

# 2018 Fixed Route Rider Survey

Final Report

Prepared by Data Centric Services 3/30/2019

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## **Executive Summary**

The Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC) surveyed the riders of their fixed route bus service over the period April 30, 2018 to May 4, 2018. The survey was based on a standard survey developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and consists of 15 questions which address customer satisfaction, rider characteristics and patterns in service usage. The first question is a multipart question which asks respondents to rate overall satisfaction and satisfaction with 19 performance measures. In preparation for the survey, Data Centric Services worked with TAWC to establish the number of surveys to collect on each route and to layout an implementation plan to ensure TAWC would achieve the survey targets. TAWC staff distributed the survey to riders and returned the completed surveys to Data Centric Services for processing and analysis. A summary of the results is provided here.

A total of 136 completed surveys were collected which was well below TAWC's target of 221 surveys. Based on the results of the survey, the total number of unique TAWC riders is estimated to be between 170 and 310 although given the number of surveys collected in 2015 (i.e., 276) the total population is likely in the upper half of this range despite a 22% decrease in ridership since 2015. A conservative estimate of the margin of error is 6.2%, meaning that the survey results reflect the complete population of riders to within +/- 6.2%.

The first category of questions addressed customer satisfaction with TAWC's service and staff. The results indicated that riders are generally happy with the service TAWC provides. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of respondents indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service. A high percentage of respondents also indicated they would continue using the service (96%) and would recommend the service to others (94%).

As part of the satisfaction assessment, riders were also asked to rate a total of 19 performance measures addressing topics such as driver and staff performance, safety, capacity, frequency of service, schedule adherence and clarity of bus schedules. The average rating across all the service elements was 4.50 on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) with 18 of the 19 service elements having an average rating above 4.

The highest rated performance measures were "availability of seats on the bus" (4.71), "bus fares" (4.65), "safe and competent drivers" (4.61), "bus schedule availability" (4.61), and "bus schedule – easy to understand" (4.58). The performance measures receiving the lowest average scores were "frequency of weekend service" (3.98), "comfort at bus stops" (4.33), "frequency of weekday service" (4.36), "bus stop maintenance" (4.45), and "on time arrivals and departures" (4.47).

A total of 35 respondents (26%) provided some open-ended feedback at the end of the survey. Eleven (11) respondents complimented TAWC's service and 8 complimented the drivers. The remaining comments offered recommendations for improving the service or expressed concerns with the service. The themes raised most frequently are listed below:

- Eight (8) respondents were unhappy with driver friendliness and / or performance
- Four (4) respondents requested additional weekend service
- Four (4) respondents expressed a need for extended hours of operation (i.e., earlier service or later service).

A comparison of the 2015 and 2018 results showed an increase in the percentage who were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service ( $97\% \rightarrow 99\%$ ). Of the 19 performance measures, 14 had higher average scores in 2018, 4 had lower average scores and 1 was unchanged. The performance measures which increased the most were "website-easy to navigate" (+1.03), "park-and-ride lots" (+0.86), "bus schedule – easy to understand" (+0.74) and "comfort at bus stops" (+0.72). It is notable that 2 of the 4 measures that decreased in average rating since 2015were related to driver performance (i.e., "safe and competent drivers" and "driver courtesy and friendliness").

The second category of questions sought to characterize riders and are summarized in Table 1.

Rider Characteristic		Results
<b>Employment Status</b>	Employed (60%) Retired (18%)	Student (2%) Other (8%)
	Not employed (12%)	Out. (070)
Home Zip Code	16365 (55%)	16347 (11%)
	16371 (14%)	16329 (3%)
	16313 (13%)	Other (5%)
Age	15 and under (0%)	41 to 60 (35%)
	16 to 24 (15%)	61 to 64 (8%)
	25 to 40 (28%)	65 and older (14%)
Gender (M/F)	Male (55%)	Female (45%)
Alternate Transportation	Yes (44%)	No (56%)
Internet Access	Yes (76%)	No (24%)
Smart Phone	Yes (60%)	No (40%)

**Table 1 - Rider Characteristics** 

A comparison of the rider characteristics between the 2015 and 2018 surveys resulted in the following observations:

- The distribution of respondents by home zip code showed some differences between the 2015 and 2018 surveys. The percentage of respondents from zip code 16347 declined (23% → 11%) as did the percentage from 16371 (22% → 14%). Conversely, the percentage from 16365 increased (49% → 55%) as did the percentage from 16313 (5% → 13%).
- There was a modest decrease in respondents age 16 to 40 (49%  $\rightarrow$  43%) and a corresponding increase in respondents age 41 to 64 (35%  $\rightarrow$  44%).
- The percentage of male respondents was 12% higher in 2018 than in 2015.
- Since the 2015 survey, the percentage of respondents with Internet access has increased by 11%.

While the shifts in respondent demographics are not excessive, they could account for at least part of the difference in rider satisfaction between 2015 and 2018. Shifts in respondent demographics can simply reflect shifts in the underlying population being sampled. They might also reflect a shift in sampling methodology between the 2015 and 2018 surveys. The latter case is important to avoid through carefully

structured survey distribution practices as it can potentially confound efforts to trend rider satisfaction over time.

The third category of questions examined service usage patterns. The results of these questions are summarized below in Table 2.

Usage Characteristic		Results
Primary Use of Bus	Work (47%)	Shopping (14%)
	Social / recreational (21%)	Higher Education (1%)
	Medical/Dental (17%)	School K-12 (0%)
Get from Origin to Bus	Walk (86%)	Drive and park (2%)
	Dropped off (4%)	Ride with someone (1%)
	Bike (2%)	Other (5%)
<b>Get from Bus to Destination</b>	Walk (88%)	Bike (2%)
	Picked up (5%)	Drive in a vehicle (1%)
	Ride with someone (2%)	Other (4%)
Usage Frequency	6 - 7 days a week (10%)	1 - 3 times a month (16%)
	5 days a week (28%)	Less than once a month (8%)
	2 - 4 days a week (28%)	First time riding (2%)
	Once a week (9%)	
<b>How Long Riding the Bus</b>	More than 3 years (58%)	1 month - 1 year (14%)
	1 - 3 years (23%)	Less than 1 month (5%)

**Table 2 - Service Usage Summary** 

A comparison of the service usage characteristics between the 2015 and 2018 surveys resulted in the following observations:

- There was a notable shift in the primary reasons respondents use the service. Those who use the service primarily for work or social / recreational activities increased  $(23\% \rightarrow 47\% \text{ and } 12\% \rightarrow 21\% \text{ respectively})$  and those who use the service primarily for shopping decreased  $(40\% \rightarrow 14\%)$ .
- The pattern in frequency of ridership had some notable changes since 2015. The percentage of recipients who use the service 5 days a week or more climbed from 23% to 37% and the percentage who use the service between 2 and 4 days a week dropped from 50% to 28%.
- The percentage of respondents who have used the service for more than 3 years has increased from 50% to 58%.

Based on the results of the survey, a number of recommendations have been developed. A summary of these recommendations is provided here for TAWC's consideration:

- Assess the demand for additional weekend service. If justified, TAWC should consider costs effective alternatives which would address at least a portion of the demand.
- Assess bus stop conditions and, based on the findings, consider implementing needed improvements especially at stops which service the most riders.
- Assess driver performance to determine if one or more drivers would benefit from additional training.
- Further evaluate the demand for increased frequency of service and extended service hours. If warranted, TAWC should evaluate cost effective alternatives to address at least a portion of this demand.

- Look for ways to acknowledge drivers and other staff for the positive feedback they received on the survey.
- Read though the open-ended comments provided by the respondents (Appendix B)
- Publicize the survey findings along with any actions which TAWC is planning in response to the survey.
- For future surveys, TAWC should strive to achieve their sample size targets to minimize the margin of error in the results.

Additional details on the recommendations are provided in the Conclusions and Recommendations section at the end of this report.

# **Summary of TAWC Service**

TAWC operates both fixed route and paratransit services in Warren County, Pennsylvania which has an area of area of 899 square miles and a population of 41,815 (US Census, 2010). TAWC's fixed route service area spans 279 square miles and has a population of about 26,000 (see Figure 1). The areas of highest population serviced by the fixed route service include Warren, Youngsville, and Sheffield. In fiscal year 2016-2017, TAWC reported a total fixed route ridership of 58,496 (PennDOT, 2018).



