

# COVID-19 General Rider Survey Report

*Updated 07.01.2020*

## Background & Methods

Public transit ridership is down everywhere and Utah is no exception. UTA is making every effort to keep customers safe and protect public health, while still getting people where they need to go. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided UTA the opportunity to reevaluate where and how we provide public transit solutions to the community. In recognizing the need for flexibility and taking a measured approach, we will be able to implement strategic and sustainable service for the community we serve. In an effort to bring additional community-informed perspectives into planning for continued COVID-19 response and recovery at UTA, a series of surveys was developed to assess ridership trends and changes, as well as understand from a public perspective what has worked well, what can be improved, and what factors will influence decisions to get ridership back onboard in the future.

From May 6 – May 29, 2020, UTA collected survey responses from 1,204 transit riders. The survey was promoted and delivered through various channels, including UTA Customer Service, UTA Special Services, social media posts and advertisements, community partners, and listservs, including registered FAREPAY cardholders. The survey was made available in English and Spanish.

Questions about future plans for transit use were not asked on this survey. The survey sought to better understand current conditions, with the possibility for a second phase to understand riders' future plans as COVID-19 evolves. The pass partner survey does include questions about future plans; that controlled group offered an opportunity to understand how some riders are thinking about their future plans for public transit use.

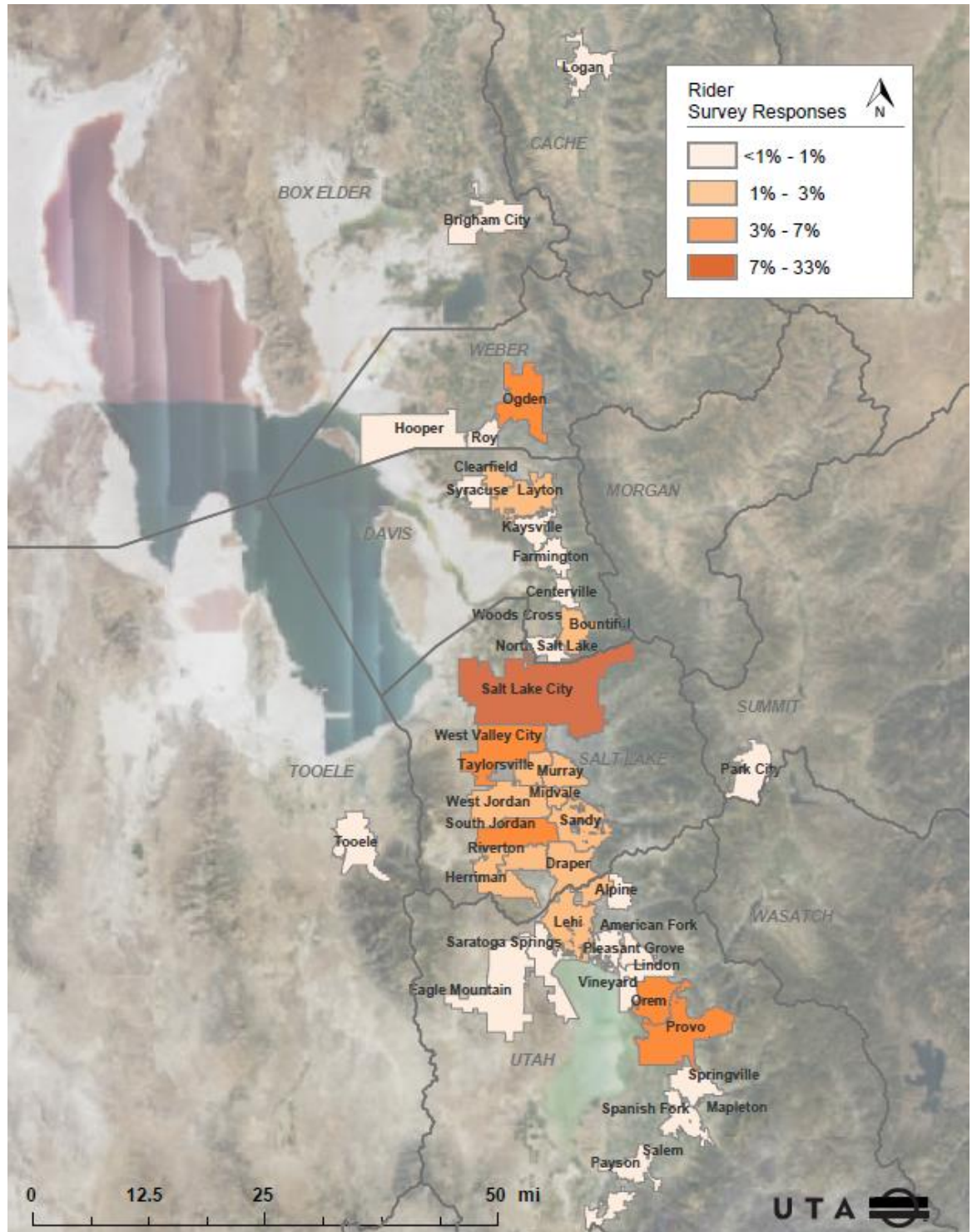
## Quantitative & Qualitative Analysis

Survey results have been compiled and analyzed for presentation in this document. Qualitative responses were thoroughly reviewed – each comment was read and assigned overarching themes to best reflect the participants' comments. Themes have been synthesized and summarized for context.

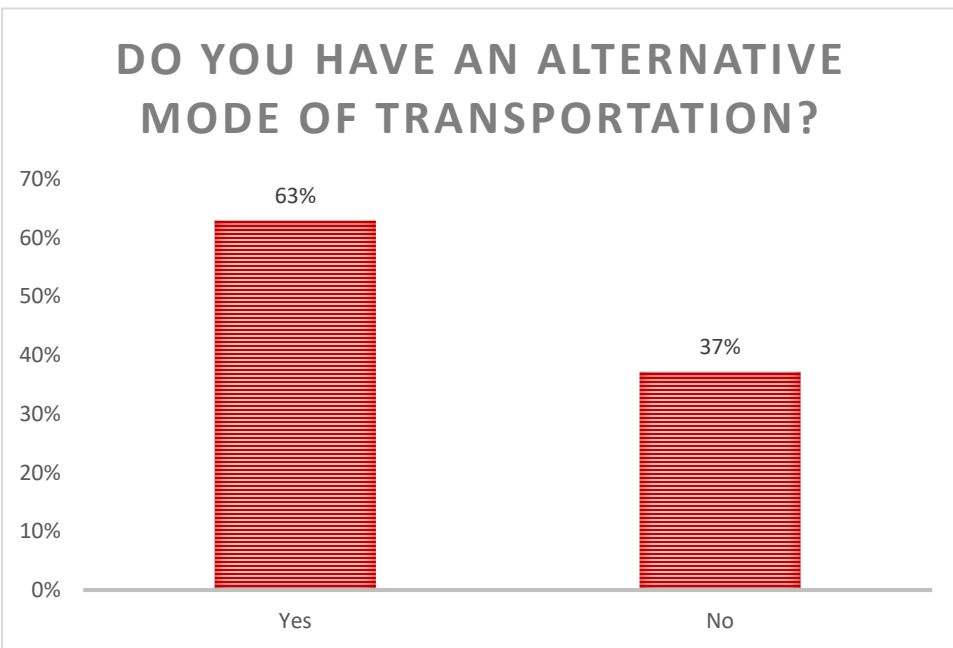
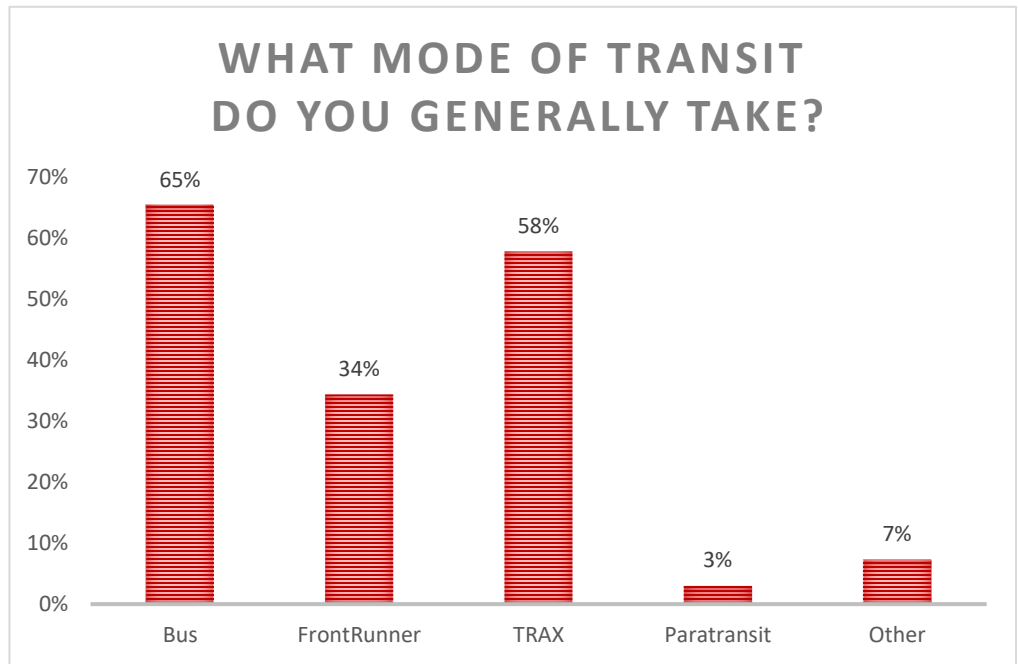
## Survey Findings

