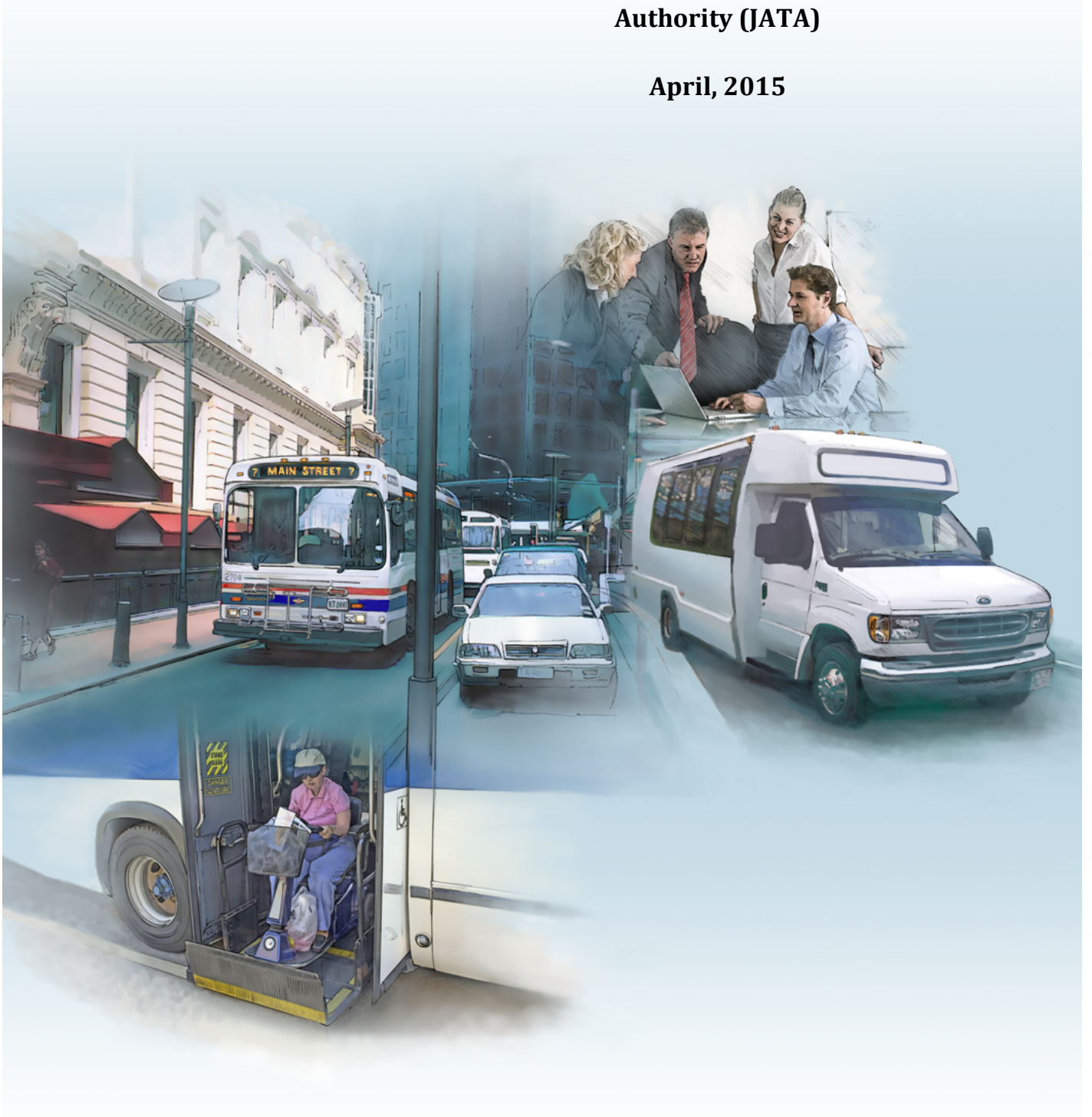




Table of Contents

JATA Passenger Survey	1
Overview	1
Passenger Survey Methodology.....	1
Passenger Survey Results.....	2
Geographic Distribution of Survey Responses	2
Frequency of Riding JATA	4
Trip Purpose	4
Passenger Fare Payment.....	8
Vehicle Availability.....	8
Customer Satisfaction Ratings.....	9
Top 3 Ways for JATA to Improve.....	10
Passenger Demographics	11
Summary of Passenger Survey.....	14

JATA PASSENGER SURVEY

OVERVIEW

The intent of this document is to provide a summary of passenger input gathered through a survey of passenger satisfaction and use of the JATA system. Passenger input is of highest value to JATA. The information contained in this report will be used in combination with results of a comprehensive public survey, which will be submitted separately. This document is presented to JATA as a draft technical memorandum and will become part of the draft final report in the Market Research Study.

PASSENGER SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The JATA passenger survey was conducted February 7-13, 2015. A team of two surveyors from Jackson and two JATA employees were trained by the RLS & Associates, Inc. (RLS) on-site survey manager to collect surveys from passengers as they boarded the vehicles. Two RLS employees also collected surveys. The survey team surveyed all routes.

Surveyors wore badges to identify them as official JATA Surveyors. They were provided with trip log sheets with the bus stops and schedules for the trips that they were covering. Surveyors were stationed at the JATA Transit Center. Surveyors then boarded buses or stayed at the Transit Center to collect surveys. Each route was surveyed (weekday and Saturday) so as not to discriminate against any certain location within the JATA service area.