**Figure 1- TAWC Service Area** 

#### **Facilities**

• TAWC Headquarters – 42 Clark Street, Warren, PA 16365 (Transfer Center and Garage also located at this address)

## **Vehicles / Technology**

TAWC has 5 vehicles in its fixed route fleet (PennDOT, 2018). The vehicles are equipped with the following ITS equipment:

• REI on-board surveillance system

# **Vehicle Maintenance and Operations**

TAWC performs their own vehicle maintenance.

#### **Routes**

TAWC provides service on 3 fixed routes (see Table 3).

Route	Days of the Week		Hours	Headway
North-South	Weekday	06:00	18:30	2:30
	Saturday	10:00	17:00	
Sheffield	Weekday	04:30	19:00	1:30
	Saturday	09:30	16:00	
Youngsville	Weekday	06:00	19:00	1:30
	Saturday	09:30	16:00	

**Table 3 - TAWC Routes** 

#### **Fares**

TAWC uses a flat fare structure and offers discounted fares for multi-trip tickets (see Table 4).

Fare Type	Cost			
Standard				
Regular	\$1.00			
Senior Citizens	Free			
Children age 6 – 12	\$0.50			
Under 6 with escort	Free			
Children to/from Warren County High School	\$0.25			
Warren C.A.R. Pool	\$0.25			
Brokenstraw Valley Pool	\$0.25			
Transfers	Free			
Multi-Trip Tickets				
10 Rides	\$8.50			
15 Rides	\$12.75			
20 Rides	\$17.00			
30 Rides	\$25.00			

**Table 4 - TAWC Fares** 

## **Customer Service**

Customer service hours are 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

# **Staffing**

TAWC has a total staff of about 24. A breakdown of the staff by role is shown in Table 5.

Category	Full Time	Part Time
Administrative staff including management	4	1
Drivers		
Fixed Route	6	2
Paratransit	7	2
Maintenance	1	1

**Table 5 - TAWC Staffing** 

# **Out of County Service**

TAWC does not provide out-of-county service.

# **Recent / Planned Projects**

Recent projects:

• None

Upcoming projects:

• A CNG station is planned but land has not yet been acquired

## **Survey Implementation**

This section will provide an overview of the survey structure and the manner in which it was implemented.

## **Survey Questions**

PennDOT has established a standard fixed route rider survey which consists of 15 standard questions and includes a section for open ended feedback. Question 1 is a multipart question that asks riders to rate overall service and 19 distinct performance measures. The survey was originally developed by Gannett Fleming as part of a 2010 project with PennDOT. Substantial revisions have been made to the list of original questions to improve clarity and shorten the survey to one page. The goal of using a uniform set of questions across the state is to ensure that the same measures are being assessed and that they are being evaluated in a consistent fashion.

All the questions on the survey were single answer, multiple choice questions. At the end of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide open ended feedback on TAWC's service.

Data Centric Services prepared both paper and electronic forms of the survey. The survey was also offered in both English and Spanish versions but TAWC utilized the English version exclusively (see Appendix A).

## Sample Size and Other Statistical Considerations

To assess characteristics about TAWC's complete population of riders, a fraction of TAWC's riders (i.e., a sample) was selected to participate in the survey. There is inherently some error in estimating population characteristics from the subset who participate in the survey. This error is characterized by two distinct but related statistical parameters. The first is the margin of error, also known as the confidence interval, and the second is the confidence level. The margin of error represents the maximum difference between the population mean and the sample mean that you would reasonably expect to see. The second statistical parameter which is used to describe the error is the confidence level. The confidence level represents the likelihood that the population mean and the sample mean differ by no more than the margin of error. The margin of error at a specific confidence level depends on a number of factors:

- Sample Size
  - The margin of error is inversely proportional to the square root of the sample size and, consequently, as the sample size increases the margin of error decreases as one would expect.
- Population Size
   The margin of error is dependent on the size of the population being sampled although this dependence is negligible for large populations.
- Proportion
  - The margin of error for a specific answer is dependent on the percentage of respondents who select that answer. Answers which are selected by a high percentage of respondents or a low percentage of respondents have a lower margin of error than answers which are more evenly split.

The margin of error can be calculated from the sample size and the size of the overall population being assessed. In this case, the sample size is 136 (i.e., the number of respondents who completed the survey) and the population is the number of unique riders who use TAWC. To estimate the number of unique

TAWC riders, the total ridership for fiscal year 2016-2017 was divided by an estimate of the average number of trips a TAWC rider makes each year. The average number of annual trips made by a rider was in turn approximated from the responses to survey Question 3 (How often do you ride the bus?). Using this methodology, the total number of unique TAWC riders is estimated to be between 170 and 310. Based on the sample size and the estimate of the total population of riders the margin of error is less than 6.2% at a 95% confidence level. This margin of error represents a worst-case scenario by assuming the maximum rider population (i.e., 310) and assuming answers are evenly split among respondents.

There are a few points worth noting:

- 1. In order to make the results of the survey more representative of the population, sample collection was stratified by route. The number of surveys targeted for each route was calculated by proportionally allocating the total number of target surveys according to the percent ridership attributable to that route. This is described in more detail later in this section.
- 2. The margin of error can be significantly different when examining subpopulations of riders such as the riders on a particular route or the riders in a particular income range. With subpopulations derived from the TAWC's results, the sample size and the population size can both be markedly smaller than the sample size and population size for the entire population of riders. This generally results in a higher margin of error when examining subpopulations.

## **Survey Distribution**

Paper surveys were distributed to riders over the period April 30, 2018 to May 4, 2018. The survey was given to willing passengers upon boarding if there was time for them to fully complete the survey before reaching their destination and if they had not previously taken the survey. Assistance was provided to the riders as needed. Over the course of the survey period, a total of 136 paper surveys were collected.

Table 6 presents the ridership percentages, target number of surveys and actual number of surveys collected by route. Figure 2 presents a graphical comparison of the target number of surveys for each route along with the actual number collected. As the data show, the number of surveys TAWC collected was well below the targets. While TAWC's ridership has declined by about 22% over the period between the surveys, it does not fully account for the low sample size collected in 2018. The reduced number of surveys collected 2018 has resulted in a significant increase in the margin of error as compared to the 2015 survey.

Route	% Ridership	Survey Target	Actual
North-South	38.4%	85	50
Sheffield	32.2%	71	41
Youngsville	29.4%	65	45
Total:	100.0%	221	136

Table 6 - Surveys Collected by Route (Target vs. Actual)

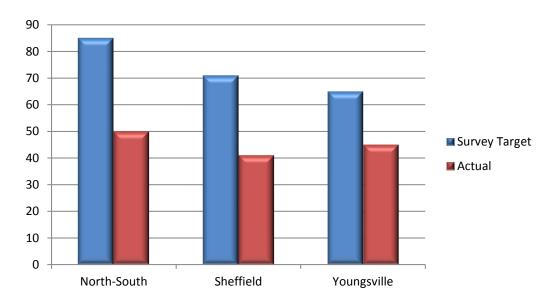


Figure 2 - Surveys Collected by Route (Target vs. Actual)

A comparison of the route level ridership data TAWC provided to DCS prior to the 2015 and 2018 surveys is shown in Figure 3. These data show an increase in North-South ridership and a decline in Youngsville ridership.

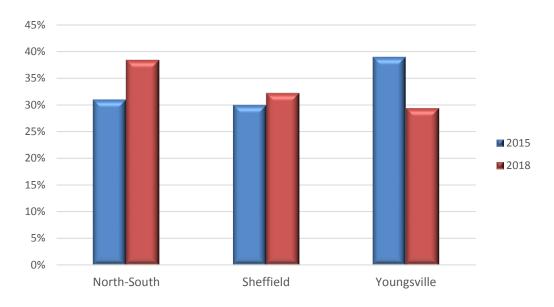


Figure 3 - Ridership by Route (2015 vs. 2018)

## **Survey Processing and Analysis**

The completed paper surveys were scanned into a commercial survey software application (i.e., Snap Survey) for processing. Each survey was reviewed to identify and correct any anomalies in processing. In addition, the open-ended comments were manually entered into Snap. The survey results were then exported for analysis in a custom survey analysis tool. At the time of processing, all surveys were assigned a unique serial number.