### Use of Transit

There were a total of 1,204 responses, from 89 unique zip codes, 79 from Utah (N=1,071). The map shows the distribution of survey responses by geographic region in Utah, determined by zip code.

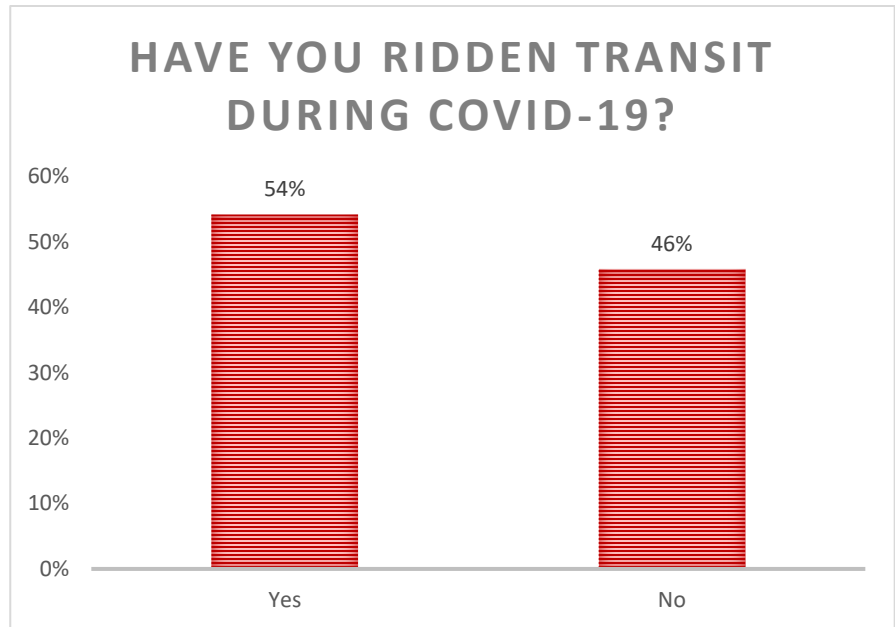


Survey participants indicated the most common mode of transit used (either pre- or during COVID-19) is Bus (65%, N=788), followed by TRAX (58%, N=696) and FrontRunner (34%, N=414). 3% (N=36) of survey participants indicated they used Paratransit and 7% (N=88) identified other modes. Other modes specified include UTA OnDemand by Via, streetcar, BRT, Rideshare, Flex, UVX, and other modes that are not public transit, such as cars, bikes, and Lyft/Uber. (N=1,204)



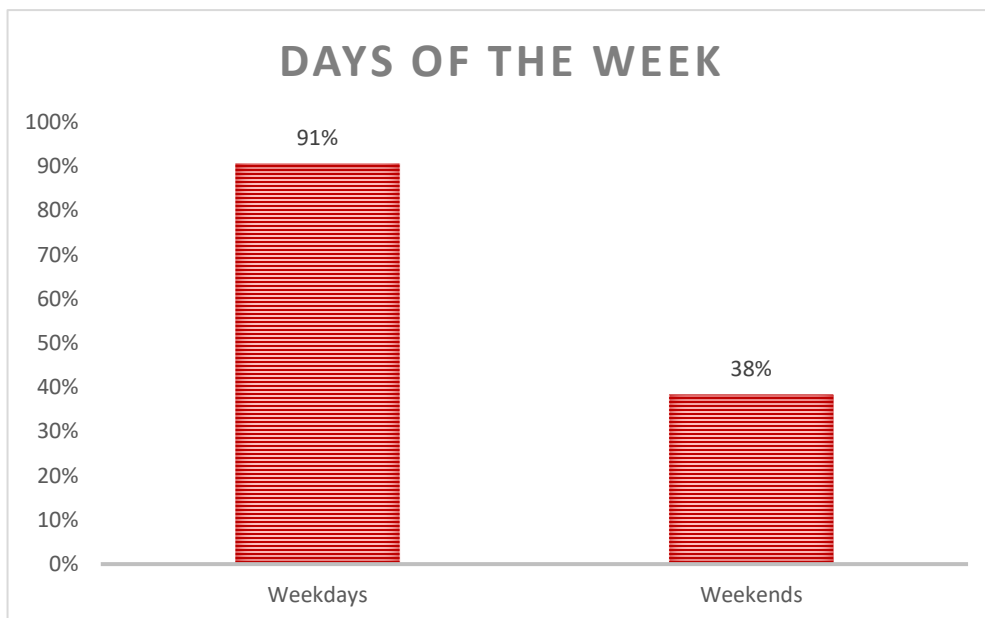
Survey participants were asked about their access to alternative modes of transportation should public transit not be available. 63% (N=743) responded that they do have alternative transportation available, while 37% (N=439) indicated that they do not. (N=1,182)

Over half of survey participants (54%, N=635) reported that they have ridden transit during the COVID-19 pandemic. (N=1,172)



