



## 2017 Socio-Economic Survey Report June, 2017

A Socio-Economic Survey was conducted on Wednesday, April 26, 2017 on the fixed-route system for Metro Transit. On that day, 19 routes were in service from 6:00 a.m. until 12:15 a.m. A total of 618 survey forms were collected from riders. Ridership from the farebox information available for April 16 was 9,573, resulting in a 6.45% return rate.

Surveys were distributed to riders on the bus and at the Kalamazoo Transportation Center with passengers being asked to return the forms to a box located on the buses or to the Kalamazoo Transportation Center Customer Service Desk.

### Highlights from 2017 Data

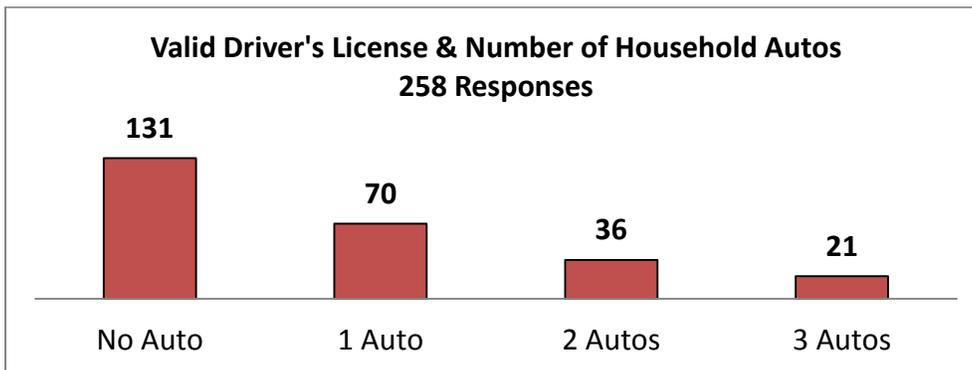
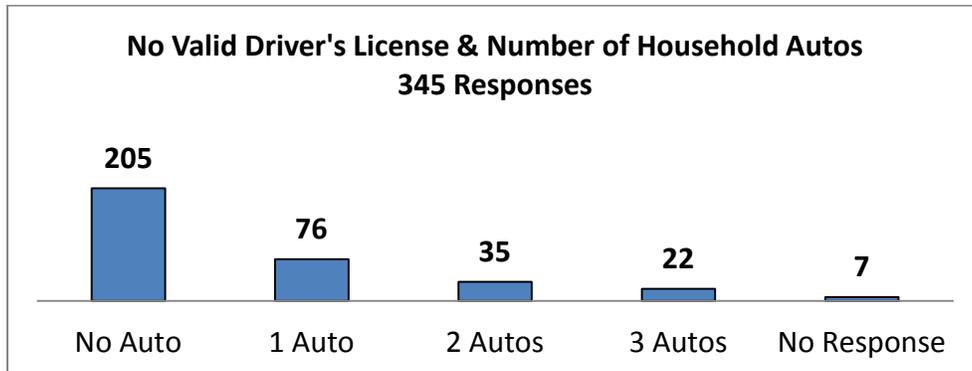
- When asked the primary purpose of bus trips, going to and from work was the largest response (222 – 44.31%), followed by school (86 – 17.17%). Riders were asked to mark one response when asked, “What is the PRIMARY purpose of your bus trips?” but marked more than one response on 108 survey forms. Of those forms, work and school were again the largest responses.
- The majority of surveys indicated that they rode the bus six or more times per week (354 – 58.71%) followed by 3-4 times (107 – 17.74%).
- When asked what days a week riders used the bus, the top responses were Wednesday (583 – 16.97%), Monday (552 – 16.07%), Tuesday (529 – 15.40%) and Thursday (519 – 15.10%). Of the survey responses, 12.4% stated they used the bus on Saturday and 8.61% stated they used the fixed route system on Sunday.
- For the 2017 survey, we asked how often they used the route they were on per week. The majority responded that they rode that route 6+ days per week (220 – 36.91%) followed by 5 days a week (131 – 21.98%).
- When asked about the overall satisfaction of the bus route they were using on the day of the survey, 268 rated the route a “10” (45.12%), followed by “8” (87 – 14.65%).
- 77.34% (454) of riders use a transfer.
- Five percent of riders use a ramp or lift to board the bus (33 – 5.45%).
- When asked if a car was available for the bus trip, 468 responded with a “No” (88.47%).