The questions on the survey presented respondents with a list of choices to choose from and requested that just a single answer be selected. On occasion, respondents selected multiple answers to these questions. In processing the surveys, Snap Survey only retains the last response for single response questions.

## Raw Surveys and the Survey Analysis Tool

Included with this report is a DVD which contains a copy of this report, the full set of completed surveys and a copy of the Survey Analysis Tool. Each survey is provided as a separate pdf file and named according to the serial number assigned to the survey. The Survey Analysis Tool is an MS Access based software application which can be used to perform additional analysis of the survey data. The key functions of this tool include:

- Filtering surveys based on the responses to one or more questions
- Directly viewing the raw survey in pdf format for any of the filtered surveys
- Creating survey groups for analysis and comparison based on a filtered list of surveys (e.g. students vs. non-students or commuters vs. non-commuters)
- Comparing current survey results to survey results from prior years

# **Results**

This section of the report presents the results of the survey.

# **Missing Data**

The percentage of missing answers by question is shown in Table 7 and is also graphically depicted in Figure 4.

No.	Question	Missing
<b>1</b> a	Overall satisfaction	0.7%
1b	On time arrivals and departures	0.7%
1c	Frequency of weekday service	2.2%
1d	Frequency of weekend service	4.4%
1e	Availability of seats on the bus	0.7%
<b>1</b> f	Comfortable bus seats	2.9%
1g	Comfortable temperature on bus	0.0%
1h	Comfort at bus stops	2.9%
<b>1</b> i	Cleanliness inside the bus	0.7%
1j	Bus fares	0.7%
1k	Driver courtesy and friendliness	0.7%
11	Safe and competent drivers	0.7%
1m	Bus stop maintenance	4.4%
<b>1</b> n	Personal safety on buses/at stops	0.7%
10	Helpfulness of employees	0.0%
1p	Park-and-ride lots	7.4%
1q	Telephone customer service	2.2%
1r	Bus schedule availability	0.7%
1s	Bus schedule - easy to understand	0.7%
1t	Website - easy to navigate	12.5%
2	What is the primary reason you use the bus?	1.5%
3	How often do you ride the bus?	1.5%
4	How long have you been using this transit service?	2.2%
5	What is your local zip code?	2.2%
6	What is your gender?	2.2%
7	What is your age group?	2.2%
8	What is your current employment status?	4.4%
9	Will you continue using this bus service?	5.1%
10	Would you recommend this bus service?	4.4%
11	How do you generally get to the bus stop?	4.4%
12	How will you generally get to your final destination once you get off the bus?	4.4%
13	Do you have alternate transportation?	7.4%
14	Can you access the Internet?	5.1%
15	Do you have a smart phone?	5.1%

**Table 7 - Missing Data by Question** 

The question with the highest non-response rate was Question 1t. This question asked respondents how easy it is to navigate TAWC's website and went unanswered by about 13% of respondents who took the survey.

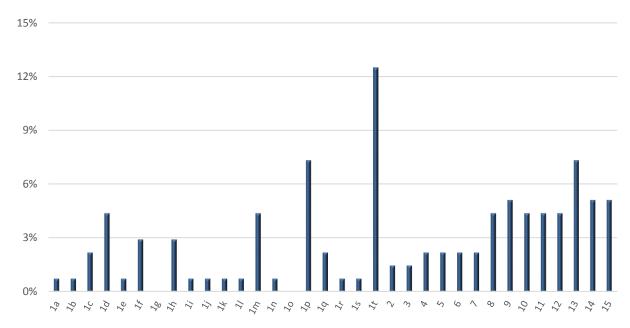


Figure 4 - Missing Data by Question

# **Customer Satisfaction**

This section assesses rider satisfaction with TAWC's service. The questions which assessed rider satisfaction are listed in Table 8. A summary of the open-ended feedback is also included in this section.

Question	Characteristic Assessed
1a	Overall satisfaction with the service
1b-1t	Satisfaction with 19 performance measures
9	Likelihood to continue using the service
10	Likelihood to recommend the service to others

Table 8 - Survey Questions Which Assessed Customer Satisfaction

#### **Overall Satisfaction (Question 1a)**

Question 1a asked riders to rate their overall satisfaction with TAWC's service. The results are shown in Figure 5. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of respondents indicated they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service.

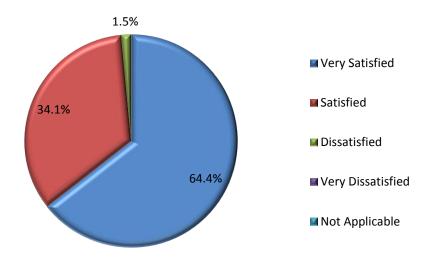


Figure 5 - Overall Satisfaction with TAWC's Service

A comparison of overall satisfaction between the 2015 and 2018 surveys is shown in Figure 6. The results suggest that overall satisfaction has increased marginally since the 2015 survey. In 2018, 99% of respondents indicated they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service as compared to 97% in 2015.

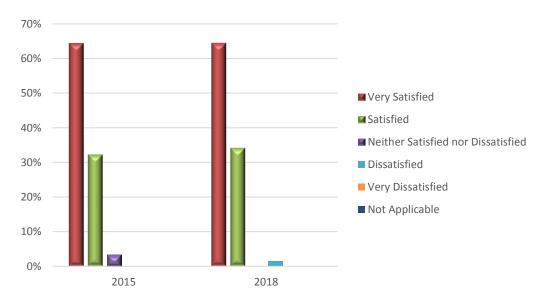


Figure 6 - Overall Satisfaction with TAWC's Service (2015 vs. 2018)

#### **Rating Performance Measures (Questions 1b - 1t)**

Questions 1b through 1t asked riders to rate TAWC's service according to 19 distinct measures of performance. For each measure, the rider could indicate their level of satisfaction by selecting from 5 choices. The choices were given a numeric score on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 corresponding to "very satisfied" and 1 corresponding to "very dissatisfied" (see Table 9).

Level of Satisfaction	Score
Very Satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Dissatisfied	2
Very Dissatisfied	1
Not Applicable	-

**Table 9 - Satisfaction Scores** 

The results of all respondents were aggregated to determine the average satisfaction score for each measure. The performance measures were then ordered highest to lowest by average score (see Figure 7).

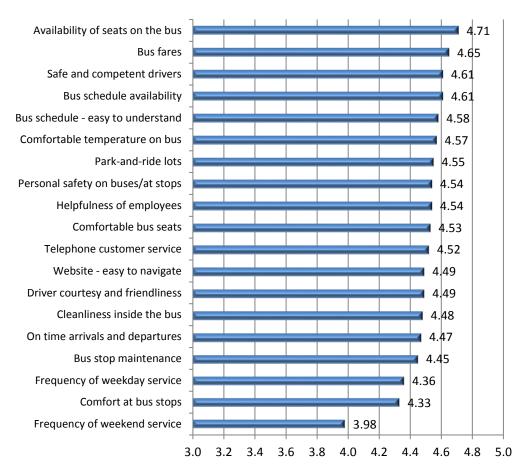


Figure 7 - Average Satisfaction Score by Performance Measure

The average scores ranged from a high of 4.71 for "availability of seats on the bus" to a low of 3.98 for "frequency of weekend service". The overall average for all 19 measures was 4.50 and 18 of the 19 measures received an average rating above 4.0.

Other performance measures receiving relatively high average ratings included "bus fares" (4.65), "safe and competent drivers" (4.61), "bus schedule availability" (4.61), and "bus schedule easy to understand" (4.58).

Other measures receiving relatively low average ratings included "comfort at bus stops" (4.33), "frequency of weekday service" (4.36), "bus stop maintenance" (4.45) and "on time arrivals and departures" (4.47).

A comparison of the average performance ratings for 2015 to 2018 is shown in Figure 8 and are presented in the same order as Figure 7.