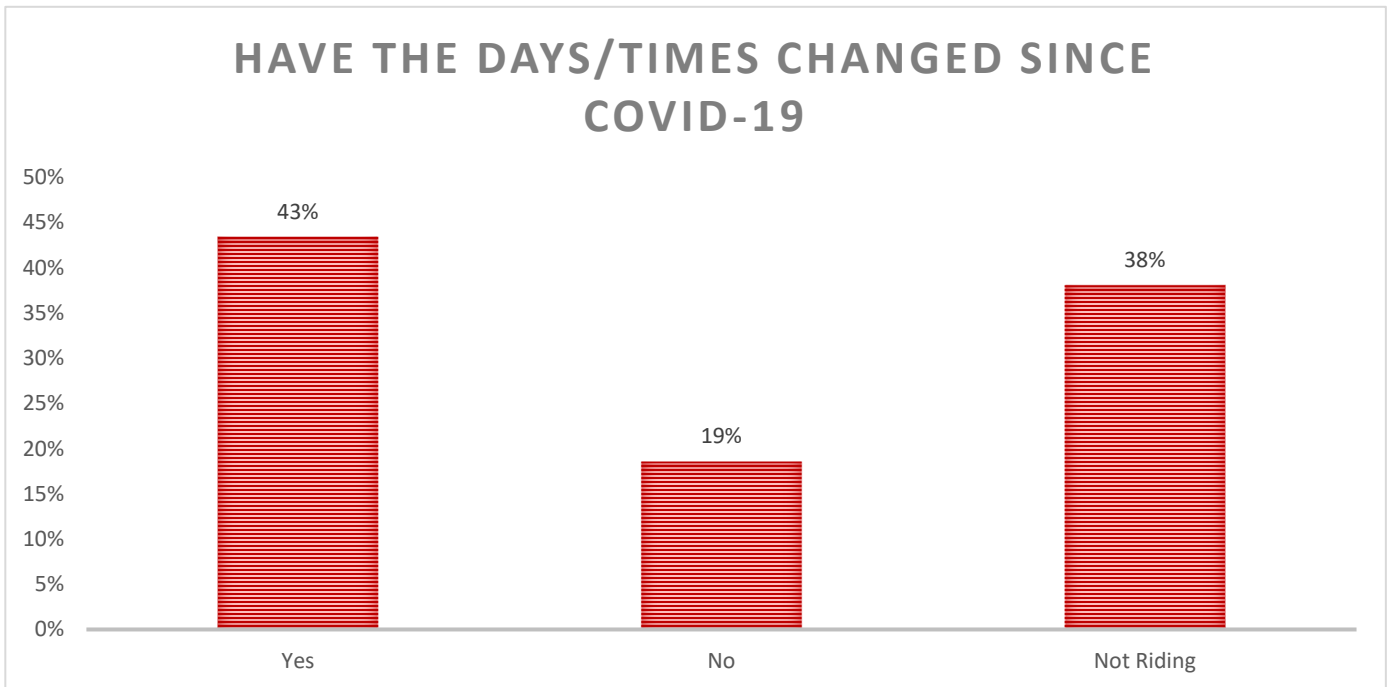
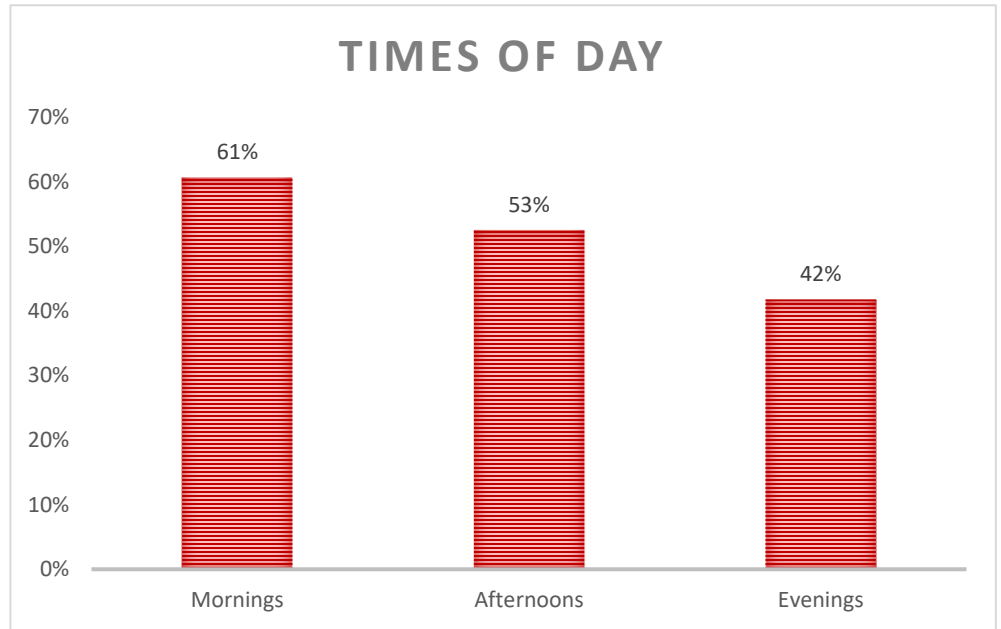
Survey participants were asked about the days and times they are currently riding:

Days of the Week		Times of Day	
Weekdays	91%, N=668	Mornings	61%, N=447
Weekends	38%, N=283	Afternoons	53%, N=387
		Evenings	42%, N=308

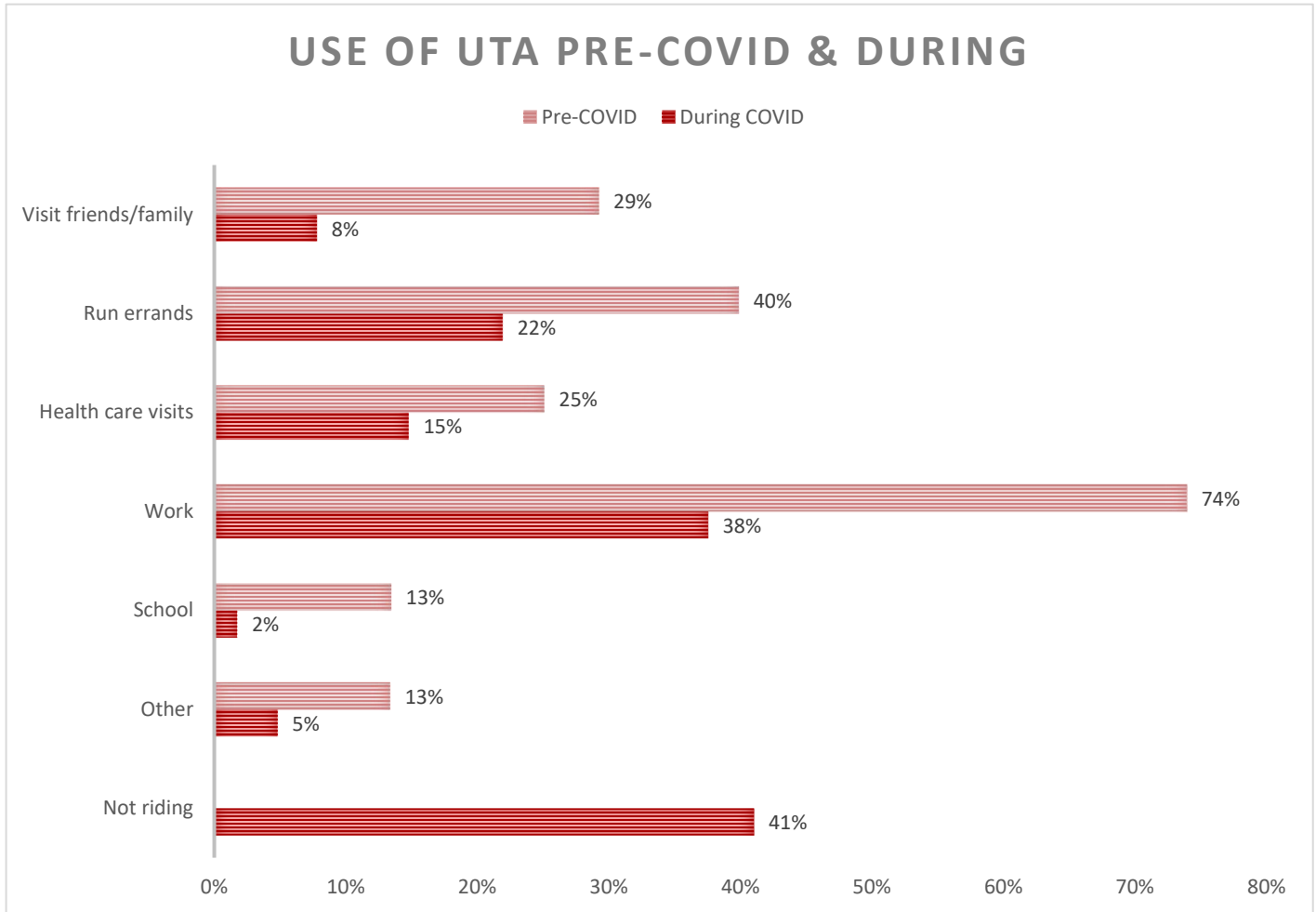


The majority of survey participants (91%) who are currently riding are doing so during the week. (N=737)

People are riding throughout the day, with mornings being the most common time to ride (61%). (N=737)

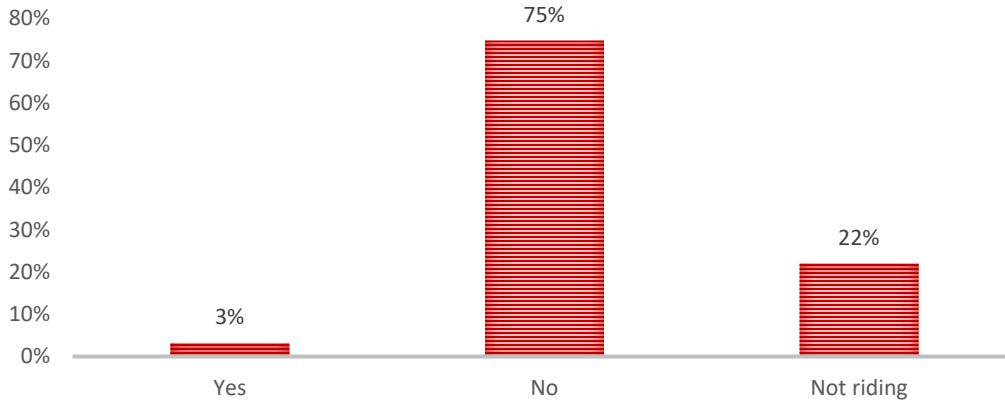


Survey participants were asked about their travel patterns and how things have changed since COVID-19. 43% (N=496) indicated that the days and times they ride transit have changed since the pandemic. 38% (N=435) indicated that they are not riding. Just looking at those who indicated they are still riding on this question (N=708), 70% said the days and times they travel have changed.



