

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SURVEY RESULTS

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN NORTHWEST OHIO



In the latter half of 2015, The Ability Center of Greater Toledo sent out a survey asking northwest Ohioans who used public transportation, why, and what improvements needed to be made. 86% of survey respondents answered, “yes” when asked if public transportation in northwest Ohio needed to be improved. This report lays out our results.



THE ABILITY CENTER
GREATER TOLEDO • OTTAWA COUNTY • BRYAN

(419) 885-5733

5605 Monroe Street
Sylvania, OH 43560

abilitycenter.org

August 2016

This survey report was prepared by Disability Rights Attorney Katherine Hunt Thomas and Marketing Coordinator Mallory Tarr. For more information, please contact Katherine at kthomas@abilitycenter.org.

The Ability Center of Greater Toledo is a Center for Independent Living, established in 1920, serving seven counties in northwest Ohio. Our mission is to assist people with disabilities to live, work, and socialize within a fully accessible community. We exercise our core values of consumer control and community inclusion; advocacy; establishing high expectations for success among people with disabilities; and forming partnerships and positive public relations to deliver best practice programs that assist people with disabilities in achieving community integration.

This survey report and other Ability Center policy advocacy can be found on our website, www.abilitycenter.org.

The Ability Center of Greater Toledo
5605 Monroe Street
Sylvania, OH 43560
419-885-5733
866-885-5733
www.abilitycenter.org



INTRODUCTION

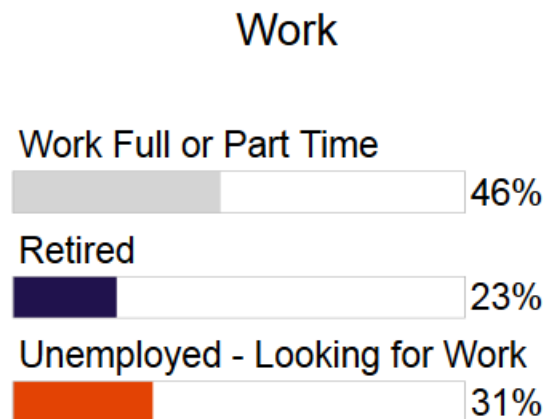
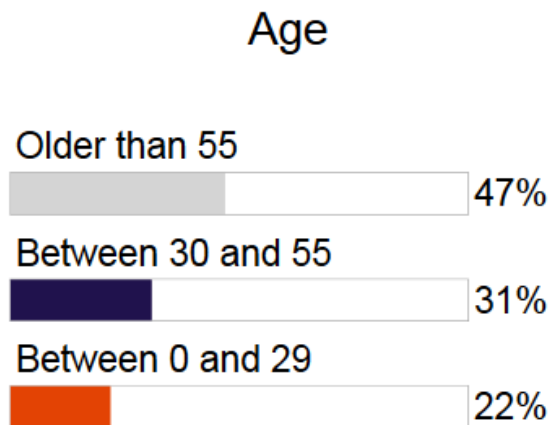
From July through November 2015, The Ability Center of Greater Toledo promoted a transportation needs assessment aimed towards those who use public transportation in northwest Ohio to give feedback on how the state of public transportation affects their quality of life. In short, how easily they are able to get around. The survey was aimed to get a sense of: **who** uses public transportation; **what** problems do they experience; and **where** do they want to go?

We received two hundred and fifty-two responses from our seven-county service area, which includes Lucas, Wood, Fulton, Defiance, Ottawa, Henry, and Williams counties. 56.2% of our respondents reported using public transportation at least once in the past year. To get feedback, we created a survey, which was available on our website and Facebook page and was promoted online by our community partners. We also distributed paper surveys through outreach to various different organizations and entered them manually into the computer. This report contains the results of that survey.

CONTENTS

Summary of Findings.....	3
Who uses Public Transportation?	5
Public Transportation in Northwest Ohio	8
Taxi Service.....	10
Fixed Line Service	11
Call-Ahead Shuttle Service	12
Why Do People Use Public Transportation	13
Where Do People Use Public Transportation	14
Problems with Public Transportation.....	15
Improvements to be Made to Public Transportation	16

QUICK FACTS: AT A GLANCE – WHO TOOK OUR SURVEY?



24.2% use fixed-line bus service **35.5%** use a call ahead bus or shuttle **28.2%** use taxi service

WHERE DID THEY GO?

33% medical appointments **26.6%** grocery shopping **26.6%** other shopping

21% work or job seeking

38.2% have been late or unable to get to doctor's appointments in the past year because of a lack of transportation



WHAT DID THEY SAY?

37.1% stated that service needs to be offered later in the evenings

37.5% wanted service that goes to areas outside the city

31.9% wanted faster, more direct routes

73% were unable to or had trouble getting to Perrysburg, Ohio because of a lack of public transportation

66.3% were unable or had trouble getting to Oregon, Ohio

54.8% want reliable public transportation to Perrysburg, Ohio

47.8% want reliable public transportation to Oregon, Ohio

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I. Who Uses Public Transportation?

We received responses from a variety of different ages and demographics. The largest group was individuals over the age of 65, 27.8% of overall Respondents, but the next three largest groups were about equal: 56-65 (19%); 41-55 (20.2%); and 19-29 (18.7%). While 73% of Respondents made equal to or less than \$40,000 per year, only 41.3% were retired, unable to work, or not looking for work. 46.1% were working full or part-time. 49.6% received Medicaid benefits. 78.3% of Respondents identified as having some sort of disability.

43.8% of Respondents claimed that, in the past year, they never used public transportation. The majority of those who remained either used it infrequently (22.7% used public transit for 1-25% of travel) or relied on it for their primary mode of transportation (19.1% used public transit for 76-100% of travel). In the past year, 41.8% of Respondents had driven their own car; 28.3% of Respondents had carpoolled or gotten a ride from someone else; 24.3% of Respondents had used a paratransit system; 21.1% of Respondents had used a fixed-line system; and less frequently, Respondents used a shuttle from a social service agency (16.3%) or a taxi (15.5%). When asked what transportation was used most often, fewer respondents answered carpooling (9.3%) than drive my own car (39.5%); paratransit (12.9%); and fixed line bus (11.7%). However, carpooling was more popular than shuttles by social service agencies (6.5%) and taxis (3.6%).

The majority of people responded that they used public transportation because they did not have a car (30.7%). 26.7% used public transportation due to a disability. Some “other” responses (20.7%) were: Respondents used public transit when their car does not work; during a temporary disability (foot surgery); for convenience/to avoid parking; and for environmental reasons. 29.5% of Respondents stated that they do not use public transportation because there is none by their home or they don’t know if it is available.