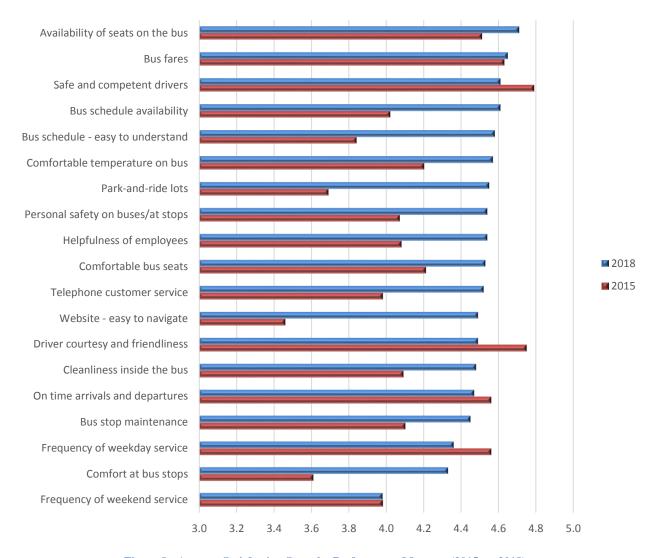


Figure 8 - Average Satisfaction Score by Performance Measure (2015 vs. 2018)

As is evident from the data, 14 of the performance measures increased since 2015, 4 decreased and 1 was unchanged. The measures with the greatest increases in average rating between the 2015 and 2018 surveys were "website – easy to navigate" (+1.03), "park-and-ride lots" (+0.86), and "bus schedule – easy to understand" (+0.74). Of the 4 measures which decreased since 2015, 2 were related to driver performance (i.e., "driver courtesy and friendliness" and "safe and competent drivers").

The number of respondents who gave each performance measure an unfavorable rating (i.e., "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied") is shown in Figure 9. The order of the service elements is the same as in Figure 7.

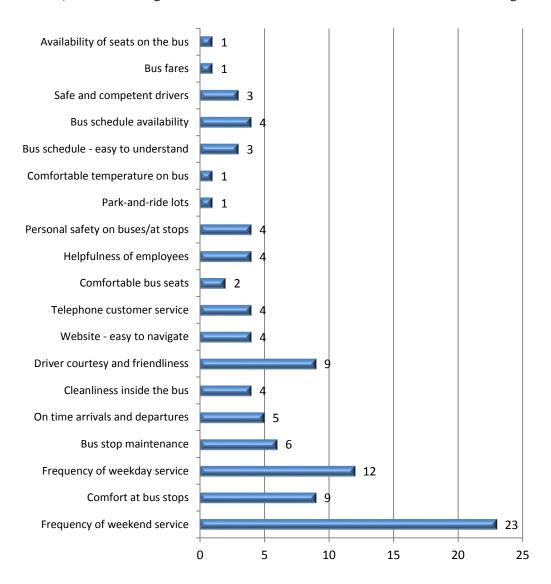


Figure 9 - Number Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied by Performance Measure

The performance measure which received the highest number of unfavorable ratings was "frequency of weekend service" with a total of 23. The three other performance measures with the most unfavorable ratings were "frequency of weekday service" (12), "comfort at bus stops" (9), and "driver courtesy and friendliness" (9).

It should be noted that while most of the performance measures are likely to at least partially reflect the respondent's experience with the route they most often ride, a few of the measures are largely unrelated to the rider's experience on a particular route but instead are a reflection of the system as a whole. Specifically, these performance measures are "bus fares", "bus schedule availability", "bus schedule – easy to understand", "telephone customer service" and "website – easy to navigate." The analysis which follows will examine differences in performance measure ratings between routes and will focus on the performance measures which are considered to be at least partially reflective of the route.

The performance measures with a relatively high number of unfavorable ratings in Figure 9 were examined to determine if a disproportionate number came from specific routes. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10.

Performance Measure	Routes with Disproportionate Unfavorable Ratings
Frequency of Weekend Service	North-South Route, Youngsville Route
Frequency of Weekday Service	Youngsville Route
<b>Driver Courtesy and Friendliness</b>	North-South Route

**Table 10 - Disproportionate Unfavorable Ratings by Route** 

The performance measures were also examined to determine how average satisfaction ratings varied across routes (see Table 11). Route scores which were more than 10% higher than the system-wide average are shaded green and route scores which were more than 10% lower than the system-wide average are shaded red. As can be seen from the table, none of the route specific average ratings were substantially different than the system-wide average.

Performance Measure	System-wide	North-South	Youngsville	Sheffield
Surveys:	136	50	45	41
Availability of seats on the bus	4.71	4.67	4.81	4.66
Safe and competent drivers	4.61	4.54	4.69	4.61
Comfortable temperature on bus	4.57	4.52	4.49	4.71
Park-and-ride lots	4.55	4.43	4.69	4.50
Personal safety on buses/at stops	4.54	4.39	4.69	4.55
Helpfulness of employees	4.54	4.38	4.73	4.54
Comfortable bus seats	4.53	4.51	4.67	4.40
Driver courtesy and friendliness	4.49	4.27	4.64	4.59
Cleanliness inside the bus	4.48	4.29	4.61	4.56
On time arrivals and departures	4.47	4.34	4.61	4.46
Bus stop maintenance	4.45	4.31	4.62	4.44
Frequency of weekday service	4.36	4.42	4.33	4.31
Comfort at bus stops	4.33	4.23	4.49	4.28
Frequency of weekend service	3.98	3.95	3.95	4.06
Average Score:	4.47	4.38	4.57	4.48

Table 11 - Average Performance Measure Ratings by Route

The assumption implicit in this analysis is that the ratings provided by a respondent are reflective of the route which they most frequently use. Since some respondents use more than one route on a regular basis this assumption is not entirely true.

The order of the routes in Table 11 is based on the number of respondents there were from that route. The route with the highest number of completed surveys is on the left (i.e., North-South Route).

Based on a review of Table 11, the following observations are offered:

- The North-South Route received relatively low marks for "driver courtesy and friendliness" and "cleanliness inside the bus."
- The Youngsville Route received a relatively high mark for "helpfulness of employees."

#### **Likelihood to Continue Using the Service (Question 9)**

Question 9 asked riders to indicate how likely it is that they will continue to use TAWC's service. As shown in Figure 10, the large majority (96%) indicated they were "likely" to continue using the service or would "definitely" continue using the service.

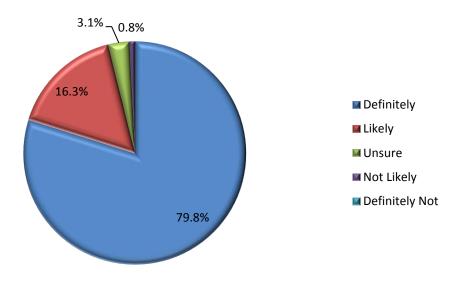


Figure 10 - Likelihood to Continue Using Service

Figure 11 compares the 2015 and 2018 results for this question. The percentage of respondents who indicated they would "definitely" continue using the service increased by 10%.

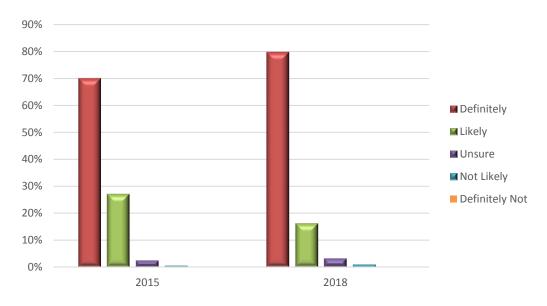


Figure 11 - Likelihood to Continue Using Service (2015 vs. 2018)

#### Likelihood to Recommend Service to Others (Question 10)

Question 10 asked riders to indicate how likely it is that they would recommend TAWC's service to others. As is shown in Figure 12, 94% of those who responded indicated they would either "likely" or "definitely" recommend the service to others.

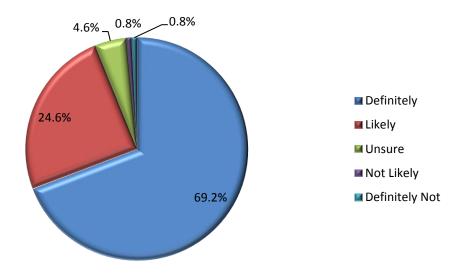


Figure 12 - Likelihood to Recommend Service to Others

Figure 13 compares the 2018 results for this question to the 2015 results. The percentage of respondents who indicated they would definitely or likely recommend the service to others decreased between 2015 (97%) and 2018 (94%).