The survey compared how riders used UTA public transit prior to COVID-19 and how they are using it currently during COVID-19. Pre-COVID-19, work was the most common purpose for using UTA (74%, N=890), followed by running errands (40%, N=480), visiting friends and family (29%, N=352), and health care visits (25%, N=302). About 13% (N=161) identified other uses of transit pre-COVID-19, including leisure and recreation activities, events and performances, travel and airport, social engagements, and miscellaneous other uses. As expected, there are marked declines across all usage types. However, survey participants are still relying on public transit for essential trips including work (38%, N=452), errands (22%, N=264), and health care visits (15%, N=178) in relatively large numbers.

## ARE YOU NEW TO RIDING TRANSIT?



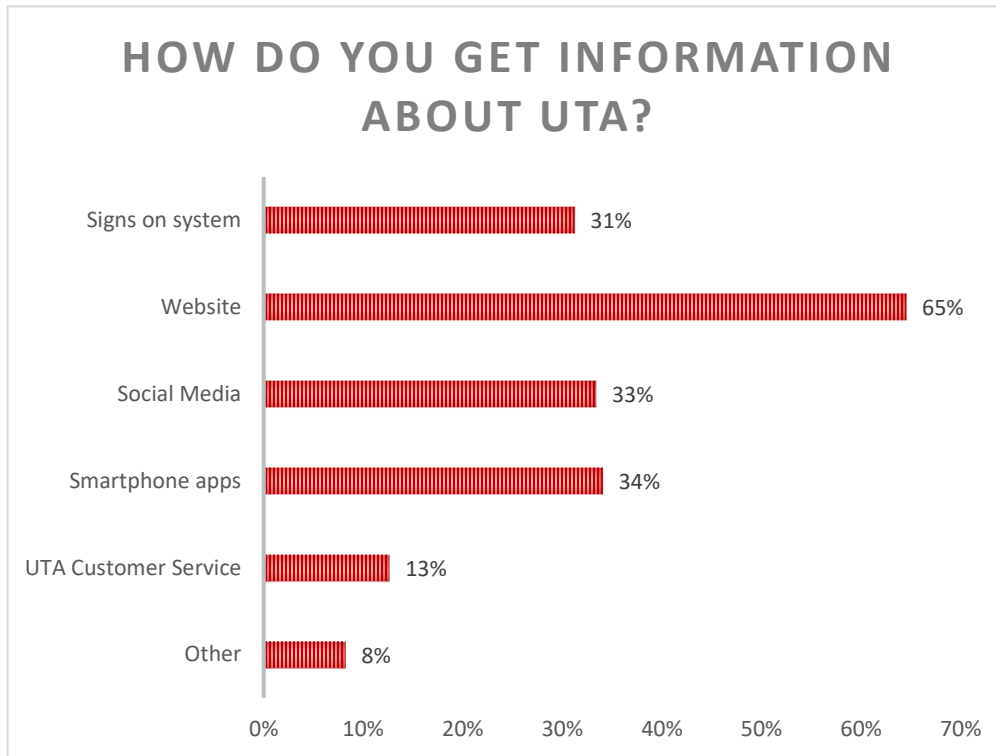
Survey participants were asked whether they are new to riding public transit during the last 2 months. Only 3% (N=37) indicated that they are new riders, while the rest indicated that they were not riding or were not new to transit. (N=1149)

### ***Use of Transit – Key Takeaways***

- Most survey participants currently ride or previously rode bus (65%) and TRAX (58%). 34% ride or rode FrontRunner.
- Over half (54%) of the survey participants are still riding transit since COVID-19 emerged in Utah and 3% report that they are new to riding transit during the last two months.
- 37% depend on public transit and do not have an alternative mode of transportation available to them.
- Riders are still taking transit throughout the week, but weekdays and mornings tend to be the most common times to ride.
- 43% say the days and times they take transit have changed since COVID-19. This may suggest, among other explanations, that alternative work schedules have been put in place.
- Not surprisingly, all uses of transit dropped between pre-COVID-19 and during COVID-19. However, the data show there are riders that still rely on transit for essential trips including work (38%), errands (22%), and healthcare (15%).

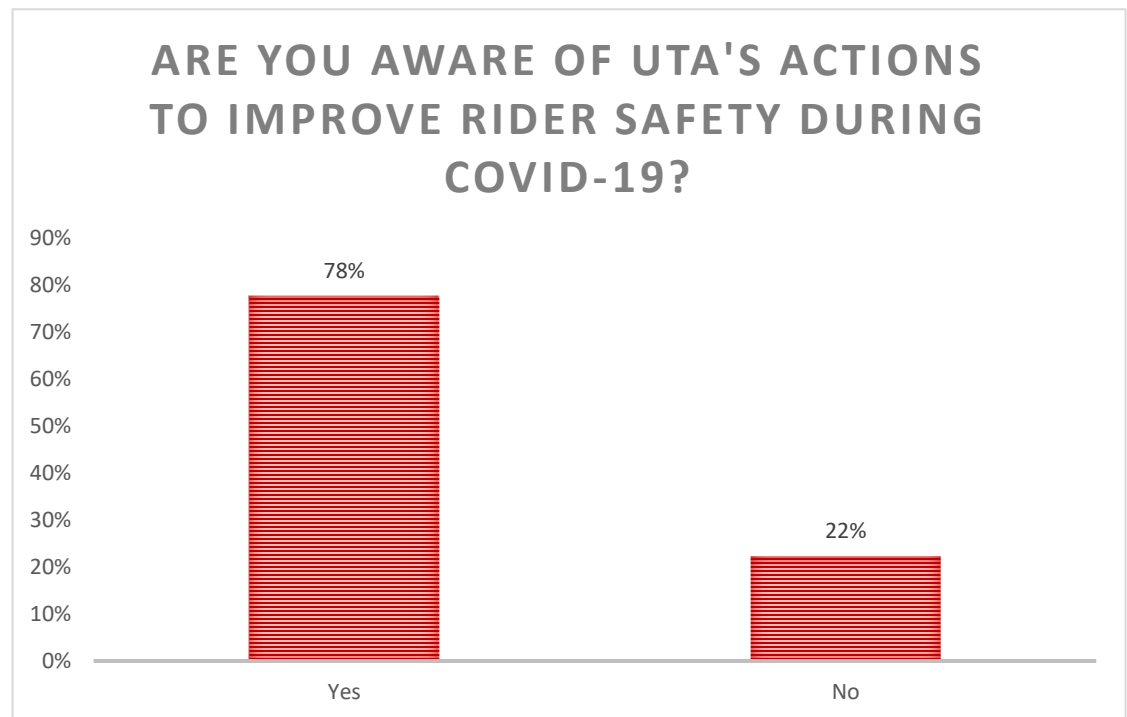
## UTA's COVID-19 Response

Survey participants were asked a series of questions regarding UTA's response to improve rider safety during COVID-19.



When asked about how they get information regarding UTA, many survey participants indicated that they used UTA's website (65%, N=777). After the website, the most common methods for getting information included smartphone apps (34%, N=410), social media (33%, N=402), and signage on the system (31%, N=376). Participants also said they got information from Customer Service, as well as other sources, including local news, email, family/friends, word of mouth, transit schedules, Google Maps, and operators. Survey participants were able to select more than one answer to this question.