The survey instrument was developed with input from the JATA Project Manager. It included questions about passenger demographics as well as trip origins and destinations, and the level of satisfaction with existing JATA services. The data not only provides insight into customer service trends, but also offers the necessary data measurement of service to minority and low-income populations to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order: EO 12898 for addressing environmental justice.

At the onset of the survey planning stage, the survey sampling plan had a goal confidence interval of +/- 10 percent with a 95 percent confidence level at the systemwide level. A total of 397 valid surveys were completed. With this sample, the survey results have a confidence interval of approximately three people, meaning that approximately every third person would respond similarly to the survey results provided for each question.

PASSENGER SURVEY RESULTS

The following paragraphs and charts illustrate the overall systemwide survey results.

Geographic Distribution of Survey Responses

JATA passengers were asked to report the zip code where they live. This response provides JATA with information about the geographic distribution of survey respondents. The distribution of 316 total responses to the question is listed below and illustrated on the map in Exhibit 1.

Distribution of Survey Results by Zip Code:

Zip Code 49203: 156 Responses

Zip Code 49201: 77 Responses

Zip Code 49202: 75 Responses

Zip Code 49254: 4 Responses

Zip Code 49269: 1 Response

Zip Code 49264: 1 Response

Zip Code 49272: 1 Response

Zip Code 49220: 1 Response

Exhibit 1: Geographic Distribution of Passenger Survey Results

Jackson Area Transportation Authority

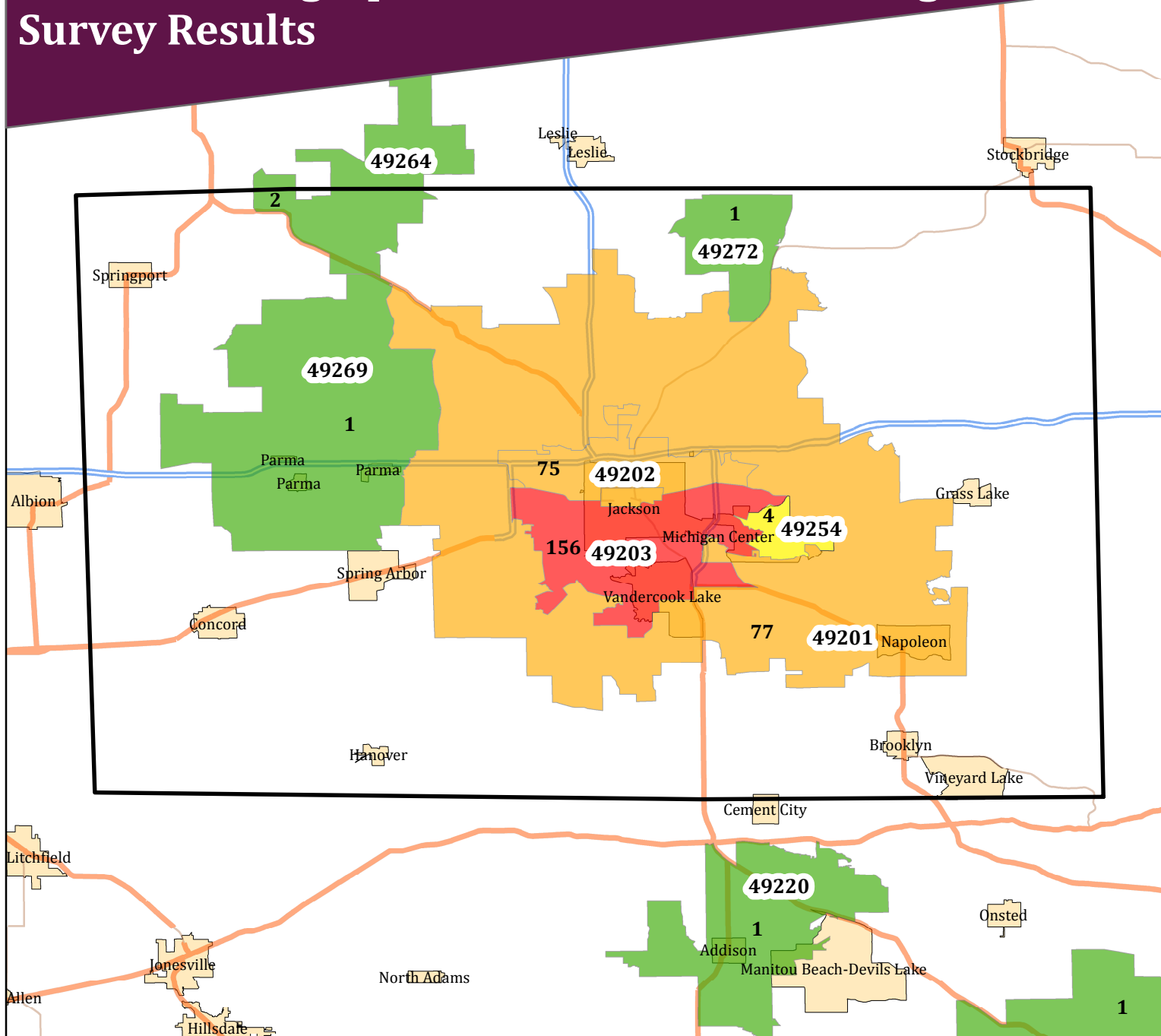
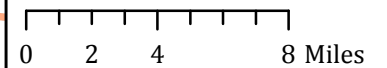
Legend