- A new question for 2017 included asking if there wasn't a bus available for the trip, how they would get to their destination. 201 (33.28%) responded they would walk, 147 (24.34%) responded they would ask someone for a ride, and 94 (15.56%) said they wouldn't have taken the trip.
- For 2017, we asked about several statements about their travel by bus. 401 (66.39%) stated they have no other way to travel so they use the bus, 159 (26.32%) stated they use the bus because it is the best choice, even though they have other means they could use for travel, and 44 (7.28%) responded they use other types of transportation but occasional use the bus.
- 345 responses (59.69%) stated they don't have a valid driver's license.
- 59.12% (337) responses indicated they were female and 40.88% (233) were male.
- The highest level of school completed was some college (253 – 43.70%) followed by 9-12 grade (199 – 34.37%).
- 35.30% (203) of surveys reported working full time, followed by 26.26% (151) working part-time.
- Of the surveys returned, 207 (35.63%) were between 23-42 years old followed by 184 who were 43-61 years old (31.67%).
- 256 responded that they are White (44.37%) and 243 responded they are Black (42.11%).
- 59.45% (346) of the households don't have a working automobile in the household, followed by 26.46% (154) having one working vehicle.
- Most surveys responded that they have one person in the household (177 – 30.89%), followed closely by two people (167 – 29.14%) and 3-4 people (164 – 28.62%).
- 123 surveys reported household income of less than \$5,000 a year (24.45%). 93 responses were recorded for both \$10,000 – 14,999 and \$15,000 – 24,999 (18.49% for both categories). 87 (17.30%) reported household income of \$5,000 – 9,999.

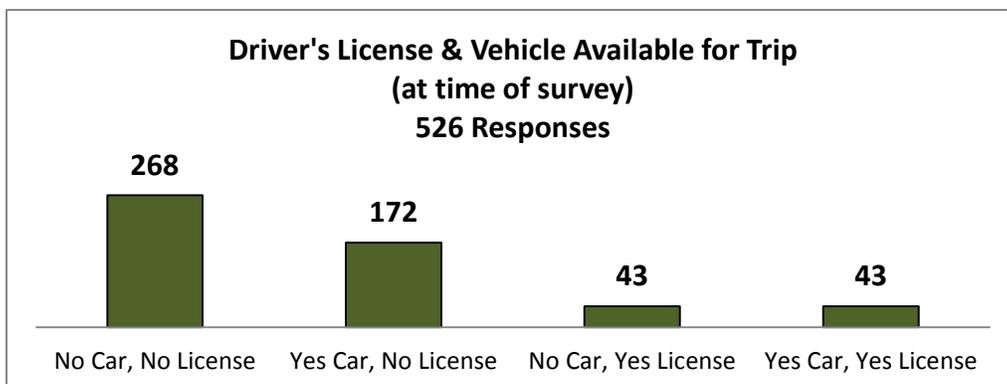
**Analysis of Data**

Of the 345 responses that indicated that did not have a valid driver’s license, 60.65% also did not have a working automobile in the household to take the trip. 22.49% of those without a license indicated that there was one working automobile in the household.

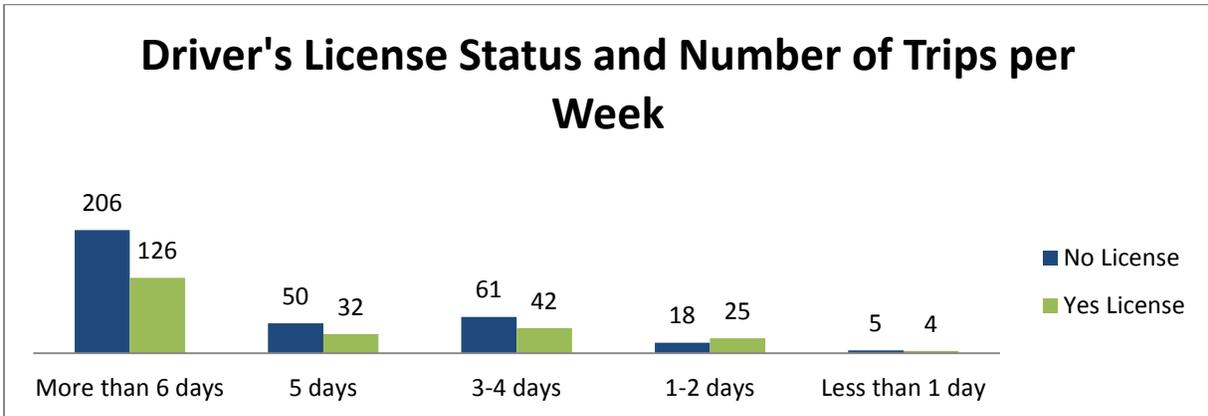
In looking at those with valid driver’s licenses, 50.78% did not have a working automobile and 27.13% had one working automobile in the household.