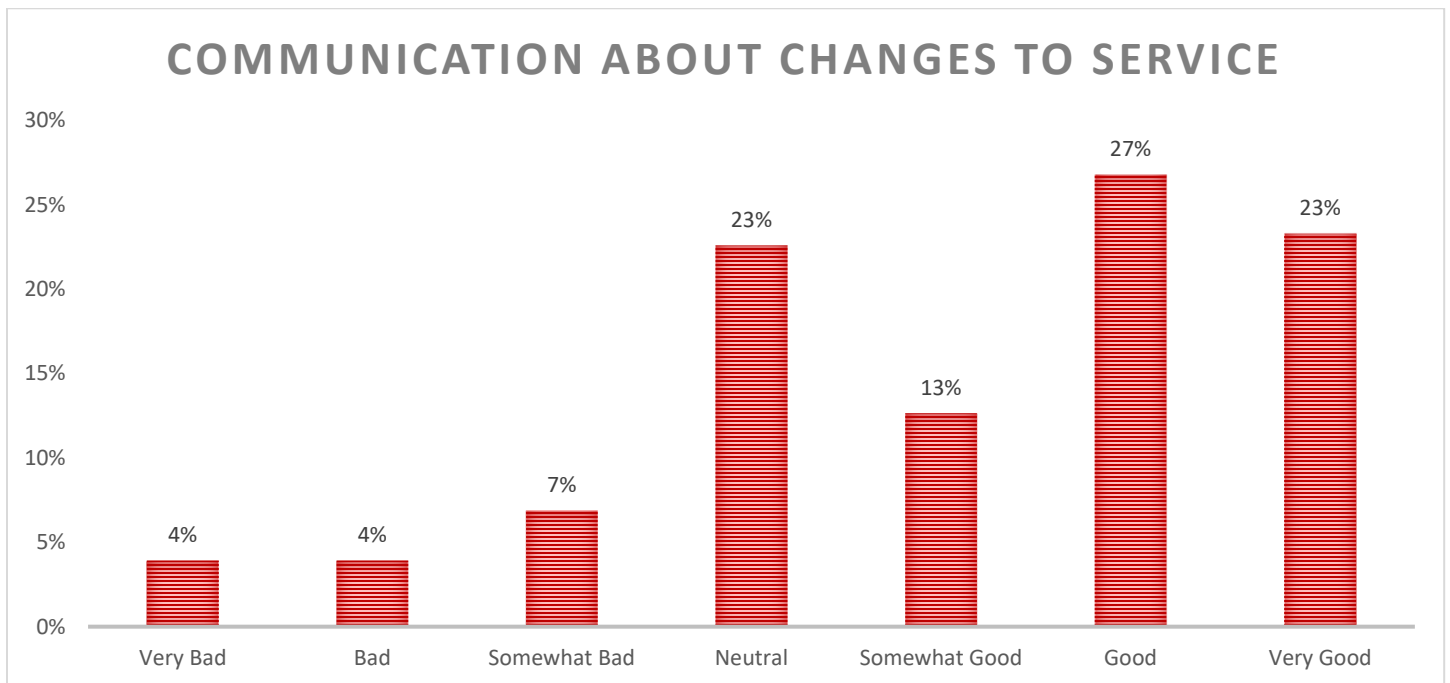
78% indicated that they are aware of actions that UTA has taken to improve rider safety during COVID-19, while only 22% said they were not aware. (N=1,173)



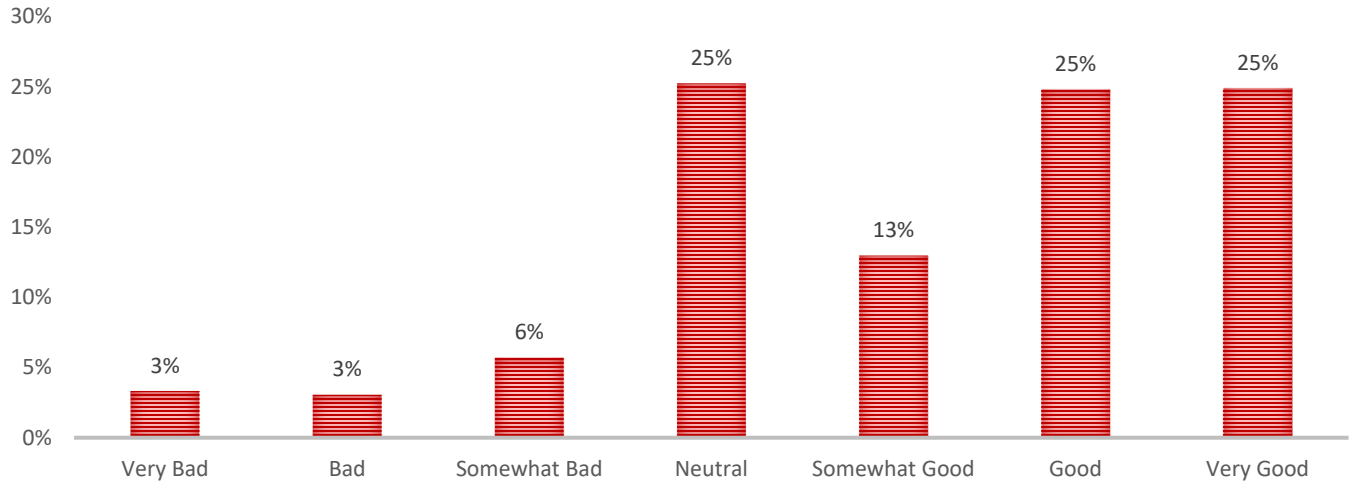


Survey participants were asked to rate UTA’s response on several measures. A scale of 1 to 7 was used, with 1 being “Very Bad” to 7 being “Very Good”. The mean score ratings are displayed in the table below and the distribution of responses on each measure can be seen in the charts that follow. “N/A” responses were removed from the total number (N) to calculate mean scores and distributions.

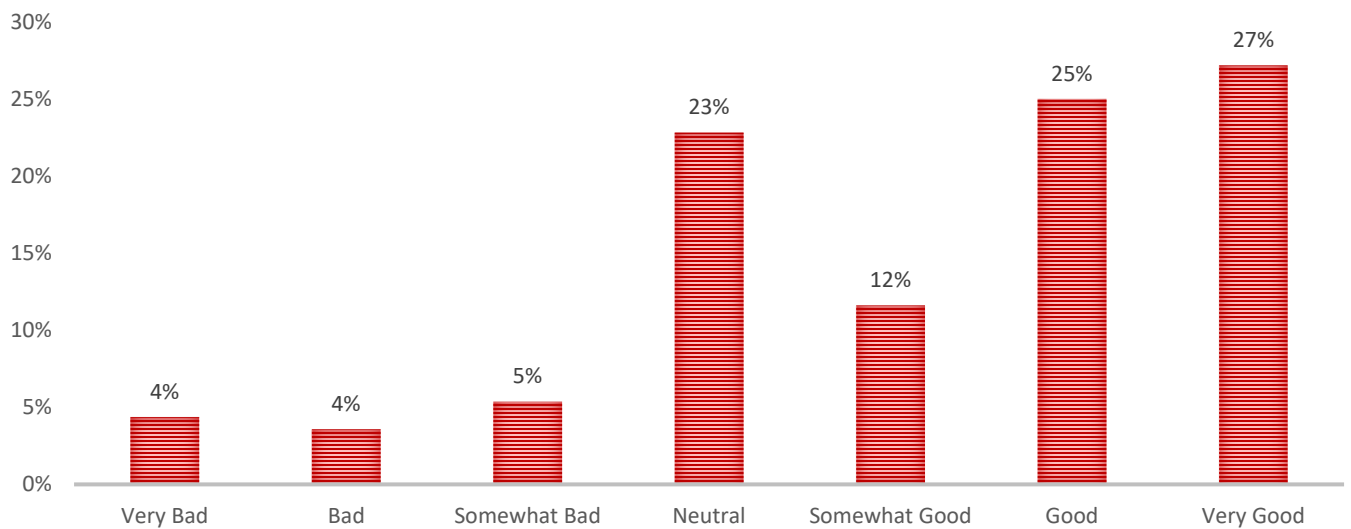
Measure	Rating	N/A	(N) – N/A
Communication about changes to service	5.1	1	1,147
Communication about changes to cleaning	5.1	1	1,141
Safety while riding	5.2	142	1,007
Cleaning of vehicles	5.3	147	997
Providing service	5	122	1,021