II. What Problems Do They Experience?

The number one thing that our Respondents wished to change about public transportation was to have buses or shuttles that go outside the city (37.5%). The second desire was to have service later in the evenings (37.1%). Other areas that needed change were faster, more direct routes (31.9%); drivers need to come on time (31%); improved trip reservation process (29.4%); buses or shuttles need to come on the weekends (28.2%); buses or shuttles that connect different cities (26.6%); and coordinated service between buses (24.2%). Physical accessibility was not a large problem for Respondents. The largest problem with accessibility was that ramps or lifts were not kept up (7%). Respondents also did not report many problems with sidewalks and bus stops, the biggest problems being either no bus stop (8%) or bus stops too far from the destination (8%).

III. Where Do They Want to Go?

Of all the activities listed in the survey, 72.1% of Respondents¹ stated that they were unable to get to or had been late to medical appointments in the past year because of public transportation. 46.7% were late or unable to get home after an activity because of public transportation and 42% were late or had to miss meeting up with friends. The fourth most commonly missed activity was “other shopping” where 40.1% of Respondents had been late to or missed other shopping due to public transportation.

The locations that Respondents most wanted to have reliable transportation were the following: Toledo (87 Respondents²); Perrysburg (72 Respondents); Maumee (59 Respondents); Oregon (55 Respondents); Sylvania (55 Respondents); Bowling Green (50 Respondents); Rossford (45 Respondents). Of those valued locations, Respondents had the most trouble getting to Perrysburg (65 Respondents had trouble accessing via public transit); Oregon (51 Respondents had trouble accessing via public transit); and Bowling Green (52 Respondents) had trouble accessing via public transit. In other locations, the areas most difficult to reach by public transit were Delta (36 Respondents); Montpelier (35 Respondents); and Bryan (35 Respondents).

¹ Respondents who answered that they used public transportation.

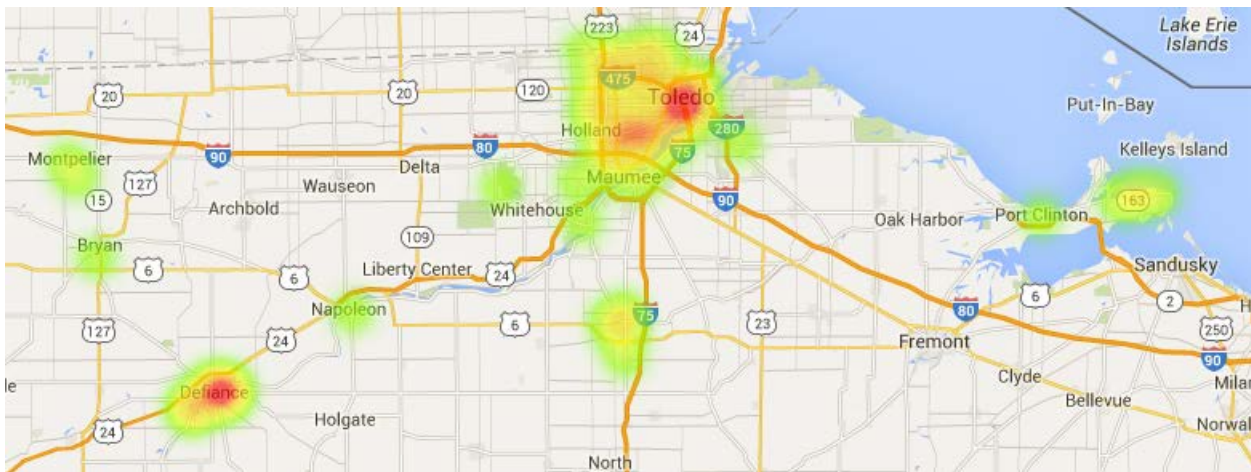
² Not all Respondents answered these questions.



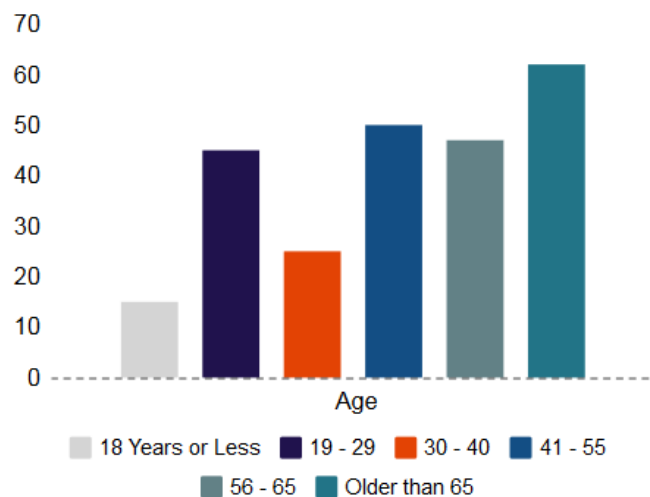
WHO USES PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?

We received 252 responses from our seven-county service area of Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Williams, and Wood Counties.

Map of Respondents' Locations³



What is your Age?



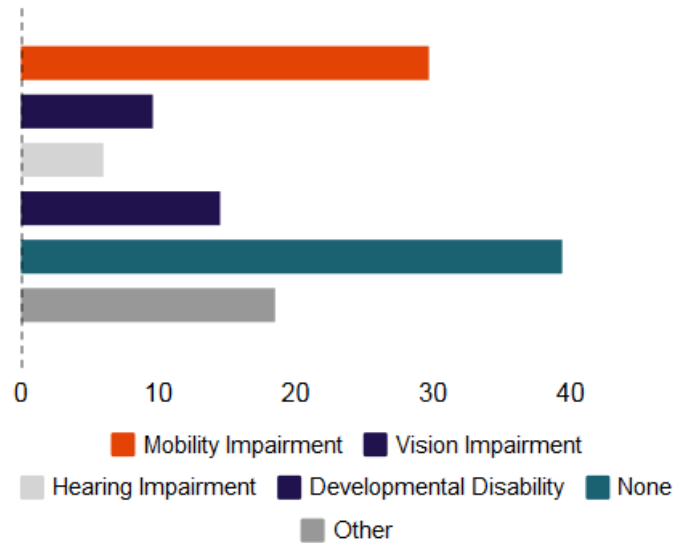
³ Not all Respondents provided locations. Where Respondents provided partial locations, the location was approximated.

Are you on Medicaid?