Zip Codes

Surveys

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 4
- 75 - 77
- 156

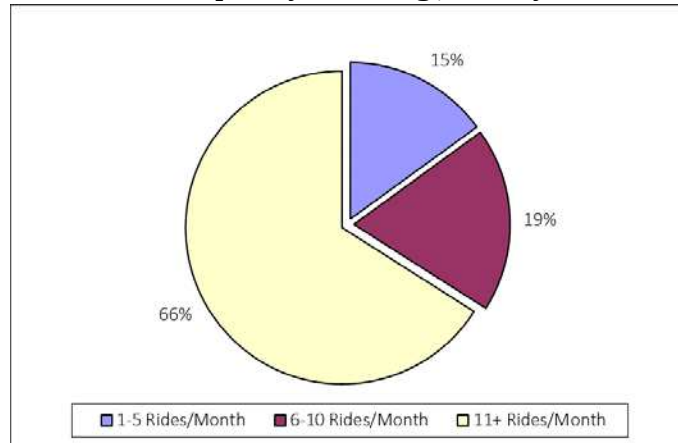
- Interstate
- Highway
- Major Road
- Cities/Towns



Frequency of Riding JATA

Nearly 66 percent of survey respondents indicated that they typically ride JATA 11 or more times per month. Another 19 percent indicated that they ride 6 to 10 times per month. The remaining passengers ride 1 to 5 times per month, resulting in a weekly rider average for all respondents of more than two days per week.

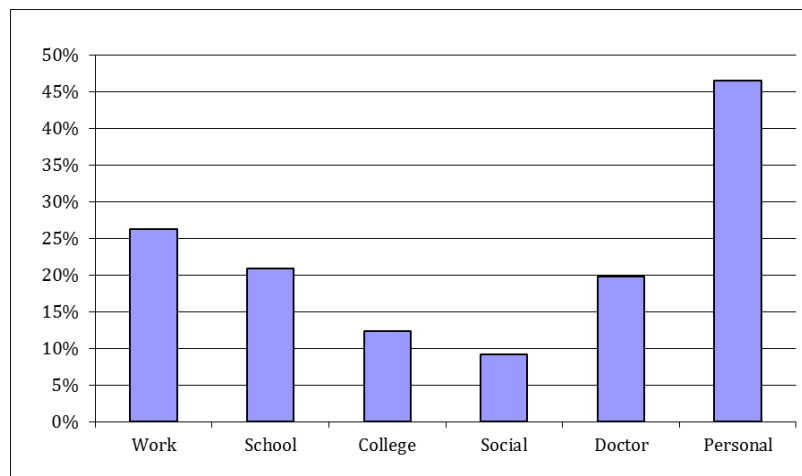
Exhibit 2: Frequency of Riding JATA, Systemwide



Trip Purpose

Passengers were asked to list the main purpose for using JATA at the time of the survey. The most common trip purpose (47%) was for personal trips such as grocery shopping or going to the bank. The second most common purpose (26%) for survey respondents to use JATA was for work. Roughly 21% were going to or from school and another 20% were going to or from a doctor or medical visit. Fewer passengers were using JATA for college or social trip purposes. Survey results, in general, indicate that the majority of JATA's passengers use JATA as a means of transportation for necessary responsibilities such as work, shopping, education, and medical appointments.

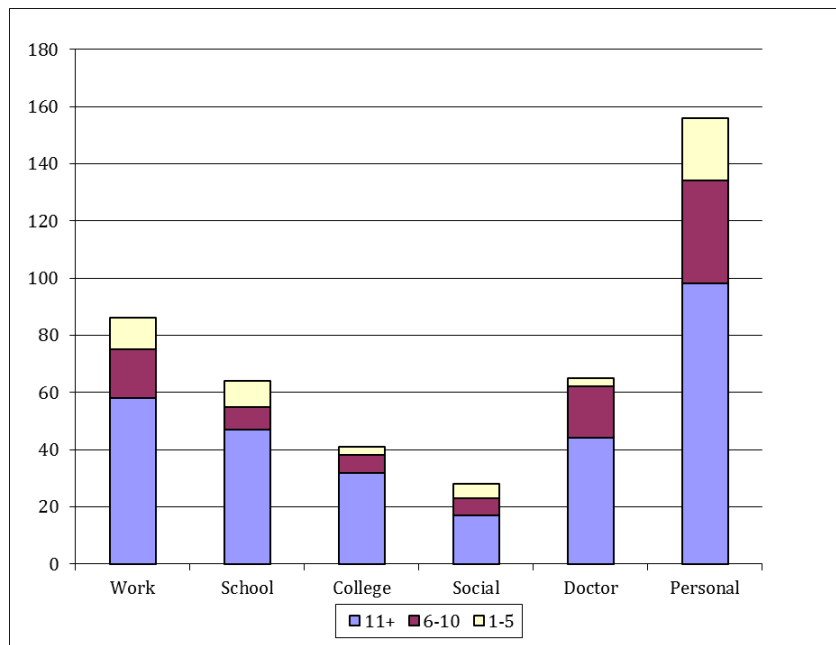
Exhibit 3: Trip Purpose



Rider Frequency by Trip Purpose

The following exhibit compares trip purpose by rider frequency. The comparison of purpose by frequency indicates that the majority of all survey respondents ride JATA eleven or more times per month and that even those riders who use JATA less frequently tend to use it for general quality of life trips including work, school, college, social visits, medical appointments, and personal errands. This is an indication that JATA is a viable option for both daily and sporadic trip purposes.