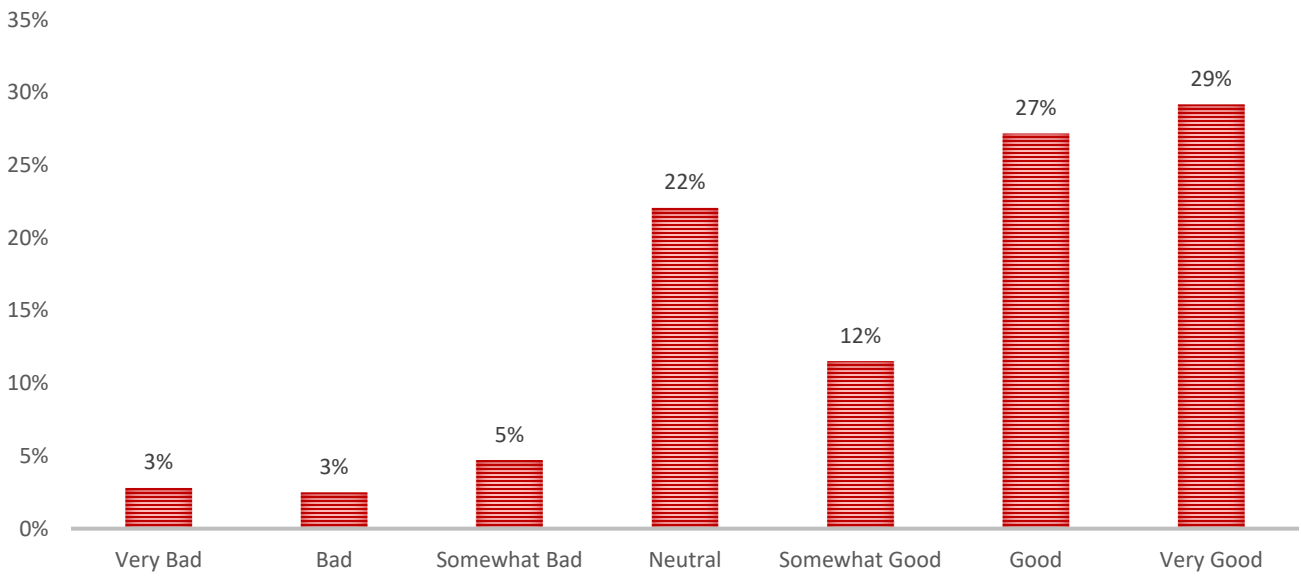
### COMMUNICATION ABOUT CHANGES TO CLEANING



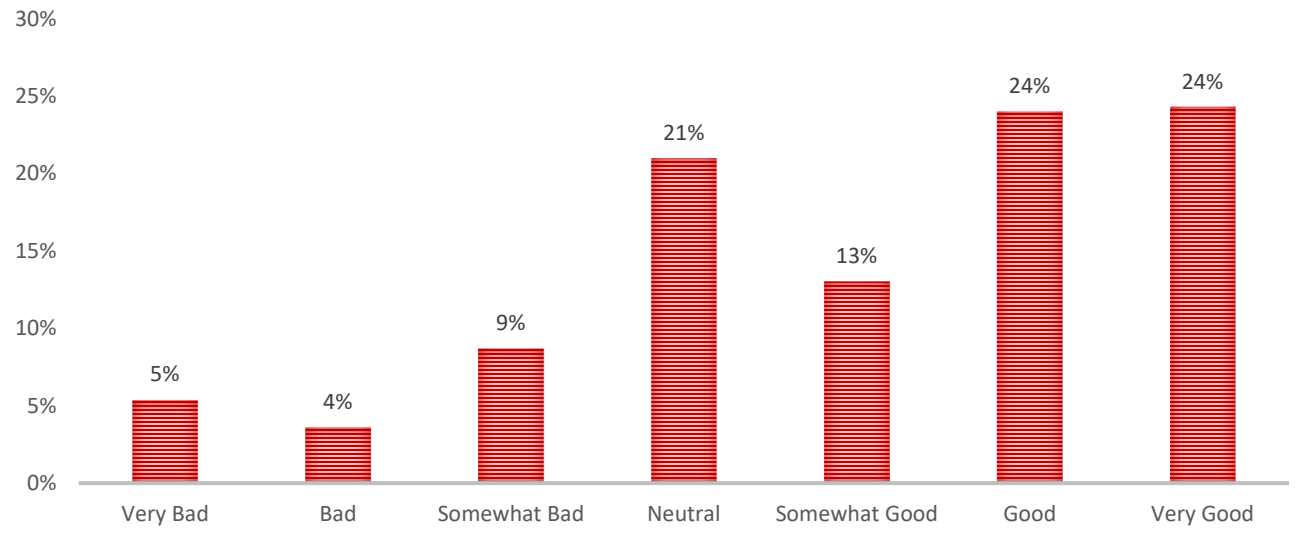
### SAFETY WHILE RIDING



### CLEANING OF VEHICLES



### PROVIDING SERVICE



### ***UTA's COVID-19 Response – Key Takeaways***

- The majority (78%) of survey participants were aware of UTA's actions in response to COVID-19. Most indicated that their main source of information about UTA is the website, followed by social media, smartphone apps, and signs on the system.
- On the five rating measures survey respondents leaned "Neutral" to "Very Good" on all measures. Providing service received the lowest mean score of the measures. There were a significant number of "N/A" responses to measures on safety while riding, cleaning of vehicles, and providing service, most likely due to participants who are not currently riding the system.
- The survey suggests that riders are aware of UTA's actions regarding safety measures in response to COVID-19 and generally believe UTA is doing a good job communicating changes and implementing actions to improve rider safety.

## Qualitative Responses

Survey participants were asked two open-ended questions about their experiences riding transit. All responses were read thoroughly and themes were identified. Each comment was coded for a theme and categorized to create a summary. Each question below provides a quick snapshot of the themes via a word cloud – theme popularity is approximately represented by font size. Below the word cloud is an in-depth look at the riders’ comments, including direct quotes, by assigned themes and number of mentions.

### What actions are working well?

A total of 482 participants responded to the question “What actions are working well?” The top four specific themes that emerged include 1) Cleaning & Disinfecting, 2) Continuing Operations, 3) Communication, and 4) Operator Protections. Many also made comments about the system and measures being generally good and safe.



### COVID-19 Precautions

**Generally Good/Safe:** comment speaks in general about things working well, feeling safe, etc. (38)

Many comments expressed generally that they feel good about the actions that UTA is taking.

*“Muy buen servicio.”*

*“It’s great to see extra cleaning and safety measures in place to keep riders safe.”*

**Operator protections:** comment mentions that the protections for operators are working well. (33)

**Rear Door Boarding:** comment mentions that rear door boarding on buses is working well. (32)

Participants appreciated the measures put in place to provide operators with protections and lower risk of exposure, including rear door boarding procedures.

*"I appreciate that the **front of busses are blocked off to protect drivers.**"*

*"Entering through back doors of bus and **separating driver and passengers.**"*

**Social distancing:** comment mentions that social distancing on the system is working well. (31)

Similarly, some participants commented positively on efforts to encourage social distancing on the system. Because the survey was administered throughout the month of May and some passenger loads began to increase during that time, the ridership context fluctuated depending on when participants responded to the survey. As noted below and throughout the three surveys, social distancing and passenger loads are a concern for riders.

*"The operators and others are **cognizant of the situation and social distancing.** I have seen adjustments and recommendations on the routes I am taking which create a safe environment. I had to ride a bus bridge the other day due to construction on the rail lines. The bus was crowded. The operators quickly got passengers moved to a second bus to create social distancing and comfort."*

**Automatic door opening:** comment mentions automatic door opening. (28)

Riders appreciate that doors are opening automatically to avoid high-touch surfaces on transit, including buttons. Some expressed that this should be standard practice.

*"I love that I do not have to touch the buttons to get onto the TRAX...do not ever stop this - this should be the standard."*

**Hand sanitizer:** comment mentions hand sanitizer on system. (8)

Where hand sanitizer is available on the system, customers appreciate it and request it on other modes.

*"I like [that] Fronrunner has hand sanitizer on board, maybe TRAX cars could get dispensers too?"*

**Masks:** comment mentions riders and employees wearing or providing masks on the system. (14)

Riders appreciate that masks have been made available to the public. Comments are also specific to appreciation for operators and train hosts who are wearing masks while on the system. Again, context is important – masks and PPE stand out as major concerns to riders and largely the sentiment is that they need to be strongly encouraged and worn more often.