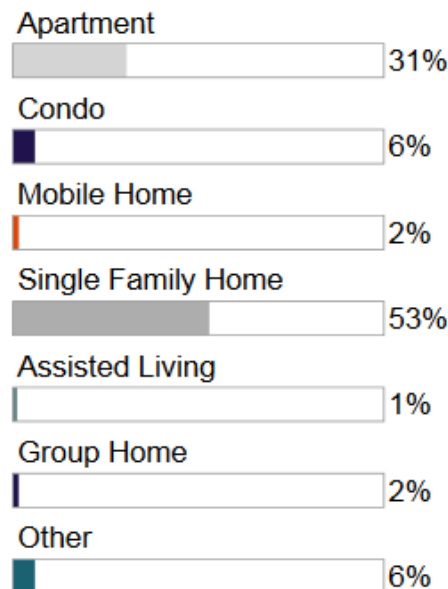
Yes(49.60%) No(50.40%)

If you have a disability, what is your disability?



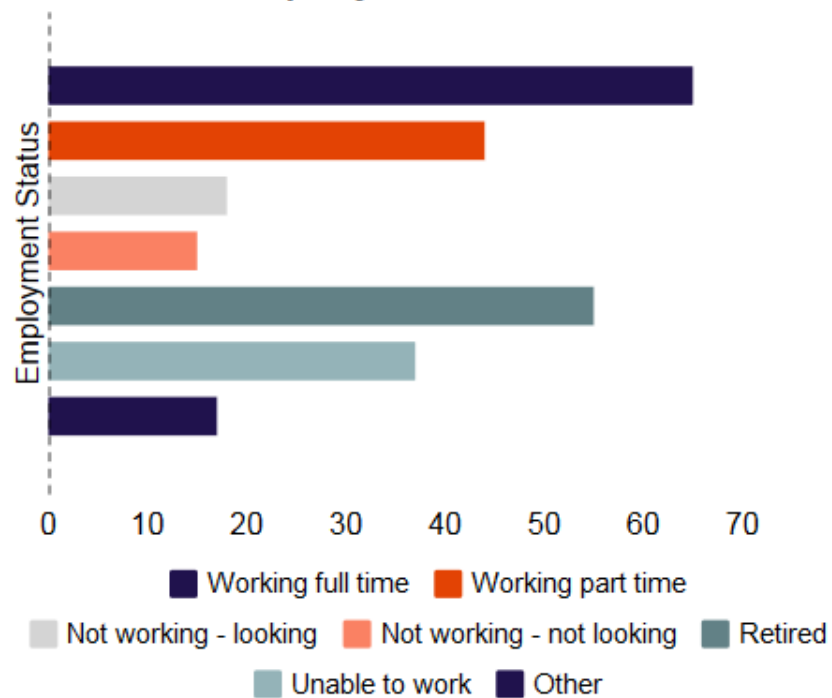
“Other” disabilities included: epilepsy and hydrocephalus; COPD/back; depression; anxiety; spinal stenosis; trouble walking; arthritis; heart; dementia; age; Down syndrome; diabetes; chronic fatigue; agoraphobia, and autism.

What type of housing do you live in?

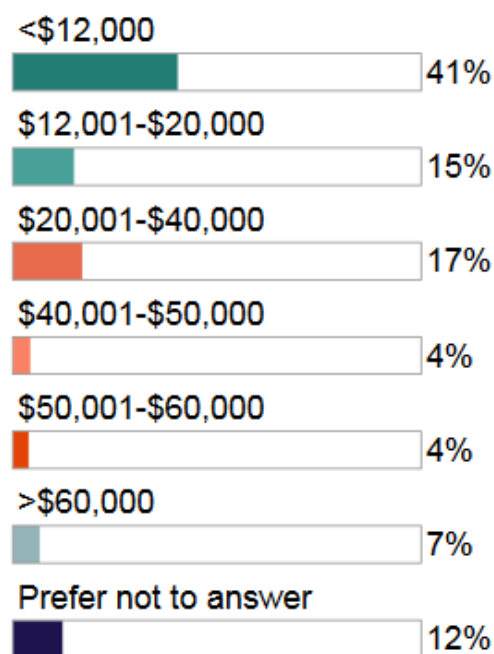




Employment Status



Income Level





Public Transportation in Northwest Ohio

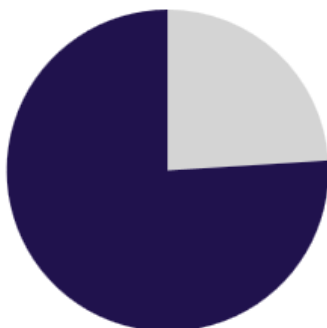
WHAT TRANSPORTATION DO PEOPLE USE?

Do you take taxis?



Yes(28%) No(72%)

Do you take fixed line service?



Yes(24%) No(76%)

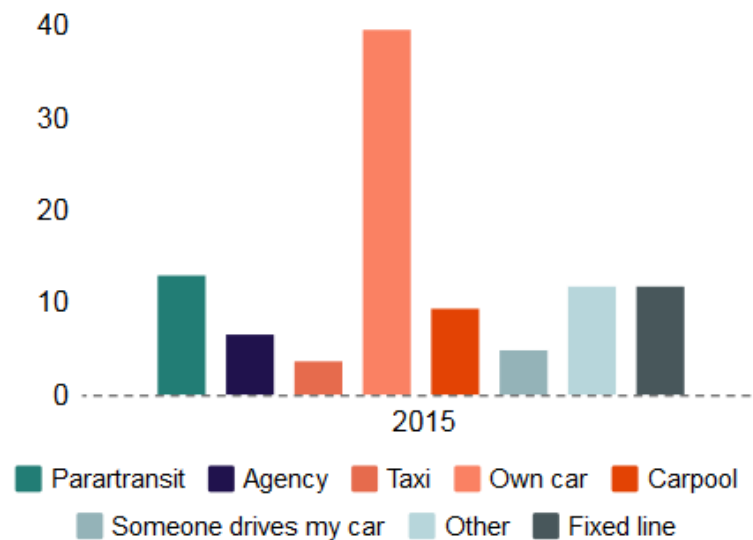
Do you use call ahead bus or shuttle?



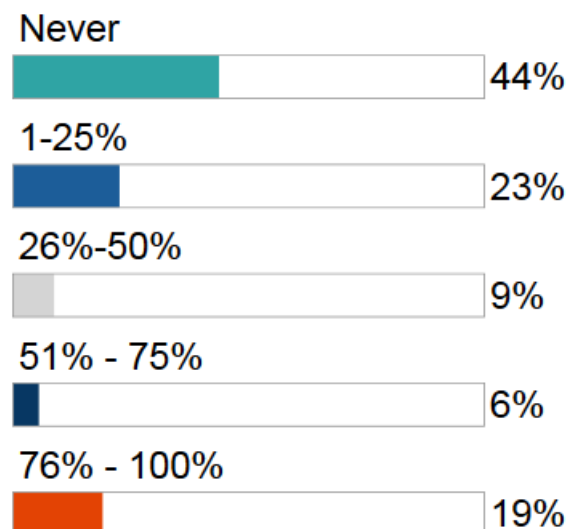
Yes(35%) No(65%)



What transportation have you used most in the past year?