Exhibit 4: Frequency of Using JATA by Trip Purpose



Mode of Transportation

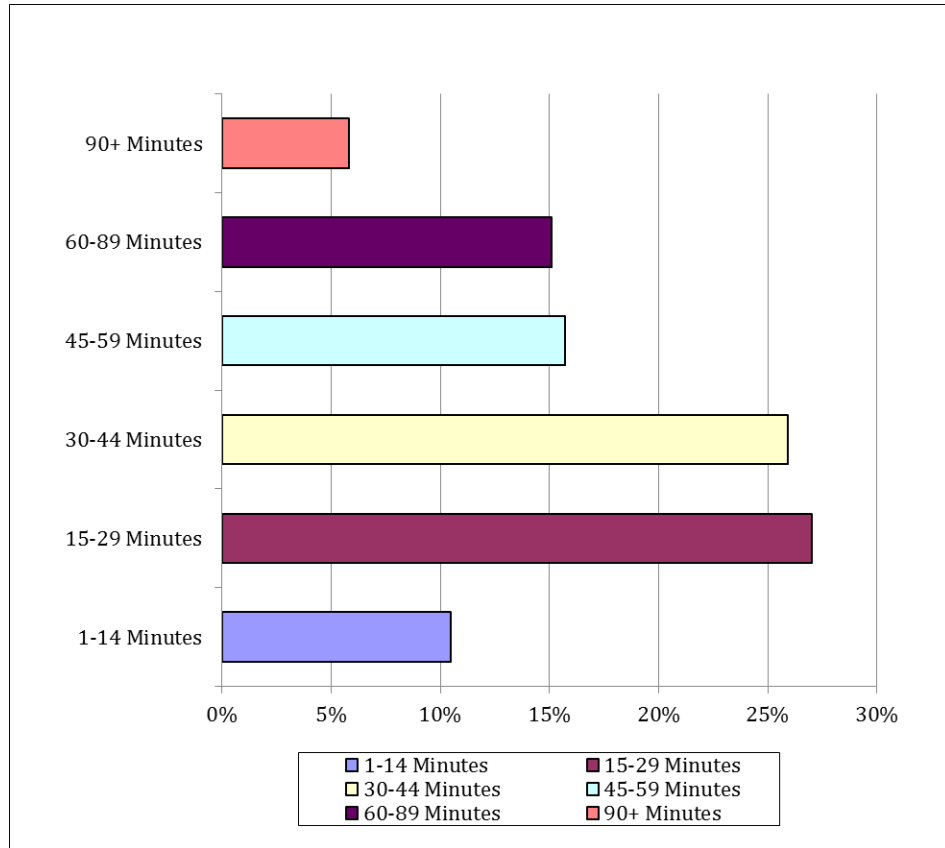
As a follow-up to the question of trip purpose, passengers were asked to name their primary mode of transportation to work and non-work activities. More than 68 percent of survey respondents indicated that JATA is their primary mode of transportation to work. Others walk (11%), drive alone (7%), carpool (6%), bike (1%), or have no commute to work.

For non-work related trips, the distribution was similar to the work trip modes. Nearly 66 percent of survey respondents ride JATA for their non-work trips. Another 11 percent drive alone, 16 percent walk, 6 percent carpool, and 2 percent bike.

Length of a One-Way Ride on JATA

The length of a one-way trip is defined as the length of time including getting to the bus stop, riding on the bus, and getting from the bus to a final destination. For approximately 28 percent of JATA passengers, the trip takes between 15 and 29 minutes. Another 26 percent of passengers indicated that their one-way trip takes 30 to 44 minutes. Approximately 11 percent of passengers indicated that their trip time is less than 15 minutes. Over 30 percent of passengers need between 45 and 90 or more minutes to complete a one-way trip from door to door. Approximately 6 percent of passengers indicated that their trip requires more than 90 minutes.

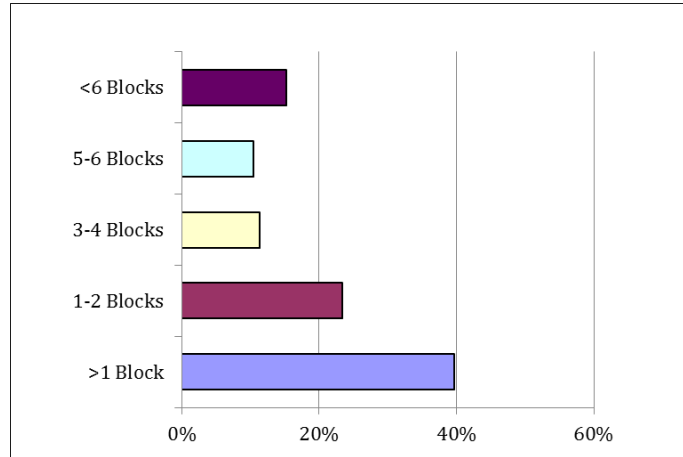
Exhibit 5: Travel Time



Distance Traveled to Bus Stop

Most passengers live near the bus stop where they board the vehicle. Approximately 42 percent of survey respondents traveled less than one block to the bus stop where they boarded the vehicle. Another 24 percent of passengers traveled one to two blocks to the bus stop. This is balanced by another 34 percent of passengers who traveled three or more blocks to the bus stop.