A total of 268 (50.95%) indicated that they didn’t have a car available for the trip the day of the survey nor did they have a valid driver’s license. 172 (32.70%) indicated that they had a car available but not a valid driver’s license. 43 (8.17%) noted that they didn’t have a car available but had a driver’s license.

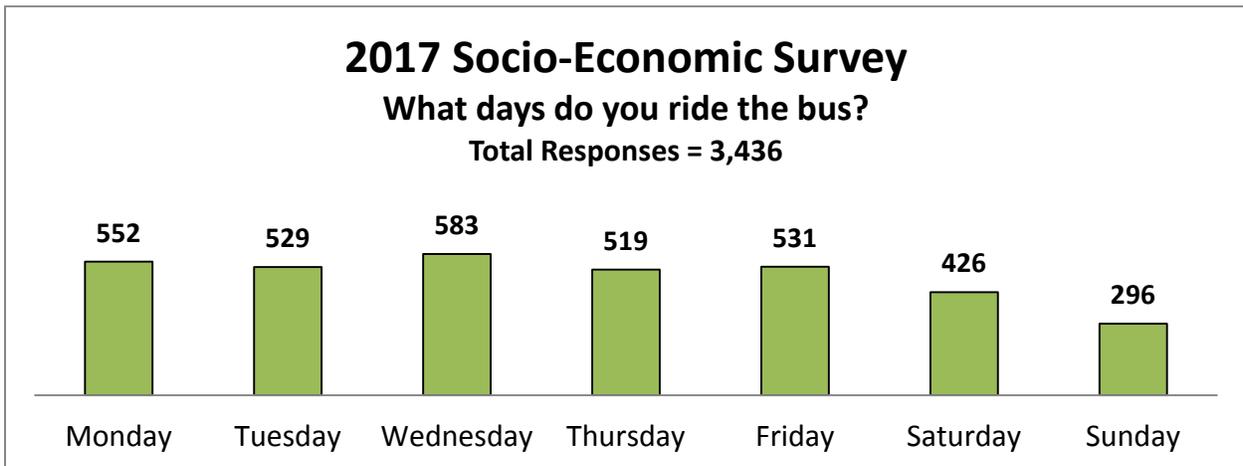


In looking at how many trips were taken by those without a valid driver’s licenses and those with, 206 (60.59%) of those without a valid license took more than 6 trips per week while 126 (55.02%) of those with valid license took more than 6 trips.