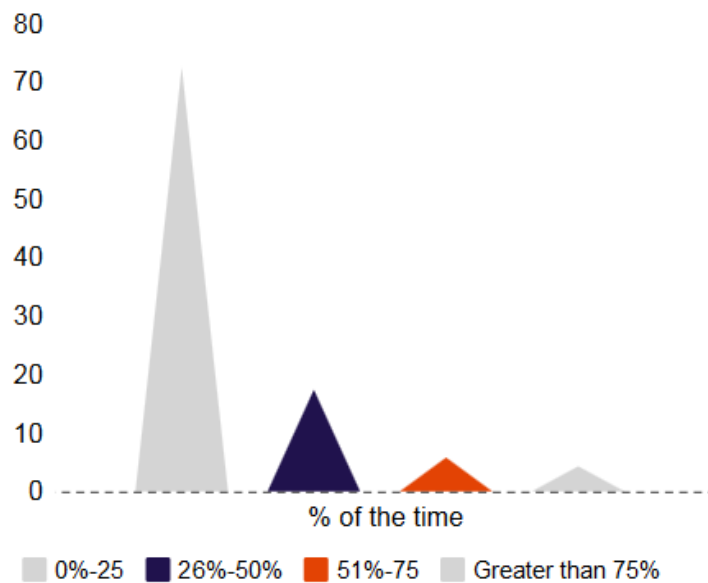
How often have you used public transportation in the past year?



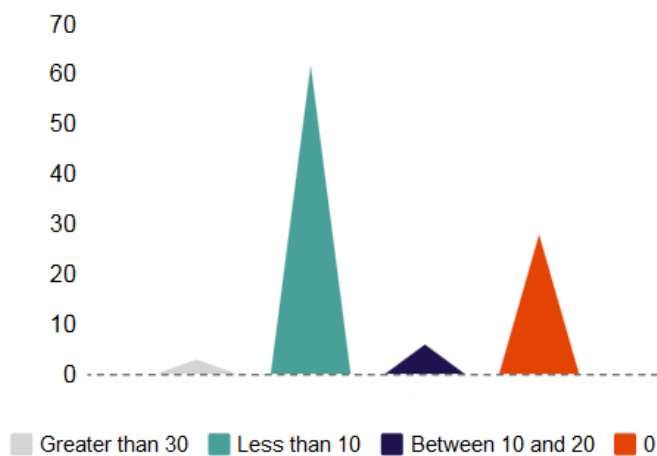


TAXI SERVICE

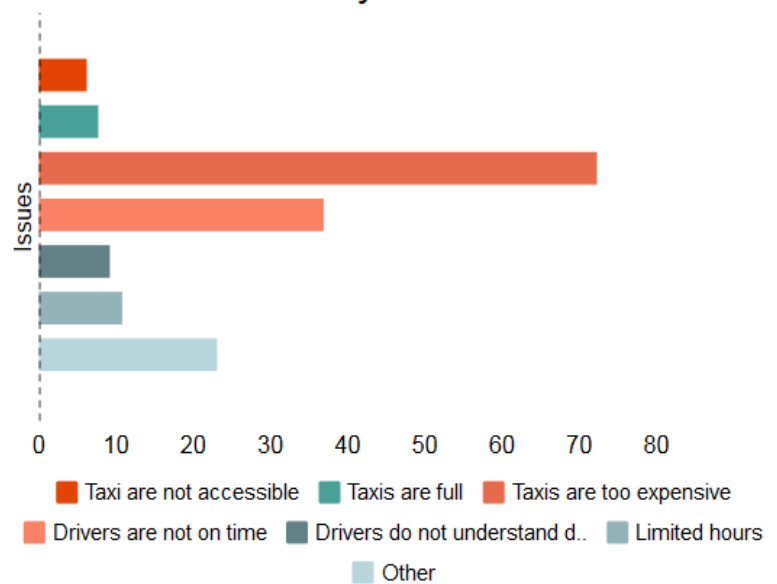
How often do you take a taxi?



How many taxi trips can you afford per month?



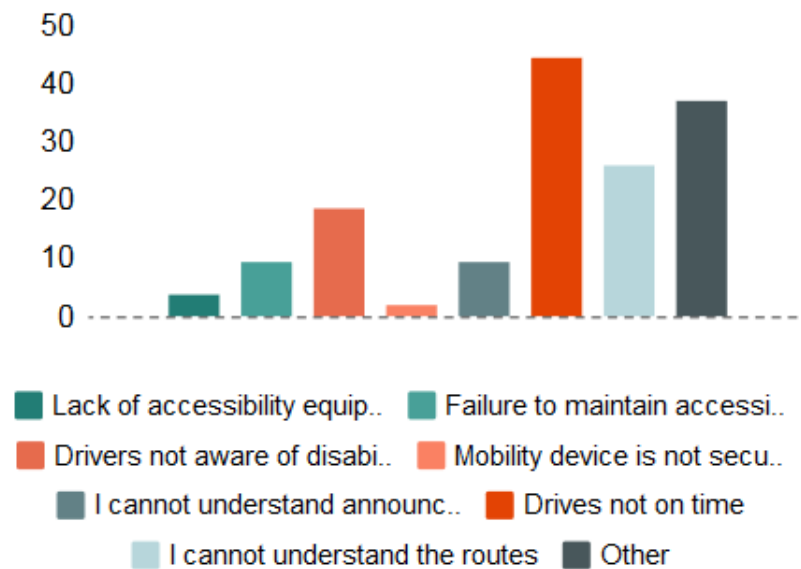
What issues do you have with taxis?



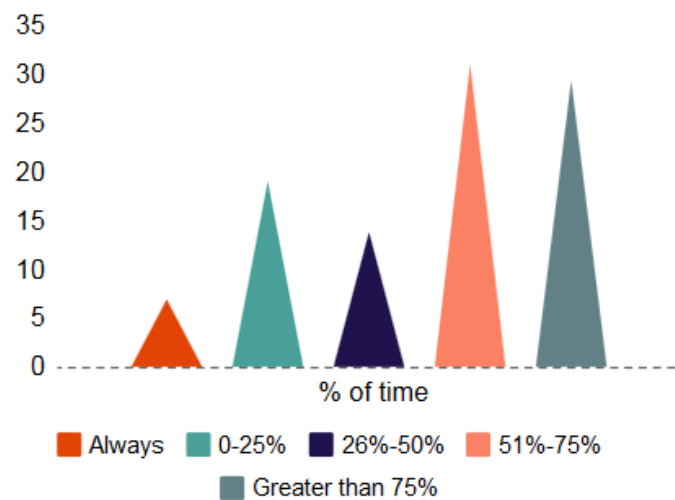


FIXED LINE SERVICE

What issues have you faced with fixed line bus service?