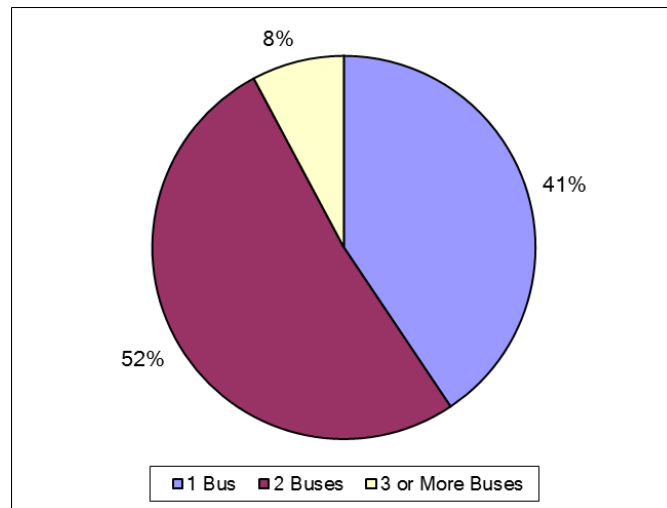
Exhibit 6: Distance Traveled to Bus Stop



Transfers to Other Buses

The number of transfers an individual takes to complete a one-way trip can add travel time to the ride. For JATA, a large majority of passenger trips can be completed with one or no transfers. Approximately 52 percent of survey respondents use two buses (i.e., one transfer) to complete a one-way trip. Another 41 percent of passengers are able to complete a one-way trip with one bus (i.e., no transfers). This is balanced by approximately eight (8) percent of passengers who indicated that they transfer two or more times to complete a one-way trip.

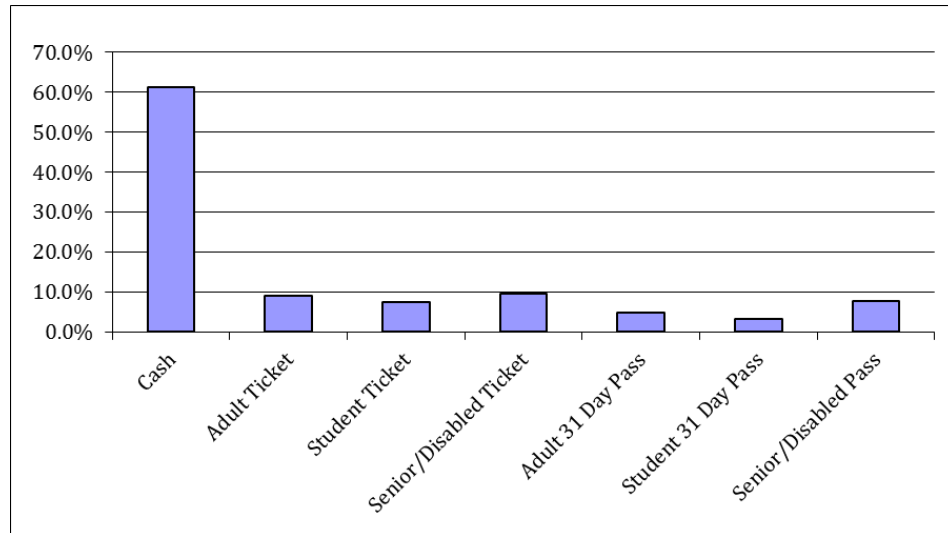
Exhibit 7: Transfers per One-Way Trip



Passenger Fare Payment

The majority of JATA passengers, 61 percent, indicated that they pay a cash fare when using JATA. No other fare payment option is used by more than 10 percent of passengers.

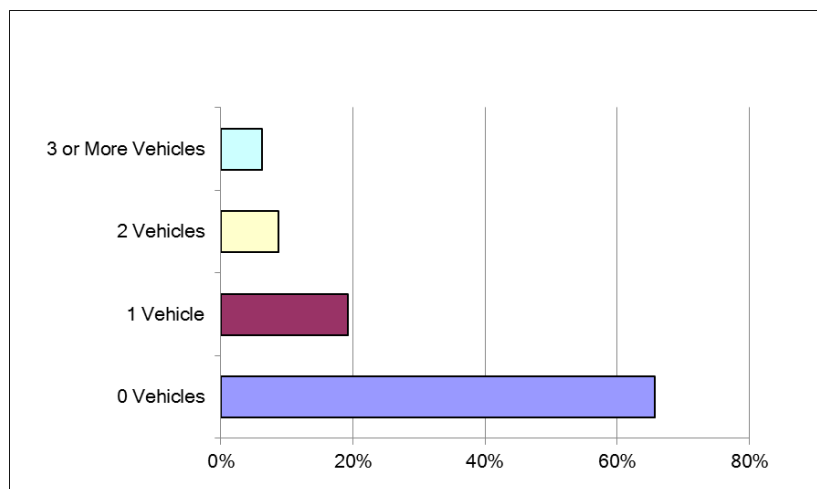
Exhibit 8: Distribution of Fare Payments by Type



Vehicle Availability

Although the option to not own a vehicle is sometimes a choice, the availability of vehicles to a passenger's household is more often than not an indication of whether that passenger is a choice transit rider or someone who has no other, or limited, means of transportation. JATA is like most transit systems in small urban and rural communities in that the majority of survey respondents (66%) had no available vehicle. Of the households with an available vehicle, most (nearly 20%) had one car. The remaining 14 percent of passenger households had two or more vehicles.