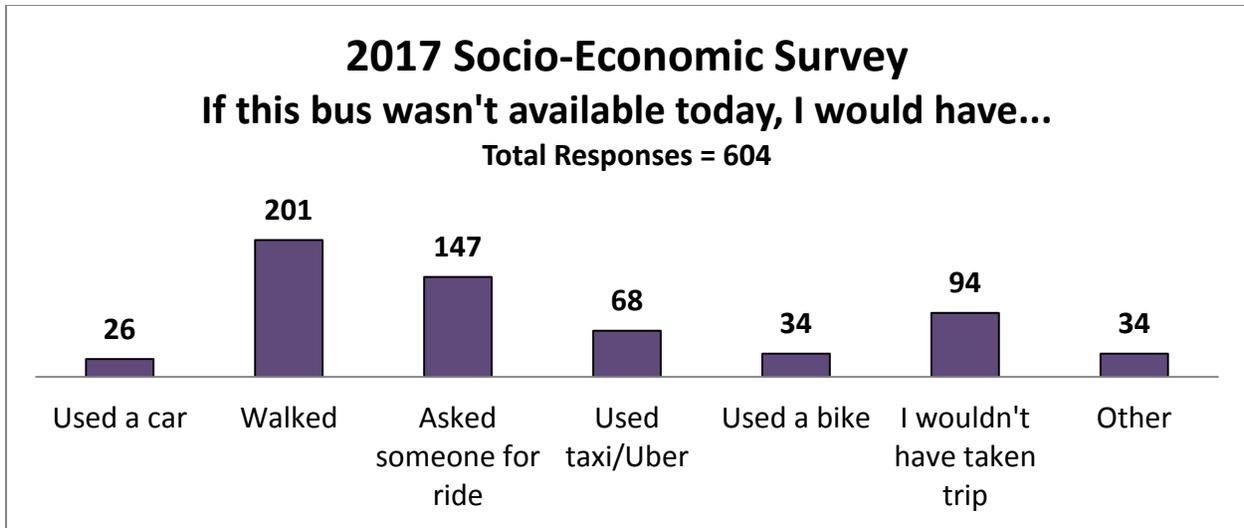


**New Questions Asked on 2017 Survey**

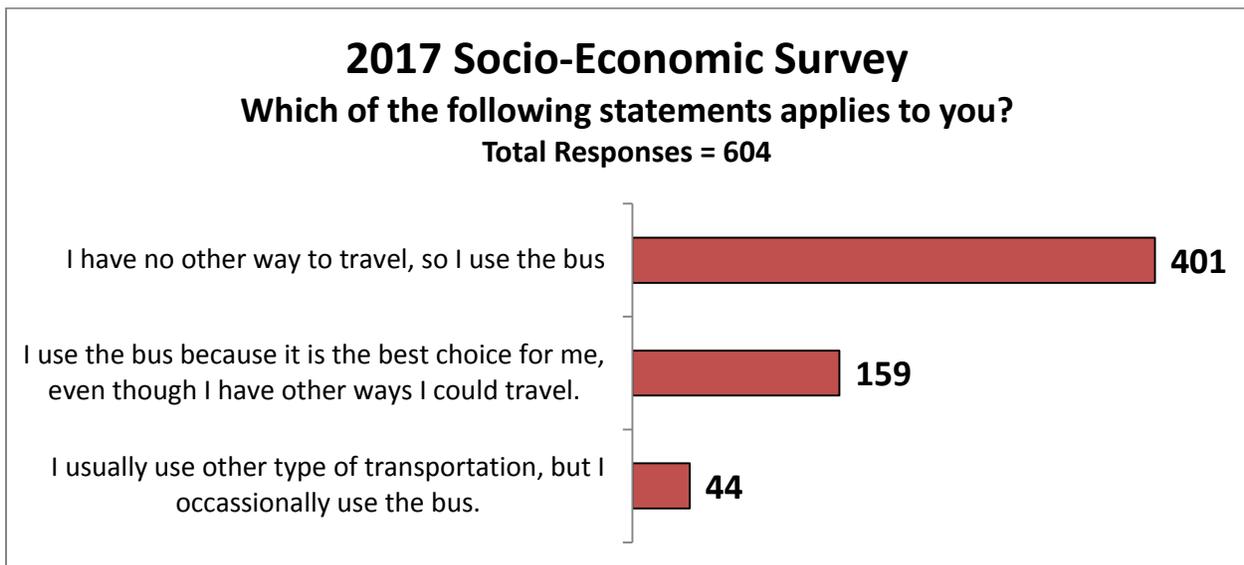
As part of the 2017 survey, we asked a number of new questions to riders taking the survey. One question was what days of the week they use the bus with multiple days being allowed as a response. Monday through Friday were all within the same percentages (77.99%) with Saturday being 12.40% and Sunday being 8.61%. In looking at ridership by day of the week for the system, approximately 88% of trips are taken during weekdays, 8% on Saturday, and 3% on Sunday.



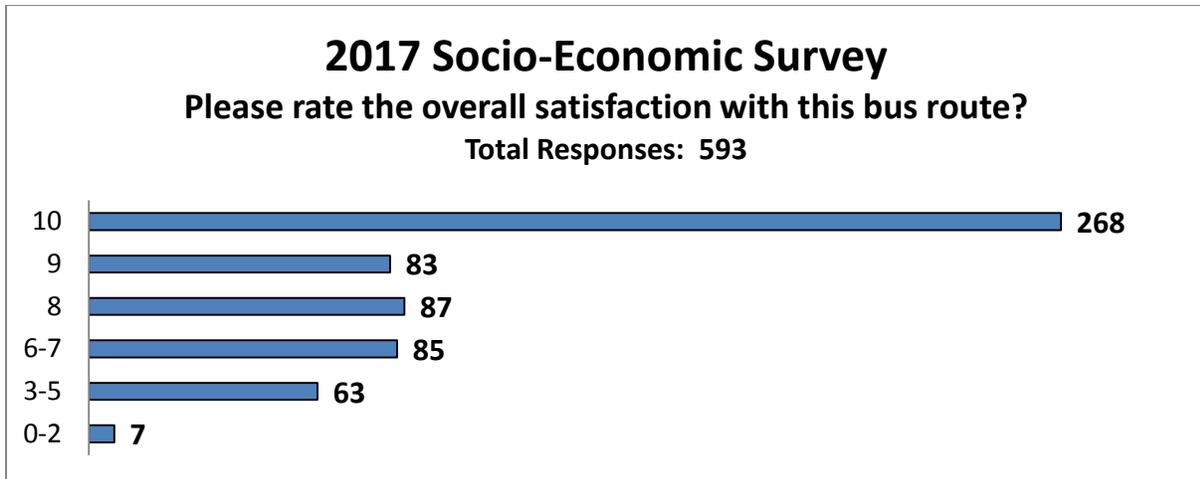
We also asked riders if the bus wasn’t available on the date of the survey, what they would use instead to get to their destination. 32.52% (201 responses) said they would walk and 23.79% (147 responses) said they would ask someone for a ride. 15.21% (94 responses) of surveys said they wouldn’t have taken the trip.