*"Glad to see **most drivers are wearing masks.**"*

## Cleaning & Disinfecting Practices

**Cleaning and disinfecting:** comment mentions that the cleaning and disinfecting practices are working well. (109)

Increased cleaning and disinfecting procedures on the UTA system are not going unnoticed. Riders recognize this as a noticeable and welcome change that they hope will be sustained.

*"I like knowing UTA is taking **extra measures to keep the vehicles clean**. I hope you continue, even after the pandemic."*

## UTA Service

**Continuing operations:** comment mentions that it is good that UTA is continuing to operate and provide service. (51)

UTA is an essential service and our ridership appreciates the continued presence and operations in the community. We heard from many individuals still riding the system, including essential workers and captive riders.

*"Staying open and **servicing the public that depends on UTA** for work and other needs."*

*"**Keeping people like me working and able to get food to my home.**"*

**Reduced schedule:** comment mentions that the reduced schedule is working well. (20)

Although the reduced schedule presents challenges for the public, commenters noted that this reduced schedule has been acceptable particularly as it relates to decreasing ridership.

*"I do think it was kind of appropriate to **reduce how frequent TRAX was going when were in the red zone**. People did decrease the use of the TRAX."*

**Employees:** comment speaks positively about UTA employees. (19)

Comments express appreciation for helpful, present, and caring employees.

*"The **friendliness of the bus drivers on UVX and 862 bus rides**. They are phenomenal. They go the extra mile with all the clients that take their bus. They let us know and fill us on all the things that's going on with COVID. I am greatly impressed on their feedback and knowledge and all their professionalism. I so appreciate it so very much."*

**Train cars:** comment mentions train cars. (7)

Comments recognize the addition of train cars have helped with social distancing. Where cars have not been added it does seem to create some issues for riders (noted in the next section below).

*"Adding **additional vehicles to the TRAX trains ensures that riders can effectively remain six feet apart** from each other."*

**Via:** comment mentions UTA On Demand by Via. (5)

UTA On Demand by Via was mentioned specifically by several riders as a valuable and appreciated service.

*"**Having Via as an alternative has been a huge blessing.**"*

## UTA Communication

**Communication:** comment mentions that communication from UTA has been working well, including social media and other means of communication. (52)

**Signage:** comment mentions that signage on system is working well. (3)

Riders receive communication through a variety of channels. People appreciate the various methods of sharing information and feel informed about UTA. From signs on the system to train announcements, social media, email, and the Transit app, riders are able to better navigate the system during COVID.

*“Keeping the website up to date and sharing efforts that are being made to keep public transportation safe.”*

## Critiques

**Nothing/None:** comment suggests there is nothing or no actions that are working well. (24)

Some responses indicated that the rider did not believe there were things that were working well. Some provided specific feedback including concern over COVID-19 precautions not being followed, inaccessibility due to rear door boarding and operators not making accommodations, and a lack of communication.

*“I can’t say any, I’m not happy at all. I’ve seen people without masks coughing and touching things. I’ve seen where there isn’t social distancing.”*

**NOT working well:** comment is about something that is not working well. (46)

A variety of comments were provided that mentioned actions or conditions that are NOT working well. Among them include feedback on communication and lack of awareness about actions UTA has taken; the reduced schedule and lack of service creating inconveniences and transportation challenges for people; and general safety concerns. Masks and social distancing were mentioned several times as factors that were not working well on transit currently.

*“I don’t know what actions are being taken. As a monthly pass holder I would have expected an email or more consistent communication.”*

*“I do know that the cut in service has hurt the people on the bottom of the socio-economic scale who have no other choice than to use UTA.”*

*“I don’t feel safe and until I do I will not ride on public transit systems”*

*“You can’t social distance on a bus...”*

## Commendations

**Commendation:** comment commends UTA for their actions and response. (20)



UTA was also recognized by customers and riders for the efforts being made in response to COVID-19.

*"I think UTA has responded swiftly and appropriately."*

#### Other Comments

**Not riding:** comment indicates respondent isn't riding currently. (42)

Many comments indicated they could not provide meaningful feedback on the question because they have not been riding during COVID-19. Many of the comments expressed nervousness to ride the system due to COVID-19.

*"I quit riding TRAX [because] I don't know how safe it is with COVID-19."*

**Other:** comments that suggest an outlying idea or sentiment. (3)

**Notable/Quotable:** comment not able to be categorized, and/or a quote-worthy comment.

Several comments were coded as notable as they were unique or provided additional suggestions or observations. One comment suggested rider incentives to increase ridership. Another commended the automatic door opening, but wondered if this would be a feasible adjustment during the summer. One comment suggested moving all fares to electronic form and allowing e-payments through smartphones or electronic wallets. Some commented on COVID-19 and taking the pandemic seriously.

**What additional actions do you think UTA should take?**

A total of 562 participants responded to the question “What additional actions do you think UTA should take?” The top four specific themes that emerged include 1) Schedules & Frequency, 2) COVID-19 Precautions (Masks, Social Distancing), 3) Communication, and 4) Cleaning & Disinfecting.



**COVID Precautions**

<b>Masks &amp; PPE:</b> comment mentions masks and other PPE (gloves, etc.) for customers, operators, etc. (106)
<b>Social distancing:</b> comment mentions social distancing and how to improve passengers’ ability to distance. (77)
<b>Hand sanitizer:</b> comment mentions hand sanitizer. (17)
<b>Operator protections:</b> comment mentions protections for operator. (6)

Participants provided feedback on COVID-19 precautions including many comments around masks, PPE, and social distancing measures. The vast majority of comments support the use of masks on transit by employees (operators, train hosts, etc.) and riders – some suggest providing masks on the system and making this precaution mandatory. Social distancing is also a major concern, especially with increasingly large passenger loads as the state begins to open back up – crowding is becoming an issue. Comments highlight service increases and additional train cars as considerations to mitigate concerns about keeping safe distance between riders. Additional comments around COVID precautions include support for operator protections and additional disinfecting, including provision of hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes throughout the system.

*“Do more to encourage users to wear masks and social distance as best as possible on the transit vehicles.”*

*“The reduction of and cancellation of certain routes made it so that there were so many people riding the same buses and trains at the same time that it was **impossible to social distance**. It was bad enough that I went and bought a car rather than ride the bus anymore.”*

### Cleaning & Disinfecting

**Cleaning & disinfecting:** comment mentions cleaning and disinfecting practices. (60)

**Seats:** comment mentions seats on system. (10)

Cleaning and disinfecting practices are a common concern among riders. Cleaning and disinfecting is recommended to be implemented more frequently, at the end of line and/or throughout the day. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies could be made available onboard for high-touch surfaces, including disinfecting wipes. Some comments point out limitations to the cleaning practices currently in place and identify this as an area for improvement. Several comments specifically mention their lack of confidence that the cloth seats on the system can be adequately cleaned and disinfected – replacing seats with an easier-to-clean material would be a welcome change for the public.

*“My suggestions are to **wipe common touch surfaces at the end of each run; once a day is not enough.**”*

*“**If the seats weren't made of fabric and could be wiped down, that would be even better.**”*

*“Seems safety geared towards driver with nothing active for passengers - **sanitizing spray or wipes [should be] available in passenger area.**”*

### Communication

**Communication:** comment provides recommendations for improved communication. (70)

**Trip Planning:** comment makes recommendations or offers feedback for improved trip planning. (4)

Many people provided suggestions on improved communication and advertisement. Comments point out inconsistencies in information provided and the difficulties in knowing about schedule changes. Use of email was a common method suggested by riders for improving communication with the public. Specific communication about cleaning practices, schedule, and service changes should be considered on an ongoing basis. UTA’s new service alert program will be an important part of the solution to improve communication.

*“Somehow you need to **let everyone know how you're keeping us safe.**”*

*“**Be more responsive to customers and have multiple avenues to share information, not everyone has twitter.**”*

*“I think this is the first email I've ever received as a FAREPAY or UTA customer. Wouldn't hurt to send more. Not spam level, but the occasional communication would be welcome. For example, **all the communication items above could have been nicely communicated directly to customers via email.**”*

## People

**Customer/Passenger Issues:** comment addresses customer/passenger issues, including inappropriate behavior, substance use, fighting/aggressiveness on the system, etc. (19)

**Homelessness:** comment mentions customers experiencing homelessness. (19)

Comments express concern over other passengers' willingness and behavior related to taking COVID-19 precautions and personal hygiene to prevent the spread of the virus. Additional concerns over other riders relate to fare payment and inappropriate behaviors on transit, including substance use. Customers experiencing homelessness are more visible on the system now with reduced ridership in general – several comments made mention of riders experiencing homelessness and expressed concerns about their access to resources to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (hand sanitizer, masks, etc.)