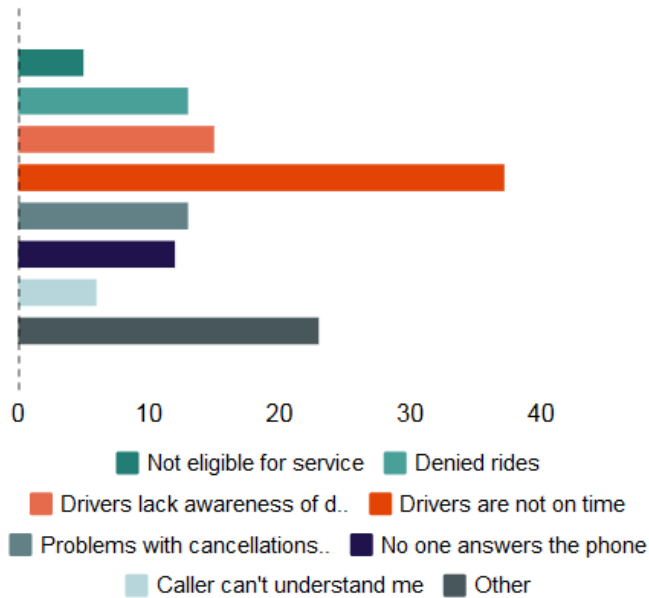
How often have bus drivers been on time?



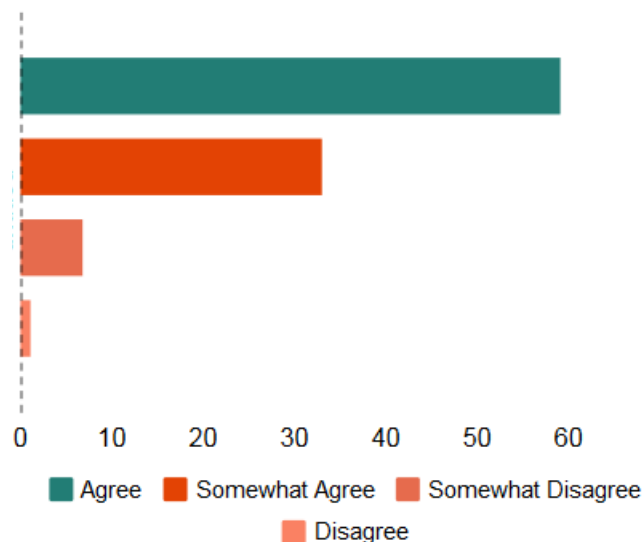


CALL AHEAD SHUTTLE

In the past year, what issues have you had with call ahead bus or shuttle?



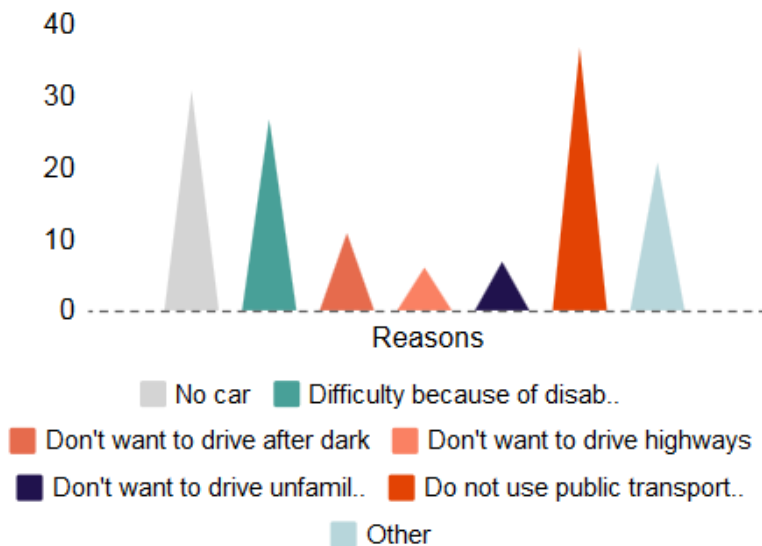
The drivers of my call ahead service understand disability issues.





WHY DO PEOPLE USE PUBLIC TRANSIT?

Why do you use public transportation?



“Other” reasons people use public transportation:



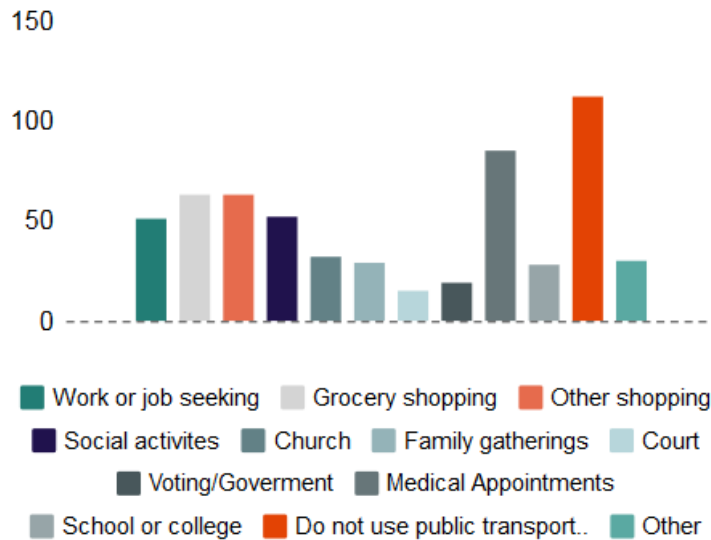
Car doesn't work – No license – Recovering from foot surgery – Out of district schooling – Walleye/Mud - Hens
 Bad winter weather – Avoid parking – Ease of access/safer – Finances – Conservation of resources





WHERE DO PEOPLE USE PUBLIC TRANSIT?