Exhibit 9: Vehicle Availability per Household



Passengers were asked how many individuals in their household have a valid driver's license. This statistic is an indication of choice riders (someone who rides because they want to ride) versus non-choice riders (someone who has no automobile and is likely to have no alternative mode of transportation). Survey results indicated that 40 percent of passengers have no one in their household with a valid driver's license. Nearly 31 percent of passengers have one licensed driver in their house, and 22 percent have two licensed drivers per household. Less than 8 percent have three or more licensed drivers.

Customer Satisfaction Ratings

Passengers were asked to rate their satisfaction with JATA in 16 service categories. Overall, customers were very satisfied with the service. The chart in Exhibit 8 illustrates the average ratings in each category. On a scale of 1 to 6 (with 6 being the highest), the majority of JATA passengers rated the service at 6 in every category. The overall average satisfaction rating was 4.93 out of a possible 6.00 rating.

The service characteristics with the highest average rating score were as follows:

- ◆ Availability of JATA resources (5.01 average score)
- ◆ Feeling safe and secure using JATA (4.98 average score)
- ◆ Readability of Schedules (4.81 average score)
- ◆ Clean Buses (4.69 average score)
- ◆ Bus stops close to passenger's home (4.68 average score)
- ◆ Courteous Drivers (4.65 average score)

Service characteristics with the lowest average rating scores were as follows:

- ◆ JATA meets the needs of rural residents (4.46 average score)
- ◆ I can quickly go where I want (4.45 average score)
- ◆ Days of service (4.37 average score)
- ◆ Buses are usually on time (4.30 average score)
- ◆ Hours of service (4.06 average score)

Exhibit 10: Systemwide Average Customer Satisfaction Ratings

Service Topics	Rating Average
Hours of Service	4.06
Days of Service	4.37
JATA Information is Easy to Find	4.72
Schedules are Easy to Read	4.88
Bus Fares are Reasonable	4.81
Buses are usually On-Time	4.30
Buses come Frequently Enough	4.62
Bus stops are Close to My Home	4.71
Sometimes I Miss My Connection	3.77
I Can Quickly Go Where I Want	4.45
Drivers are Courteous	4.68
Buses are Clean	4.74
Meets Needs of Rural Residents	4.46
JATA is a Valuable Resource	5.10
I Feel Safe & Secure Using JATA	5.06
Overall JATA Service Satisfaction	4.99

Top 3 Ways for JATA to Improve

Passengers were asked to select their three top priorities for improving JATA service. According to 321 passenger survey results, 68 percent of passengers would like for JATA to extend its hours of service. Approximately 58 percent of passengers would like for JATA to expand its routes and schedule in the County. Similarly, nearly 55 percent of passengers would like for JATA to expand its routes and schedules in the City. The following table illustrates the distribution of priorities from JATA passengers in order of highest to lowest priority.

Exhibit 11: Top 3 Passenger Rated Priorities for Improving JATA by 2018

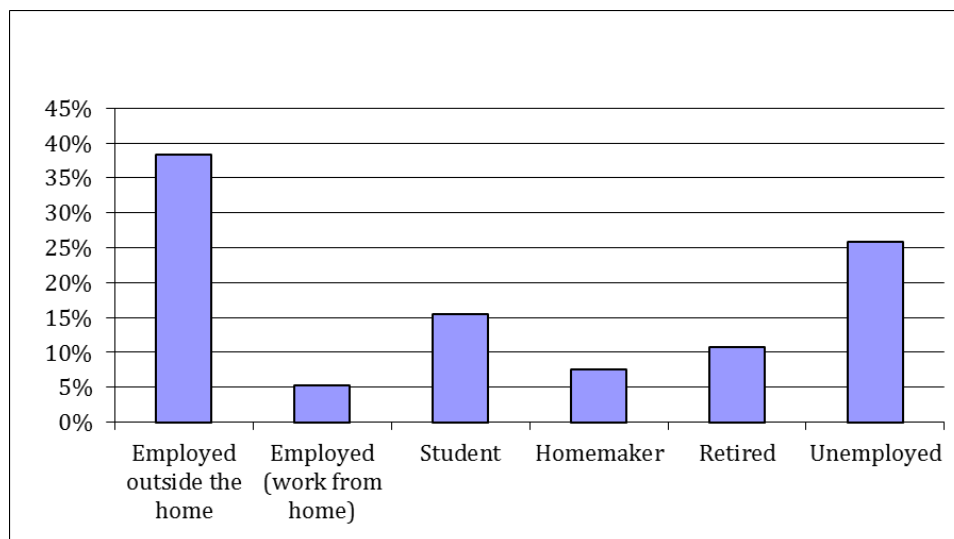
Priority Topics	Response Percent
Extend hours	68%
Expand route and schedule in county	58%
Expand route and schedule in city	55%
Reduce cost - - be more effective	32%
Improve quality and on time performance	20%
Improve public awareness	17%
Improve fleet and facilities	15%
Improve information/website/signage	12%
Improve safety and security	12%

Passenger Demographics

In order to continue providing the most appropriate service to its consumers, it is important for JATA to understand the current demographics and socio-economic characteristics of its passengers. The following charts provide a summary of passenger characteristics of survey respondents.