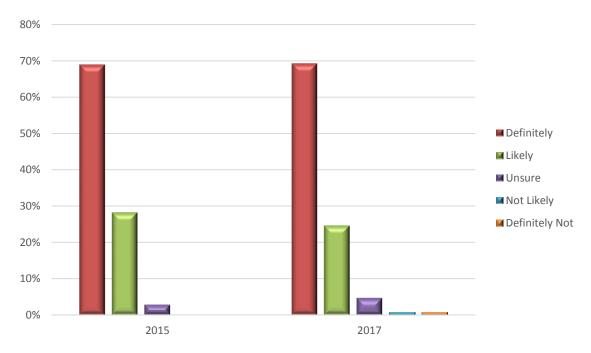


Figure 13 - Likelihood to Recommend Service to Others (2015 vs. 2018)

#### **Performance Measure Importance**

In their work with PennDOT, Gannett Fleming (2013) determined the relative importance for the 19 performance measures. Relative importance scores for the measures were developed through feedback solicited from PennDOT and the transit agencies at the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PPTA) General Session April 26, 2012. The transit agencies were asked to evaluate the importance of the performance measures using a scale from 1 to 5 (see Table 12).

Importance Level	Importance Score
Very Important	5
Somewhat Important	4
Neither Important nor Unimportant	3
Somewhat unimportant	2
Not Important at all	1

**Table 12 - Importance Levels for Performance Measures** 

The overall importance score for each performance measure was determined by averaging the importance scores assigned by each participant (see Table 13). The performance measures with the highest importance scores are shown at the top and those with the lowest are shown at the bottom.

Performance Measure	Importance Score
On-time arrivals and departures	4.92
Safe and competent drivers	4.86
Personal safety on buses and at stops	4.68
Helpfulness and responsiveness of employees	4.64
Bus schedule - easy to understand	4.62
Driver courtesy and friendliness	4.57
Frequency of weekday services	4.49
Telephone customer service	4.49
Bus fares are reasonable	4.46
Bus schedule availability	4.46
Cleanliness inside the bus	4.35
Availability/accessibility of park-n-ride lots	4.33
Availability of seats on the bus	4.22
Website - easy to navigate	4.22
Comfortable temperatures on the bus	4.08
Comfort of the seats	3.84
Stops are properly maintained	3.70
Frequency of weekend service	3.65
Comfort at bus stops	3.59

**Table 13 - Performance Measures Importance Scores** 

#### **Open Ended Feedback**

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide additional feedback they might have regarding TAWC's service. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the respondents provided this type of feedback. Table 14 provides a summary of the open-ended feedback organized by topic. A complete list of the comments is presented in Appendix B. Some of the key themes which emerged based on a review of this feedback are listed below:

- Nine (9) respondents complimented TAWC's service
- Eight (8) respondents complimented TAWC's drivers. A driver named Cindy was identified by name on 2 surveys collected on the Youngsville Route.
- Eight (8) respondents provided negative feedback about the drivers. Three (3) drivers were mentioned by name.
- Four (4) respondents requested additional weekend service
- Four (4) respondent requested extended hours of service (either morning or evening)

	Complimentary Comments
<u>Topic</u>	Survey Serial Numbers
Drivers and other staff	7, 20, 26, 72, 76, 86, 93, 110
General Service	12, 13, 25, 78, 80, 86, 93, 110, 130
Other	84, 111
	Requested Improvements / Complaints
<u>Topic</u>	Survey Serial Numbers
Expanded Service	
Additional Stops	16, 74
Additional Morning	11, 37
Additional Evening	45, 70
Additional Weekend	24, 52, 70, 88
New Routes / Altered Service	None
Shorter Headway	24
Drivers	
Poor Performance	1, 4, 53, 63
Missed Stops	None
Unfriendly	28, 53, 61, 70, 87
Vehicles	
Cleanliness	83, 84
Breakdowns / Need Repairs	None
Enhancements	None
Stops	
Stop Enhancements / Maintenance	63
Stop Safety	None
Too Many Stops	None
On-Board Experience	
Safety	61
Comfort	None
Overcrowded	None
Other Passengers	None
Time on board	None
Schedule Adherence	
Arrives Late	None
Departs Early	63
Other Complaints	
Fares	None
Telephone Customer Service	None
Miscellaneous	30, 93

**Table 14 – Open-Ended Comments Summary** 

# **Rider Profiles**

This section will assess rider characteristics. The questions which assessed rider characteristics are listed in Table 15.

Question	Characteristic Assessed	
5	Home Zip Code	
6	Gender	
7	Age Group	
8	Employment Status	
13	Alternate Transportation Options	
14	Internet Access	
15	Smart Phone Ownership	

**Table 15 – Rider Profile Questions** 

## **Home Zip Code (Question 5)**

In Question 5, riders were asked to report their home zip code (see Figure 14). The results show that more than half of the respondents live in zip code 16365.

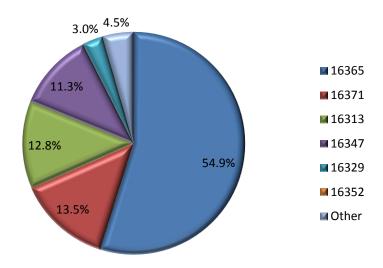


Figure 14 - Respondent's Home Zip Code

A comparison of the 2015 and 2018 results for this question is shown in Figure 15 and indicates there has been some shifts in the distribution of home zip codes since 2015.

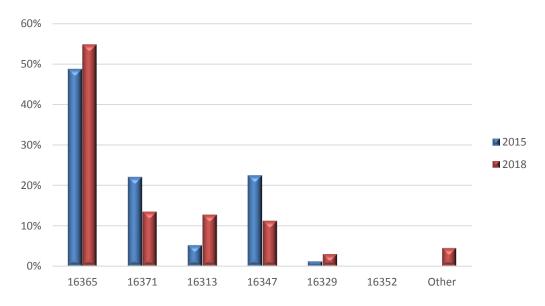


Figure 15 - Respondent Home Zip Code (2015 vs. 2018)

## **Gender (Question 6)**

Question 6 addressed the rider's gender. The majority of respondents (55%) were male (see Figure 16).

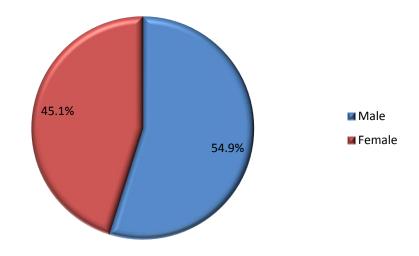
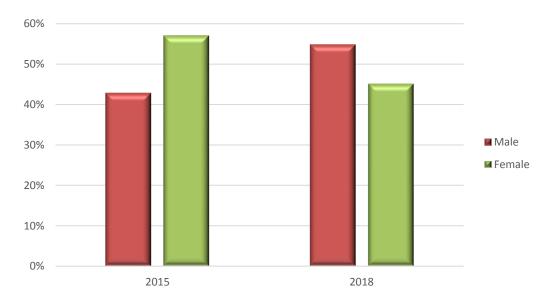


Figure 16 - Gender Breakdown of Ridership

In Figure 17, the gender breakdown of the 2015 survey respondents is compared to that of the 2018 survey respondents. The percentage of female respondents decreased from 57% to 45% between 2015 and 2018.



Figure~17-Gender~Breakdown~of~Ridership~(2015~vs.~2018)

#### Age (Question 7)

The breakdown of respondents by age is shown in Figure 18. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the respondents were between the age of 25 and 60.

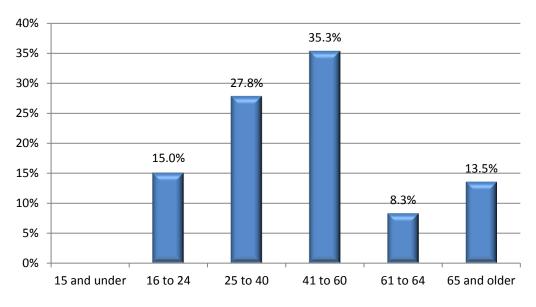


Figure 18 - Respondent Age

An age breakdown comparison between the 2015 and 2018 survey respondents is shown in Figure 19. The data shows that the percentage of respondents between the ages of 16 and 40 decreased by 6% and the percentage between the ages of 41 and 64 increased by 9%.