*"I won't ride Frontrunner until face masks are mandatory. Too many riders don't care or are ill informed about why face masks are important. Also, you need to assure social distancing is required and enforced on the train. UTA tells riders it's recommended and encouraged, but **too many riders don't seem to care**. I can't risk that attitude among riders."*

**Transit police:** comment mentions transit police, including their role on the system. (13)

There were several comments referring to UTA transit police presence and how increased presence could improve safety on the system. Specifically, riders thought police could help enforce fare payment.

*"**Have the transit police checking for passes more often. Have transit police stay on the train and ride....**"*

**Employees:** comment provides feedback on employees, including employee behavior, conduct, driving, etc. (29)

Many of the employee comments suggested operators and train hosts should wear masks and gloves. There were also several comments that referred to unkind or rude interactions with drivers, as well as inconsistent implementation of policies and procedures (mostly related to fares).

*"You need to **get all the bus drivers on the same page...some make you pay and some don't.**"*

*"The driver should lead with their example - **drivers should wear masks.**"*

## UTA Service

**Schedules:** comment mentions schedules and service availability. (121)

**Frequency:** comment mentions frequency of service. (78)

**Hours:** comment mentions hours of service, including earlier and later and additional days. (20)

**Timeliness:** comment refers to timeliness of the system, including delays, early departures, etc. (5)

Many comments provided feedback on the reduced schedules and challenges that have arisen with longer wait and travel times, as well as increasing crowding due to less frequency. These inconveniences seem to have motivated some to find alternative modes of transportation, including driving personal vehicles for those who have the option. Connectivity and scheduling to accommodate bus/rail connections is a concern – several comments relay that schedules have been mismatched by mere minutes resulting in missed connections and much longer commute times for riders. Hours of operation came up in several comments with feedback that current hours are not taking some work schedules into consideration, particularly those who work earlier and later than average. Many comments simply request a return to more normal schedules.

*“It’s been much harder to get around during the day with the limited services, especially if you need to transfer, then it’s almost impossible.”*

*“Consider that reducing route schedules would increase riders on routes... **[some] buses are standing only on the bus and you are standing shoulder to shoulder with someone.** This increases not decreases the risk of COVID-19.”*

*“Run at a later time. **I work a night shift and UTA is my only form of transportation and I have to walk 7 miles home at night.**”*

*“**Making sure that essential workers can actually get to work on time via UTA.** The reduction on the schedule got rid of the bus I used to ... catch to get to my 7 am shift at the hospital... Also **most night buses/trains aren’t running which has completely inconvenienced me....** Also more buses are packed due to the reduction of buses which is more unsafe...”*

**Train cars:** comment mentions train cars. (9)

Among suggestions related to increasing service and frequency for social distancing purposes, adding train cars for additional space was mentioned several times. Reduced frequency and space on vehicles, especially now that the state has decreased the risk level for COVID-19, is causing crowding and increasing likelihood of being in close proximity to others.

*“I am often in a train with passengers sitting back to back. Not even close to six feet apart. Every row has someone in it at [all] times. **Make the trains longer and give more seating options** to help with social distancing.”*

**Accessibility:** comment is about physical accessibility of the system. (13)

Accessibility concerns are being raised by riders, many having to do with rear door boarding and reluctance to let those individuals who need the bus lowered to board through the front door.

*“**Those who have mobility issues find rear entry discouraging.**”*

*“The **backdoor entry is nearly impossible for me and I have to argue with each and every driver** to open the front door and kneel the bus. Even if it is the same bus driver on my regular route.”*

**Recovery and service model:** comment mentions UTA recovery plans, future service/service model, etc. (26)

Among comments related to service were those more focused on recovery and how service should look moving forward. Comments made suggestions including additional access to services like UTA On Demand by Via, additional routes, and additional weekend coverage.

**Fares:** comment mentions fare collection issues, people riding for free, issuing transfers, etc. (30)

Comments regarding fares were common and diverse. Among these comments, individuals would like to see more ways to pay fare, including credit/debit card payment on vehicles and a mobile app for reloading fare cards. Consistent enforcement of fare collection was called out by a few riders, including suggestions to have more assurance that all passengers are paying customers. Specific problems were identified, including not enforcing cash fare payment, but requiring others to use their electronic fare cards. Some provided suggestions to decrease or eliminate fare, particularly for those struggling financially in the wake of COVID-19.

*“It’s not fair that people with cash don’t have to pay because the driver doesn’t want them to come up to the cash box. I’ve had drivers tell me not to worry about paying and others that get mad if I ask about paying...I had a driver let a person on the bus without paying because they had cash and when I got on I sat down without paying since she didn’t. He asked me if I had cash or a FAREPAY card...I told him both and he told me I had to pay if I had a card.”*

## UTA Practices

**Corporate policy:** comment mentions UTA policy. (6)

**Use of resources:** comment refers to UTA’s use of resources (4)

A few comments referenced UTA policy and use of resources. These comments varied from suggestions about hazard pay, to COVID-19 testing, to use of resources to maximize community benefit from transit.

*“Focus resources on routes with the highest ridership and access to essential services to reduce crowding.”*

**Commendation:** comment commends UTA for their response. (22)

These comments provided positive feedback for the actions UTA has taken in response to COVID-19.

*“It seems that there is a **good balance** between restricting travel for those who do not need to do so, and allowing for that travel for those who have no alternate.”*

## Other Comments

**Other:** comments that suggest an outlying idea or sentiment. (13)

**Notable/Quotable:** comment not able to be categorized, and/or a quote-worthy comment. (45)

Some comments didn’t fit well in a category, but provided some additional insight that could provide valuable perspective. Ventilation and air circulation on the system were mentioned several times and are notable for inclusion

since it also came up in other surveys. A few riders expressed an appreciation for UTA On Demand by Via. Others shared that the COVID-19 situation is more a factor influencing their decision to ride beyond any actions that UTA is taking – some describe being high risk, other simply do not feel comfortable getting on public transit during the pandemic. Finally, a few responses indicated a desire for UTA to follow up on comments and concerns more often, to show that we are really listening and care about the community’s perspectives.

*“We use Via ride share [and] it is great for us located outside the local TRAX please keep this service.”*

*“I have a major concern about my age group, which is the elderly at high risk. I’m not sure there is anything that can be put in place to address this need of restricted riding that this group needs with the standard bus riding experience. Therefore I have stopped riding for the foreseeable future.”*

## Summary of Findings

1. Service, reduced schedules and frequency are the main concerns for riders. Riders are spending more time commuting and experiencing longer wait times on transit. Service models must align with transit dependent riders or accommodate alternative transit needs.
2. COVID-19 precautions, including social distancing and wearing masks on transit, are also important considerations. Reduced frequency is beginning to cause crowding on routes making social distancing a challenge.
3. Building a better communication email /listserv with riders for disruptions and other important communication is needed.
4. Continued communications of disinfecting and safety measures are important to this group of riders.
5. These riders will likely continue to ride or get back onboard when the time is right. There are steps that can be considered to improve their experience as both captive and choice riders, as well as reduce barriers to traveling on public transit.

## Conclusion

The general rider survey provided rich data from a large group of transit riders. Over half of these survey participants have been riding transit during the pandemic and have perspectives and experiences to share. Over one-third of them are captive riders, or don't have other modes of transportation available to them. COVID-19 and changes to public transit have created a different landscape and new challenges for riders. Their schedules have changed and their use of transit has shifted in purpose, but travel for work and other essential trips remain a main need. In general, this group of riders feel that UTA is doing better than neutral in implementing changes and actions for rider safety in response to COVID-19. So many of them took the time to provide specific feedback on actions they feel are working well and what additional actions would improve response to COVID-19, as well as their experiences as UTA riders. The riders appreciate that UTA continues operations and has provided additional cleaning and disinfecting in response to the pandemic. This survey was conducted throughout the month of May and in that time much has changed – the state moved almost entirely to a lower risk stage, and as more businesses began to open back up people started getting back onboard for work. UTA should remain flexible as COVID-19 evolves and work to ensure safety and accessibility on the transit system, particularly for those who depend on UTA the most.