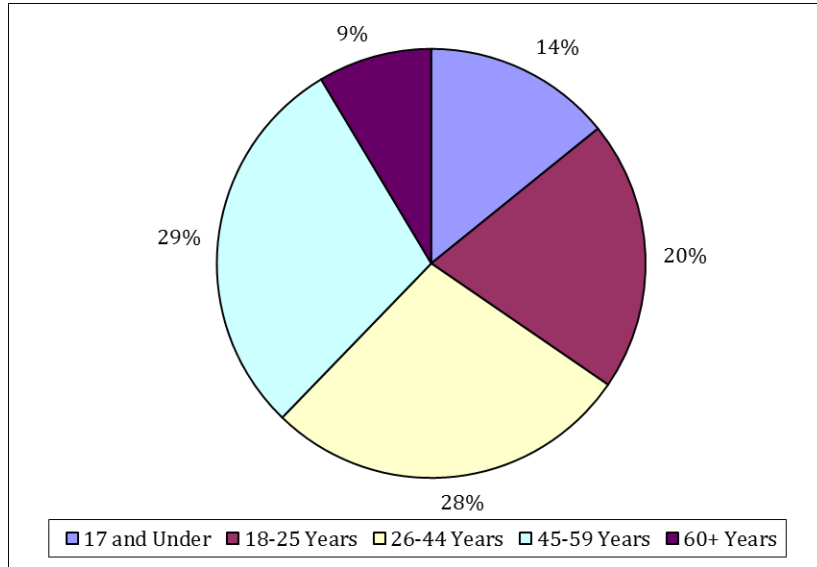
Nearly 40 percent of survey respondents indicated that they are employed and work outside of their home. Only five percent are employed and work from home. Another 25 percent are unemployed. A smaller percent of respondents were students (16 percent); retired (11 percent); or a homemaker (8 percent).

Exhibit 12: Employment or Student Status



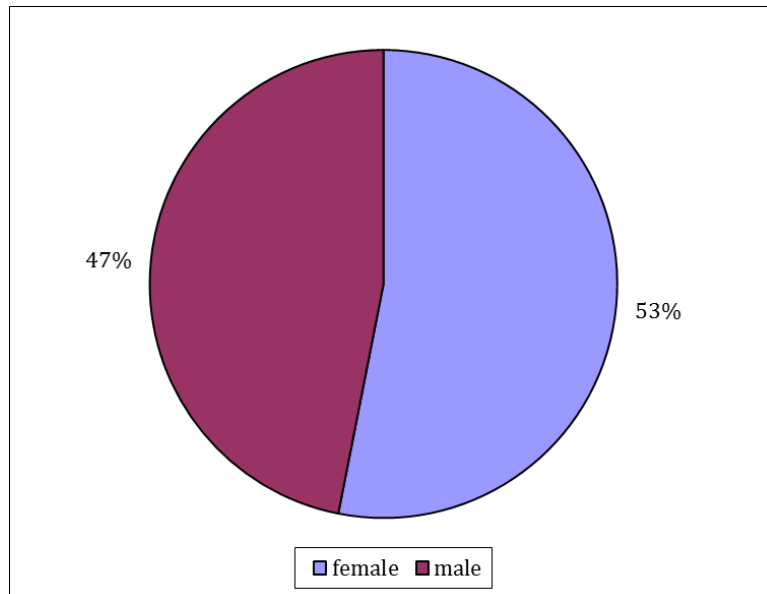
The age distribution of survey respondents was balanced among the working age groups. Approximately 29 percent of respondents were between ages 45 and 59 years. Another 28 percent were between 26 and 44 years. Twenty percent were between ages 18 and 25 years.

Exhibit 13: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents



Approximately 53 percent of survey respondents were female and 47 percent were male.

Exhibit 14: Gender Distribution of Passengers

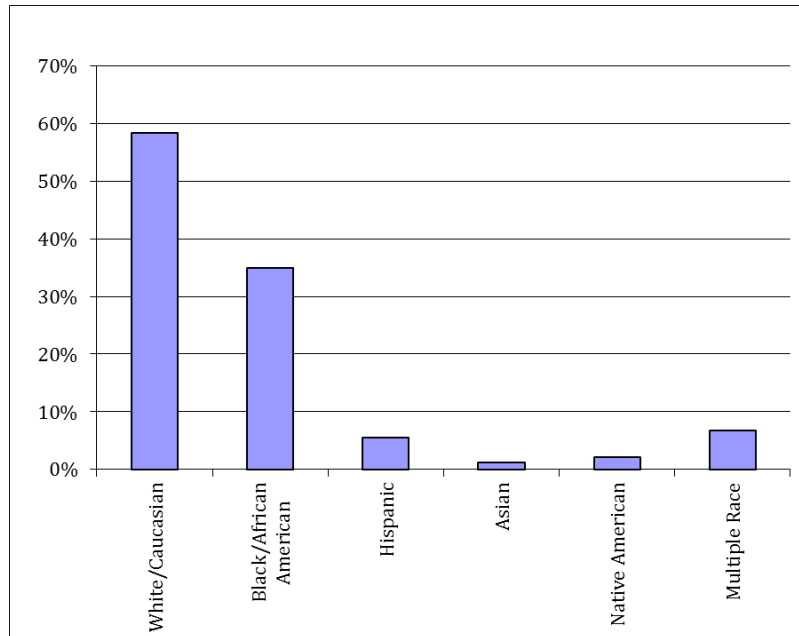


Nearly 59 percent of survey respondents indicated that their race or ethnicity was white or Caucasian. Another 35 percent indicated that their race or ethnicity was black or African American. The remaining passenger ethnicities included Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and multiple race.