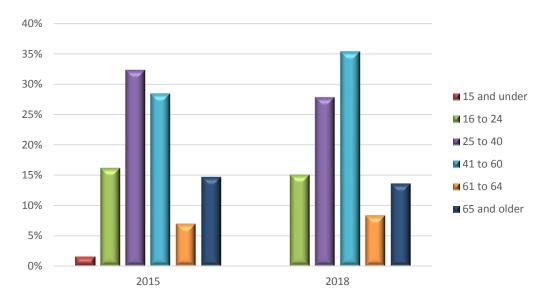
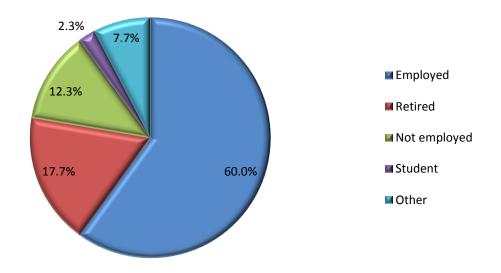


Figure 19 - Respondent Age (2015 vs. 2018)

## **Employment Status (Question 8)**

Question 8 asked riders about their current employment status. The results are depicted in Figure 20. Sixty percent (60%) who answered the question indicated they were employed.



**Figure 20 - Rider Employment Status** 

A comparison of the 2015 and 2018 results for this question is shown in Figure 21 and indicates there was little change since 2015.

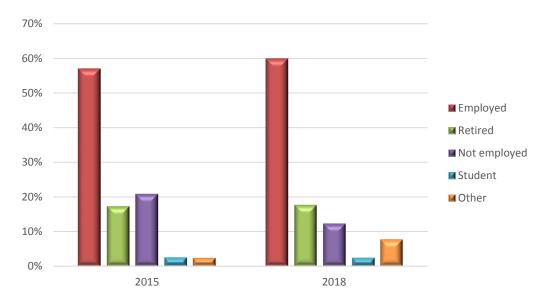
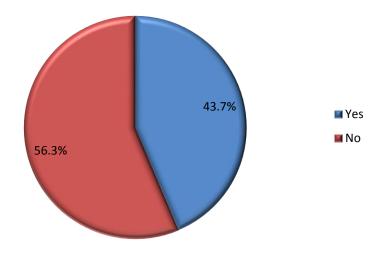


Figure 21 - Rider Employment Status (2015 vs. 2018)

# **Alternate Transportation (Question 13)**

In Question 13, riders were asked if they have alternative transportation (see Figure 22). The results show that for 56% of respondents, TAWC is their only transportation option.

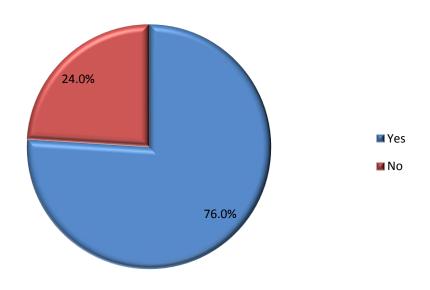


**Figure 22 - Alternate Transportation** 

This question was not included on the 2015 survey.

#### **Internet Access (Question 14)**

Question 14 asked riders if they have Internet access. Almost one quarter (24%) indicated that they did not have access to the Internet (see Figure 23).



**Figure 23 - Internet Access** 

A comparison of the 2015 and 2018 results for this question shows that Internet access has increased from 65% in 2015 to 76% in 2018 (see Figure 14).

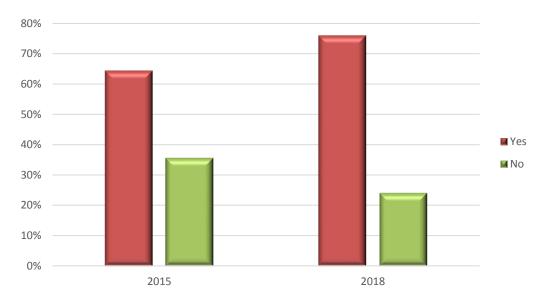
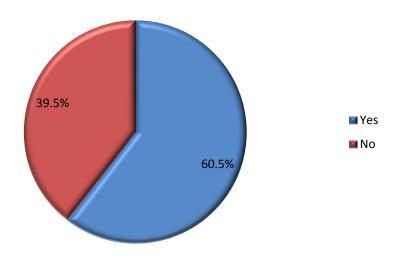


Figure 24 - Internet Access (2015 vs. 2018)

### **Smart Phone (Question 15)**

Question 15 asked riders if they own a smart phone. Sixty-one percent (61%) of the respondents indicated they own a smart phone (see Figure 25).



**Figure 25 - Smart Phone Ownership** 

## **Service Usage Characteristics**

This section will assess how and why riders use TAWC's service. The questions which assessed these topics are shown in Table 16.

Question	Characteristic Assessed	
2	Primary reason for using the service	
3	How frequently riders use the service	
4	How long riders have used the service	
11	11 How riders get to the bus stop	
12	How riders get to their final destination	

**Table 16 – Usage Characteristics Questions** 

#### What is the primary reason you use the bus? (Question 2)

Question 2 examined the primary reasons riders use TAWC's service. The results are presented in Figure 26 and indicate that almost half the respondents use the service primarily for work

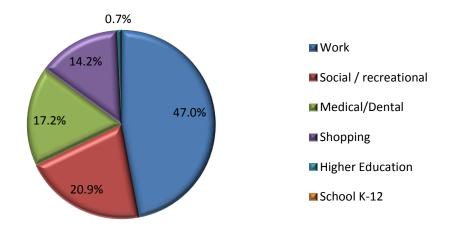
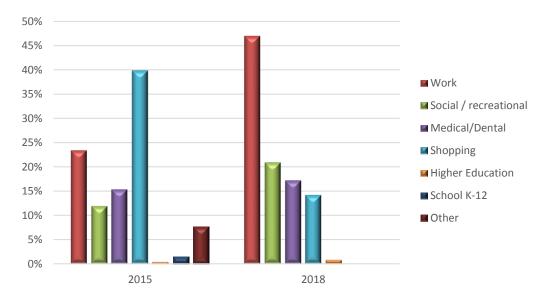


Figure 26 – Primary Purpose in Using TAWC

A comparison of the 2015 and 2018 results for this question is shown in Figure 27. Those who listed work as the primary purpose more than doubled from 23% to 47% and those who listed social / recreational activities increased from 12% to 21%. Conversely, the percentage who reported shopping as their primary purpose decreased from 40% to 14%. It should be noted that on the 2015 survey, "other" was an answer choice for this question whereas on the 2018 survey it was not.



**Figure 27 - Primary Purpose in Using TAWC** 

#### How often do you ride the bus? (Question 3)

In Question 3, riders were asked to report how frequently they use TAWC's service. As shown in Figure 28, 37% use the bus at least 5 days a week and 66% use the bus 2 days a week or more.

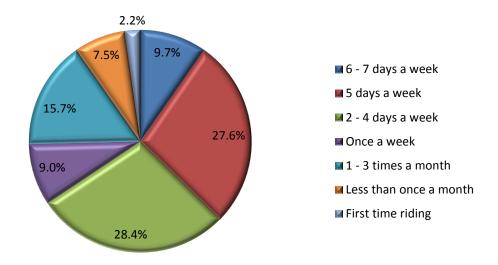


Figure 28 - Frequency of Riding

A comparison of service usage frequency between 2015 and 2018 is shown in Figure 29. Over this period, the results suggest the percentage of riders who use the service 5 days a week or more increased (23%  $\rightarrow$  37%) and the percentage of riders who use the service 2 to 4 days a week decreased (50%  $\rightarrow$  28%).