In 2017, we also asked about their choice to use Metro Transit’s fixed route system. 64.89% (401 responses) said they had no other means of travel so they used the bus, 25.73% (159 responses) said they use the bus because it is the best choice even though they had other ways they could travel, and 7.12% (44 responses) said they usually take another type of transportation but occasionally take the bus.



We asked riders to give us feedback on the route they were on when they took the survey form. Of the 593 responses received who responded to the question, 268 (43.37%) gave the route a “10” rating. Seven forms gave the route they were on a “0-2” rating. Those routes include 3-West Michigan, 4-Oakland, 7-Alamo, 10-Comstock, 11-Stadium, and 26-Centre.



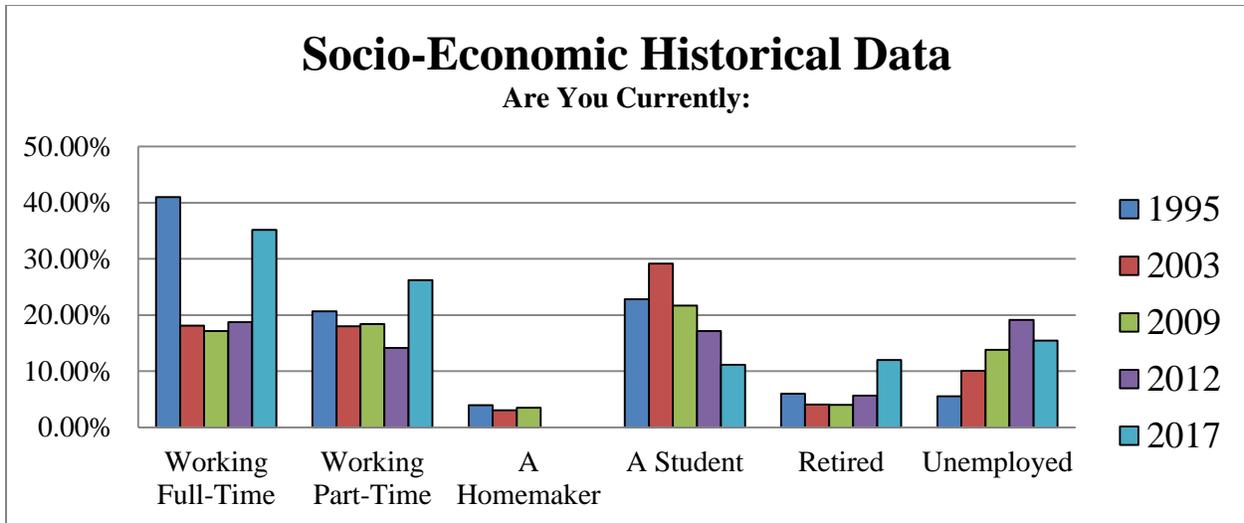
### Previous Survey Comparisons

Previous surveys were completed by the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Kalamazoo Urbanized Area. Surveys were completed by KATS in 1995, 2003, 2009, and 2012. Similar questions were asked as part of the survey in order to identify changes in the system users.

In examining the primary purpose for using the bus, to/from school was previously indicated as the top reason. In 2017, survey responses indicated that to/from work was the primary reason for using the bus. In past years, this was ranked second behind school.

Using the bus 6 or times per week continues to be the top response for surveys.

The number of responses indicating they are either working full-time or part-time increased from previous years. Previous years had full-time employment ± 18%. In 2017, that percentage is 35.16% (205 surveys). For part-time employment, the current survey responses were 26.24% whereas in previous years it was 14.16-20.64%. Since 2003, there has been a decline in the number of student responses. Metro Transit has been watching a decline in the number of student riders over the past several years and with this survey, sees the trend continuing. Student riders have typically been Western Michigan University students who have access to the entire Metro Transit fixed route system. Enrollment at the university has been down over the past several years as well.



Riders continue to use transfers when riding Metro Transit’s fixed route system. From 2012 to 2017, there was an increase from 63.78% to 77.34% reflecting the need to use more than one bus to reach destinations.

There was also an increase in the number of surveys stating they didn’t have a car available for the trip they took when completing the survey. In 2012, the number of responses was 73.61% compared to 88.47% in 2017.