All but one survey respondent indicated that he or she was born in the United States of America. One survey respondent was born in Mexico.

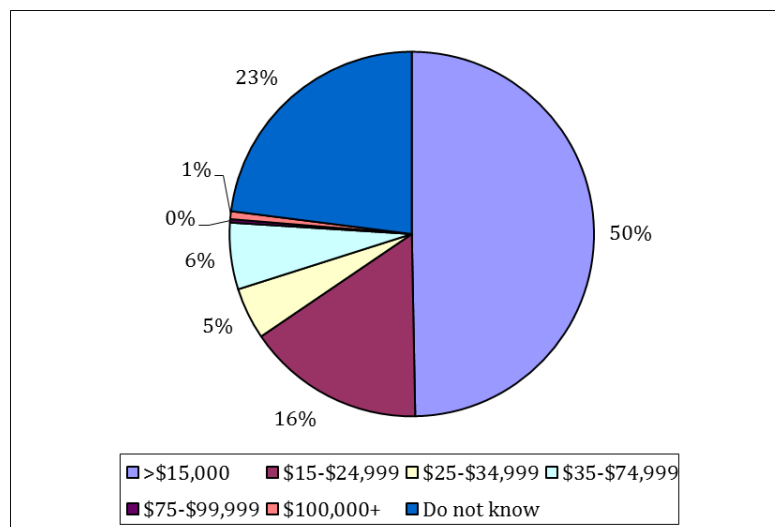
Approximately 99 percent of survey respondents indicated that they speak English “Very Well.”

Exhibit 15: Race or Ethnicity of Passenger



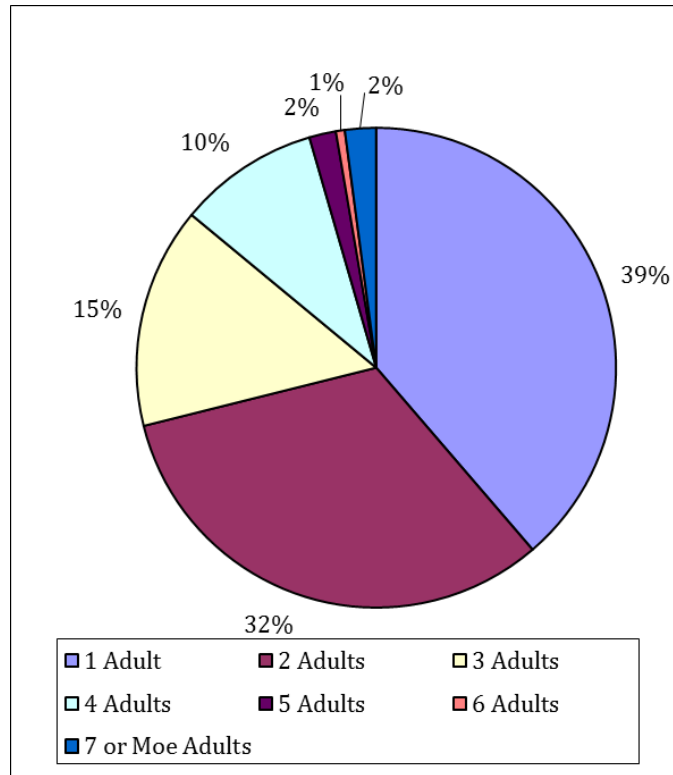
Household size and income are indicators of the passengers who are above and below the poverty level. Survey results indicate that half of survey respondents have a household income of less than \$15,000 per year. Approximately 23 percent did not report their annual household income. Approximately 16 percent earn between \$15,000 and \$24,999 per year. The remaining passengers earn \$25,000 or more.

Exhibit 16: Passenger Annual Household Income



Nearly 39 percent of survey respondents live in single person households. Another 32 percent live in a household with two adults (defined as age 18 or older). Nearly 15 percent live in a household with three adults while 10 percent live in a household with four adults.

Exhibit 17: Number of Adults per Household



SUMMARY OF PASSENGER SURVEY

Survey results include a total of 397 responses from passengers. The majority of passengers who completed a survey ride JATA eleven or more days per month. Approximately half of the survey respondents earn an annual household income of less than \$15,000. Approximately 39 percent of survey respondents have one adult per household. And, approximately 66 percent of survey respondents have no available vehicle at home, which is often an indication that the passengers ride JATA as their primary transportation resource. The age distribution of survey respondents was evenly distributed among the working age groups (generally ages 18 and older).

Customer satisfaction for JATA service is generally strong. When asked the top three most important priorities for JATA over the next three years, survey respondents indicated the following, in order of priority:

- (1) Improve/Expand JATA’s hours of service;
- (2) Expand JATA’s routes and schedules throughout Jackson County; and,
- (3) Expand JATA’s routes and schedules within the City limits of Jackson.