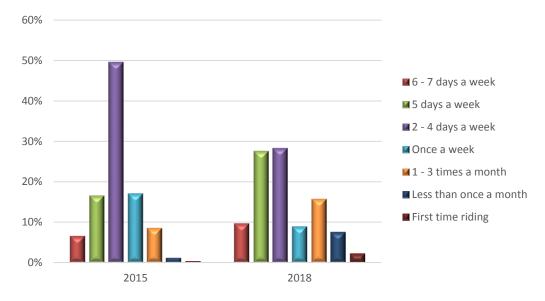


Figure 29 – Frequency of Riding (2015 vs. 2018)

#### How long have you been using TAWC's service? (Question 4)

Question 4 asked riders about the length of time they have been using TAWC's service. The results indicated that 81% of respondents have been using TAWC's service for more than 1 year and 58% have been using it for more than 3 years (see Figure 30).

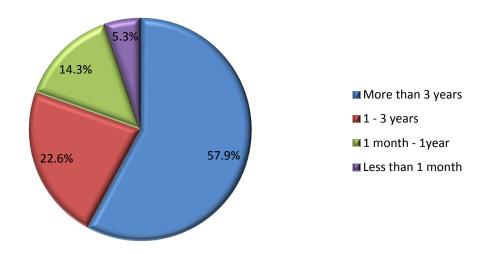


Figure 30 - Length of Time Using TAWC's Service

A comparison of the data from the 2015 and 2018 surveys is shown in Figure 31. Based on the results, the percentage of respondents who have utilized the service for more than 3 years has increased from 50% to 58%.

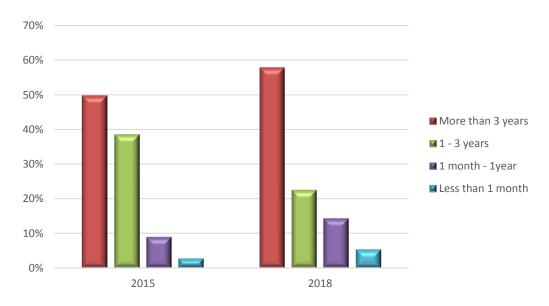


Figure 31 - Length of Time Using TAWC's Service (2015 vs. 2018)

#### How do you get to the bus? (Question 11)

In Question 11, respondents were asked how they get to the bus. The results (see Figure 32) indicate that the majority (86%) walk to the bus stop.

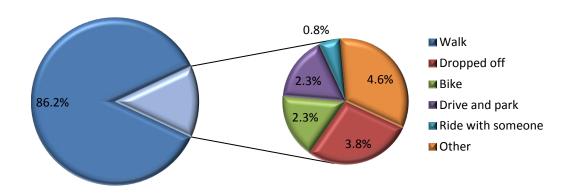


Figure 32 - Getting to the Bus

Figure 33 compares the 2015 results for this question to the 2018 results. The percentage of respondents who reported that they walk to the bus stop has decreased by about 5% (91%  $\rightarrow$  86%).

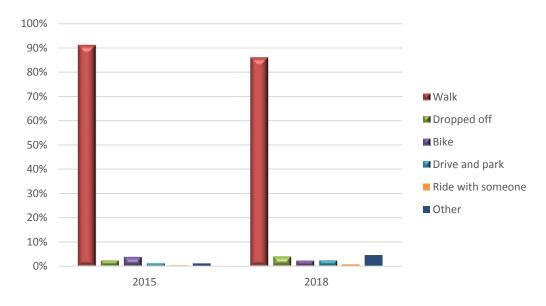
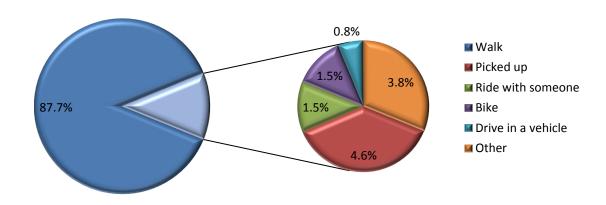


Figure 33 - Getting to the Bus (2015 vs. 2018)

#### How do you get to your final destination? (Question 12)

Question 12 asked riders how they get from the bus to their final destination. The results indicate that 88% of riders walk (see Figure 34).



**Figure 34 - Getting to the Final Destination** 

Figure 35 compares the 2015 results for this question to the 2018 results. The data indicates that the respondents walking from the bus stop to their final destination has decreased slightly since the 2015 survey  $(91\% \rightarrow 88\%)$ .

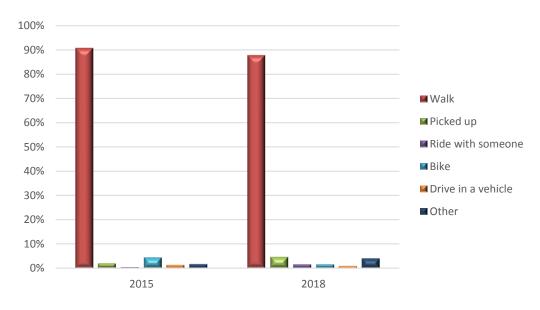


Figure 35 - Getting to the Final Destination (2015 vs. 2018)  $\,$ 

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Overall, the results of the 2018 survey indicate that riders are satisfied with the service TAWC provides. Ninety-nine percent (99%) indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service. In addition, 18 of the 19 performance measures had an average rating above 4.0 and a significant portion of the open-ended feedback was favorable in regard to TAWC's service and staff.

Comparison of the 2018 survey results with the results from the 2015 survey indicated an upward trend in customer satisfaction. The percentage of respondents who indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with TAWC's service increased from 97% to 99%. In addition, the average rating of 14 of the 19 performance measures increased.

The open-ended feedback provided by respondents was also largely favorable. Nine (9) respondents provided positive comments about TAWC's service and 8 complemented TAWC's drivers and other staff.

While the results of the survey suggest TAWC riders are generally happy with the service, analysis of the data collected reveals areas where there are opportunities for improvement. The remainder of this section provides some observations and suggestions for TAWC to consider.

The performance measure "frequency of weekend service" received the lowest average score of all 19 performance measures (3.98) and 23 respondents gave this measure an unfavorable rating. In addition, 4 respondents indicated a desire for additional weekend service in the open-ended feedback. Additional weekend service is commonly requested by transit riders across the state and it can be challenging to accommodate these requests. However, TAWC may want to further evaluate this demand and, if warranted, explore cost effective alternatives which would address at least a portion of this need.

While the performance measures "comfort at bus stops" and "bus stop maintenance" both had an average rating which improved significantly since 2015, they are still two of the lowest rated performance measures. TAWC should assess the conditions at their bus stops and consider making improvement to those which need it, especially stops which see the highest number of riders.

There were 8 unfavorable comments in the open-ended feedback which pertain to drivers, 5 of which came from respondents on the North-South Route and 3 of which came from respondents on the Youngs-ville Route. Further, the performance measures "driver courtesy and friendliness" and "safe and competent drivers" both declined in average rating since 2015. TAWC may want to assess driver performance to determine if one or more drivers would benefit from additional training.

The performance measure "Frequency of weekday service" received one of the lowest average ratings from respondents (4.36). This performance measure also received the second highest number of unfavorable ratings from respondents (12). There were also 4 comments in the open-ended feedback where respondents requested extended hours of operation (both morning and evening). TAWC should further evaluate the demand for increased frequency of service and extended service hours. If warranted, TAWC could consider cost effective alternatives to address at least a portion of this demand.

The favorable results of this survey are in large part a reflection of the efforts of TAWC's staff. TAWC should consider sharing the survey results with their drivers and other staff and acknowledging them for their efforts.

The open-ended feedback provided by the respondents represents some of the most useful information captured by the survey. Since it is unstructured, it allows riders to identify their most important concerns

in their experience with the service. While this report has attempted to summarize and evaluate the topics which were most frequently mentioned in respondents' comments, TAWC would derive additional value by reviewing the full text of the feedback which was provided (see Appendix B).

TAWC may want to publish the results of the survey along with any actions the agency plans to take in response to the survey findings. This will send a message to the riders that TAWC cares about their concerns and has used their feedback in a thoughtful fashion to improve the service. Methods of publicizing this information include posting the results on the TAWC website and / or Facebook page, distributing a flyer on the buses and holding a public meeting.

Data Centric Services calculated a sample size target of 221 for TAWC in order to keep the margin of error below 5%. However, the number of surveys which were actually collected (136) fell well below this target which adversely affected the margin of error for the survey. For future surveys, TAWC should strive to achieve a sample closer to the target in order to improve the representativeness of the survey results.

## References

Gannett Fleming. (2013). PennDOT Transit Customer Satisfaction Survey Design

PennDOT. (2016). Pennsylvania Public Transportation, Annual Performance Report, Fiscal Year 2014-15.

Transportation Research Board. (2003). TCRP Report 88 - A Guidebook for Developing a Transit Performance-Measurement System

Transportation Research Board. (1999). TCRP Report 47 - A Handbook for Measuring Customer Satisfaction and Service Quality

U.S. Census Bureau. (2010)

Appendix A – Example Paper and Electronic Survey



# Customer Satisfaction Survey Transit Authority of Warren County

1)	Please rate us in the following areas,		•			
	•	Satisfied S	atisfied Di	ssatisfied Very	dissatisfied No	t Applicable
	Overall satisfaction					
	On-time arrivals and departures					
	Frequency of weekday service		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	Ц
	Frequency of weekend service		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	Щ
	Availability of seats on the bus		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	_Ц
	Comfortable bus seats				<u> </u>	_Ц
	Comfortable temperature on bus					
	Comfort at bus stops					
	Cleanliness inside the bus					
	Bus fares					
	Driver courtesy and friendliness					
	Safe and competent drivers					
	Bus stop maintenance					
	Personal safety on buses/at stops					
	Helpfulness of employees					
	Park-and-ride lots					
	Telephone customer service					$\overline{\Box}$
	Bus schedule availability					$\Box$
	Bus schedule - easy to understand					
	Website - easy to navigate					
	Website - easy to havigate					Ш
2) W	2) What is the primary reason you use the bus?  5) What is your local zip code?					
Ĺ	☐ Work ☐ School K-		16313		16365	
F	Shopping Higher Ed		16329	)	16371	
F	Medical/Dental Social / re		16347		Other	
L	Medical/Derital Social/Te	Creational	16352			
3) H	ow often do you ride the bus?		LI !!Otho	r " plages epoci	6.	$\neg \neg \neg$
	6 - 7 days a week 1 - 3 times	s a month	II Oule	er," please speci	ly	
	5 days a week Less than	once a				
	2 - 4 days a week	ridin a	6) What is yo	our gender?	_	
	Once a week	riding	Male		Female	
4) How long have you been using this transit 7) What is your age group?						
	ervice?		· ·	d under	41 to 60	
Γ	More than 3 years 1 month to	1 year	16 to 2		61 to 64	
Ī	1 - 3 years Less than		25 to 4		65 and ol	lder

<del>-</del>	_
8) What is your current employment status?  Employed Student  Not employed Other  Retired	12) How will you generally get to your final destination once you get off the bus?  Walk Bike Drive in a vehicle Ride with someone Picked up Other
9) Will you continue using this bus service?  Definitely Not likely Likely Definitely not Unsure	13) Do you have alternate transportation?  Yes No  No  14) Can you access the Internet?
10) Would you recommend this bus service?  Definitely Not likely Likely Definitely not Unsure	Yes No  15) Do you have a smart phone?  Yes No
11) How do you generally get to the bus stop?  Walk Bike Drive and park Ride with someone Dropped off Other  Are there any other comments you would like to make	ke pertaining to <i>TAWC</i> ?

THANK YOU FOR HELPING
TAWC
IMPROVE OUR SERVICE!



## Customer Satisfaction Survey Transit Authority of Warren County

Which bus route do you most frequently use? --Click Here--Please rate us in the following areas, over the last 30 days Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Not Applicable Overall satisfaction On-time arrivals and departures Frequency of weekday service Frequency of weekend service Availability of seats on the bus Comfortable bus seats Comfortable temperature on bus Comfort at bus stops Cleanliness inside the bus Bus fares Driver courtesy and friendliness Safe and competent drivers Bus stop maintenance Personal safety on buses/at stops Helpfulness of employees Park-and-ride lots Telephone customer service Bus schedule availability Bus schedule - easy to understand Website - easy to navigate Next → What is the primary reason you use the bus? --Click Here--How often do you ride the bus? --Click Here--How long have you been using this transit service? --Click Here--What is your local zip code? --Click Here-- ▼ ← Back Next →

What is your gender?
Click Here ▼
What is your age group?
Click Here ▼
What is your current employment status?
Click Here ▼
Will you continue using this bus service?
Click Here ▼
← Back Next →
Would you recommend this bus service?
Click Here ▼
How do you generally get to the bus stop?
Click Here ▼
How will you generally get to your final destination once you get off the bus?
Click Here ▼
Do you have alternate transportation?
Click Here ▼
← Back Next →



**Appendix B - Open Ended Feedback** 

Survey Serial Number	Route	Q30
45	North-South	You would get more of me if you had more service to Warren Moor area later in day.
52	North-South	I wish the buses ran longer on Saturday and they ran Sunday. I pay \$40 a weekend to get a taxi to and from work. It's a struggle.
53	North-South	The afternoon North-South bus driver is rude and unsafe. I feel very uncomfortable on the bus when he is driving.
61	North-South	Sometimes Tom is rude. Also occasionally leaves stop before I am seated.
63	North-South	I don't believe Tom is a very good driver, besides hitting every bump in the road, he takes curves too tightly hitting the curb or making people fall from their seats. Also, he picks unsafe places to let people off before the towns. Dianne just need so slow down a little time-wise because a lot of us miss her bus even when we show up 10 mins before. Some of the bus stop signs need redone because they can barely be read. And there is one even out of place going towards the west end when the bus goes on 4th, so the bus never even stops there. :) Thank you.
70	North-South	The evening bus driver for Walmart is very rude!!! Also wish you ran later on weekdays and weekends.
72	North-South	Everyone is really super kind!
74	North-South	I think they should have the bus come up to Zimmer Rd to pick up people wo we don't have to walk all the way up town to get on the bus.
76	North-South	Great people
78	North-South	So many people would be stranded if the buses were not here. Thank you all!
80	North-South	Everything is awesome. I love the service that is provided to the community and me.
82	North-South	I started riding because of medical issues.
83	North-South	Sanitizing of the bus - afraid of what I could catch.
84	North-South	I have ridden the bus since the beginning and I'm grateful for the fees never changing. They could help make the bus smell better though.
86	North-South	I am very satisfied with your service. Hope and pray you and every other driver with continue giving us this great service. Thanks again for everything.
87	North-South	Some drivers are not nice. They can be very nasty if you ask a question. Afternoon drivers are the ones that need a nice pill.
88	Sheffield Route	The possibility of Sundays. going by Dollar General in Sheffield twice.

Survey Serial	Route	Q30
Number		
93	Sheffield Route	I appreciate this service! Improvements can be made, however, drivers are great!
110	Sheffield Route	The bus driver or nest. The palei I like to ride bus for Warren PA
111	Sheffield Route	I think it's wonderful that a bicycle can be carried on the front of the bus.
130	Sheffield Route	Good service!
1	Youngsville Route	Drivers to go slower!
4	Youngsville Route	Why is it drivers use the CB radio to discuss the morning donut give-away instead of driving safely? Sheffield - No. Warren drivers
7	Youngsville Route	Cindy is an amazing driver and I appreciate her daily service and dedication.
11	Youngsville Route	Would like to see bus at 5:30 am to Blair from Youngsville
12	Youngsville Route	I appreciate they do for the people and they make life easier.
13	Youngsville Route	I like riding the bus. People are friendly.
16	Youngsville Route	Yes, bus goes all the way out to Sheffield but Y-ville is farthest stop on west end. People in Garland, Pittsfield, etc. are underserved. Even one stop at Pittsfield post office would be helpful.
20	Youngsville Route	I had to start riding the bus because of a seizure, and Cindy the regular driver is a delight and welcoming.
24	Youngsville Route	Would like to see the bus run more and later on weekends.
25	Youngsville Route	Thankful we have a bus, especially not driving my own car.
26	Youngsville Route	No, they are great. Thanks to all who work at TAWC
28	Youngsville Route	One driver on the North Warren bus is rude; afternoon one.
30	Youngsville Route	Seat belts for children
37	Youngsville Route	I think it would be feasible to have a 5:30 am bus to BlueSteam Blair for the 6 am - 230 pm shift. Thank you.