I use public transportation to get to:



“Other” places go to using public transportation:



Train or bus station - Navigate the city – Exercising – Dialysis – Special Olympics – Bowling

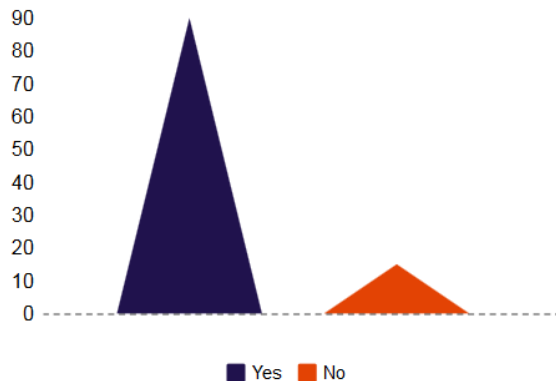
Girl Scouts – Park – Toledo Zoo – Meetings - Library – Symphony – Out to dinner – Volunteering



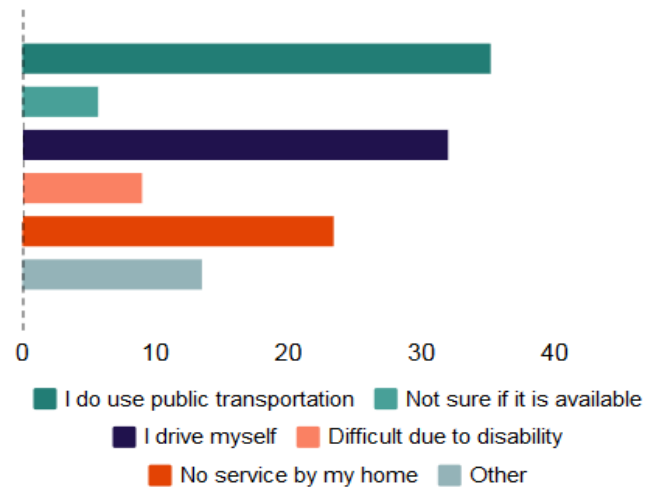


PROBLEMS WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Do you think public transportation should be improved?



If you do not use public transportation, why not?



Other reasons why people don't use public transportation:

- "You have to call the BG taxi service hours before you leave"
- "Family agreed to transport me"
- "I get help from my office"
- "I do use public transportation, when they do not cancel"
- "I would use public transportation more often if it were more convenient"

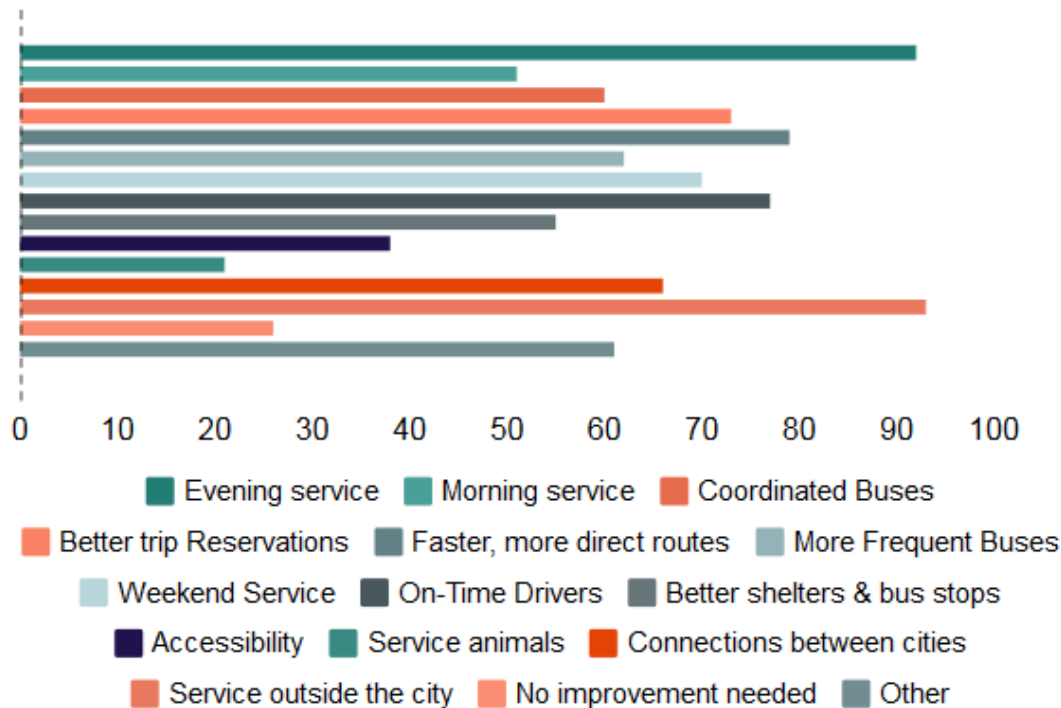


- "There is no public transportation in our city"
- "They do not have public transportation in Perrysburg Township"
- "I am too trusting of strangers and could be taken advantage of"
- "It's not convenient for me"
- "Not convenient. Not enough time options. No stops near my house or places I want to go. Mass transit in Toledo is very poor"



IMPROVEMENTS TO BE MADE IN PUBLIC TRANSIT

What should change about public transportation in your area?

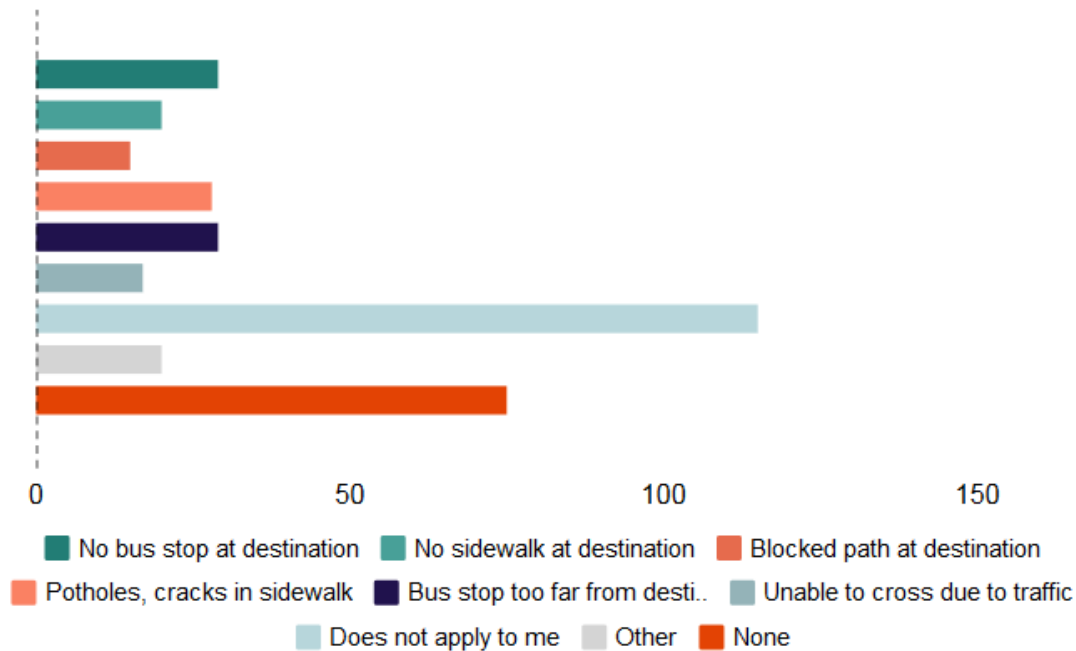


"Other" changes to be made in transportation:

- Trips should be no longer than an hour
- Need to make paratransit easier to use
- More children friendly
- Difficult to get to medical appointments on time
- Service vehicles need updating
- Need a bigger service area
- More buses and drivers
- Limited scheduling times
- Safer bus stops
- Drivers need decorum lessons
- More affordable options



What problems have you had with bus stops and sidewalks?

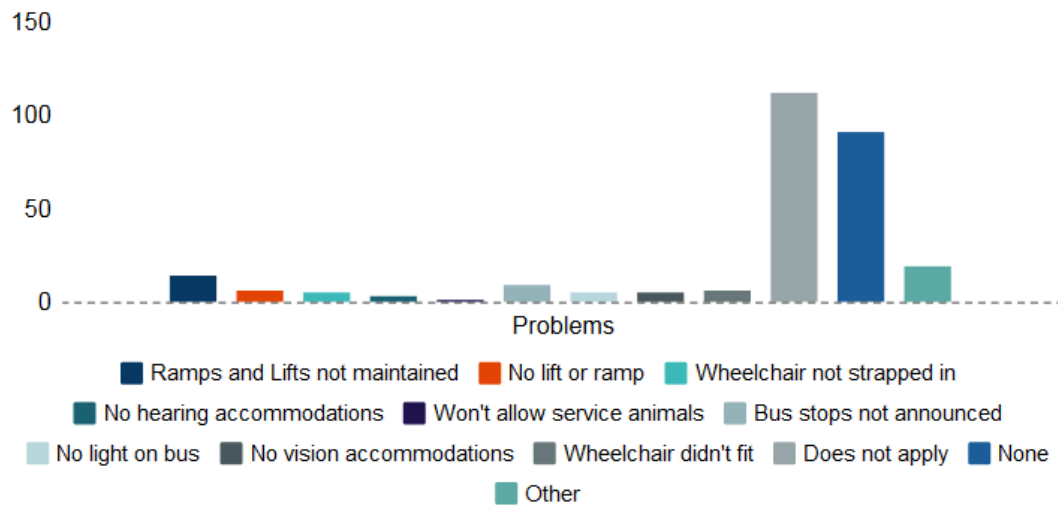


“Other” problems with bus stops and sidewalks:

- 9 respondents mentioned problems with snow removal
- Drivers passing a respondent’s apartment to drop off others first
- Signs on streets that no longer have routes
- Ditches
- Difficulty walking to a taxi
- And no public transportation at all



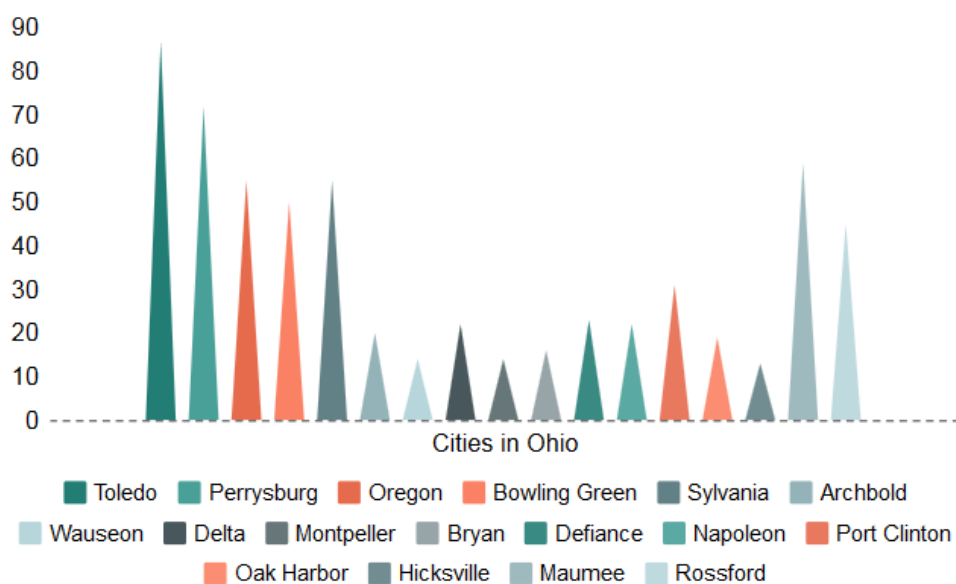
What problems have you had with accessibility?



"Other" problems with accessibility:

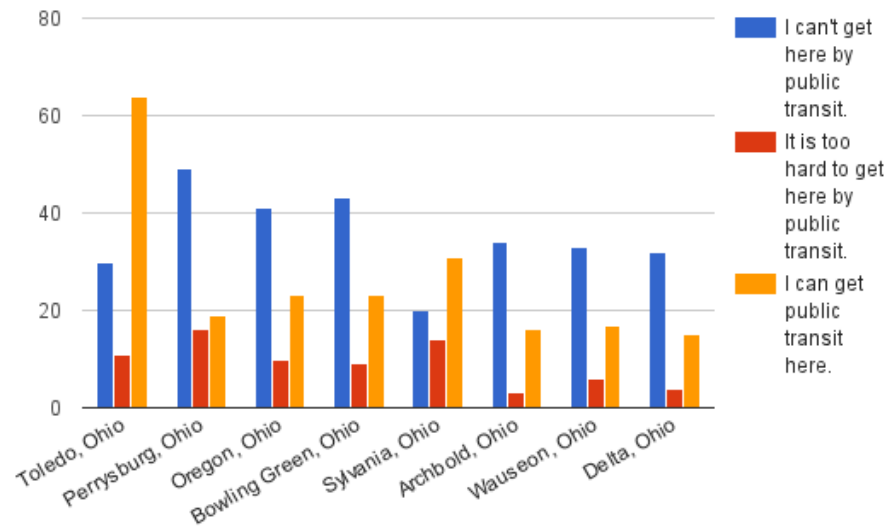
- Lift would not go up and down
- Driver doesn't assist with mobility
- Not enough vans with lifts available

I want to have transportation to this area:

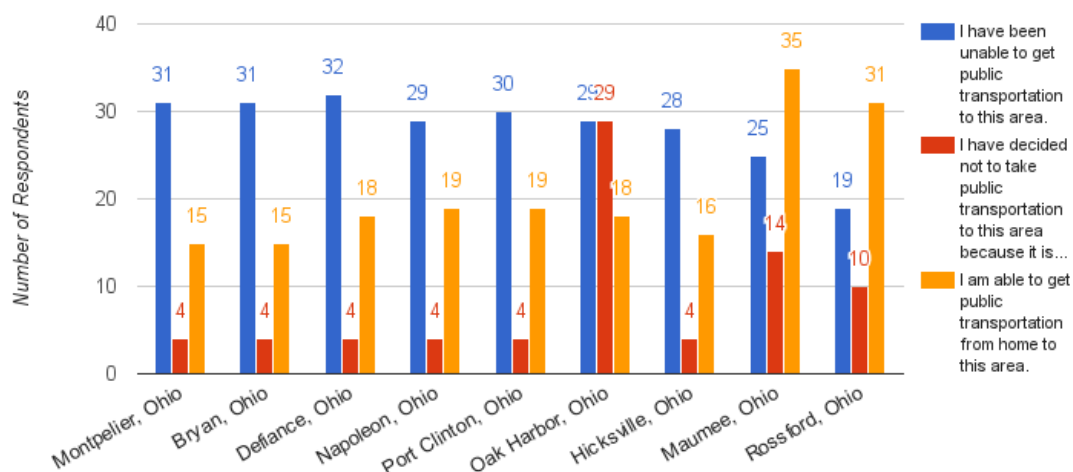




In the past year, I have had trouble getting to these places.



In the past year, I have had trouble getting to these places:



"Other" places people want to go:



Zoar Lutheran Church in Perrysburg - travel and tourism attractions - Northwood, Ohio - 577 Foundation - Yarn Craven, Bead Store, and book stores in Bowling Green - My church in Perrysburg - My primary care physician in Perrysburg - Perrysburg YMCA - Manufacturing jobs in Northwood, Bowling Green, and Perrysburg - St. Luke's Hospital - St. Charles' Hospital - The grocery store - Cleveland airport - Put in Bay - Sam's Club

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?



Should be able to serve the public later than 10pm – Toledo, Ohio

Buses should come on time. – Toledo, Ohio

I would like public transportation from Waterville or Maumee to the Franklin Park Mall Area. I would ride if it was available. – Whitehouse, Ohio

Faster routes. – Toledo, Ohio

There is only one taxi service in our town and it is not often available. – Bryan, Ohio

Better service to Waterville, keep the service at 8:30 AM I do not drive I need to use the bus. Public transportation is not in Waterville. – Waterville, Ohio

More buses, more drivers, not having buses overloaded with groups of day hab center riders that are going to multiple places and allowing these passengers on the bus for up to 2 hours.

The bus shelters should all be in good repair. No missing glass walls. – Toledo, Ohio

Better customer services.

It would be nice to be able to get from Perrysburg to Toledo without sitting at Meijer for up to an hour each way. My time is valuable! – Perrysburg, Ohio



**More services available to the VISION.
EVERYONE ELSE GETS HELP ...WE GET
SHUNNED. - Whitehouse, Ohio**

Would like to meet up with friends, church and family gatherings. - Napoleon, Ohio

It should be offered in our county period. There is none and I do see the need. – West Unity, Ohio

There should be public transportation in the area. – Defiance, Ohio

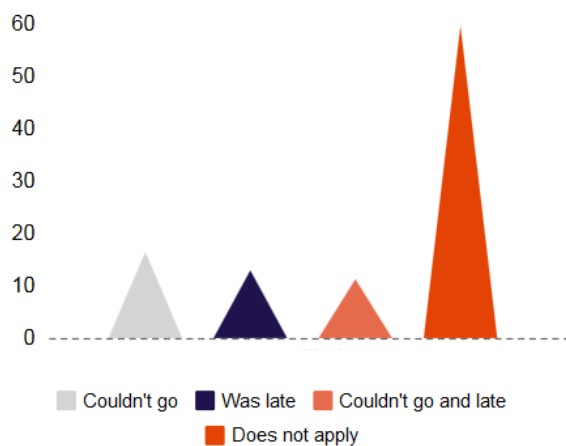
The bus or TARPS should go in Springfield Township also. We need to go other places too!



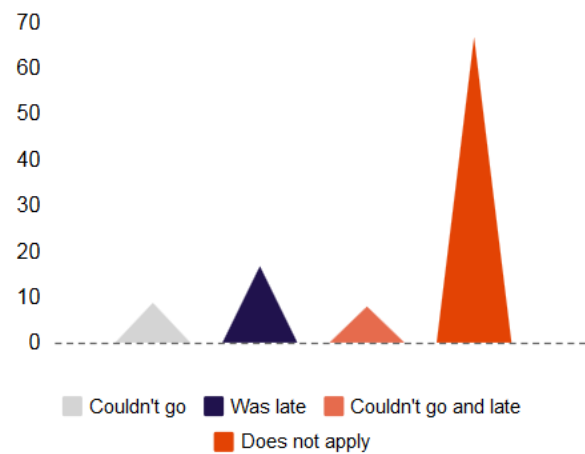


IN THE PAST YEAR, I HAVE HAD TROUBLE OR BEEN UNABLE TO GET TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES BECAUSE OF A LACK OF TRANSPORTATION.

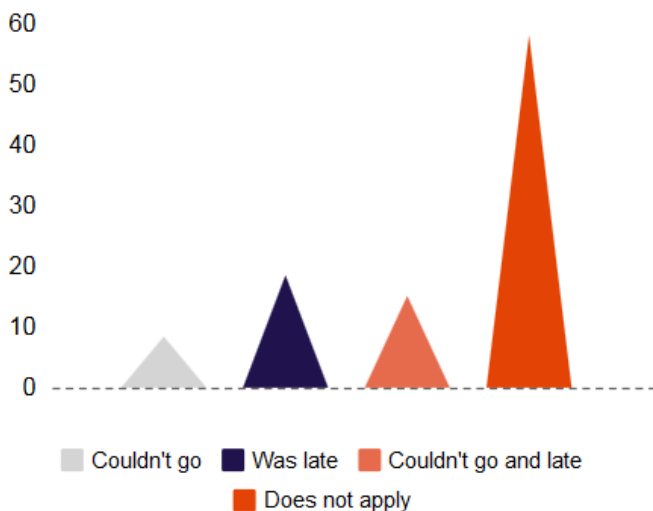
Other Shopping



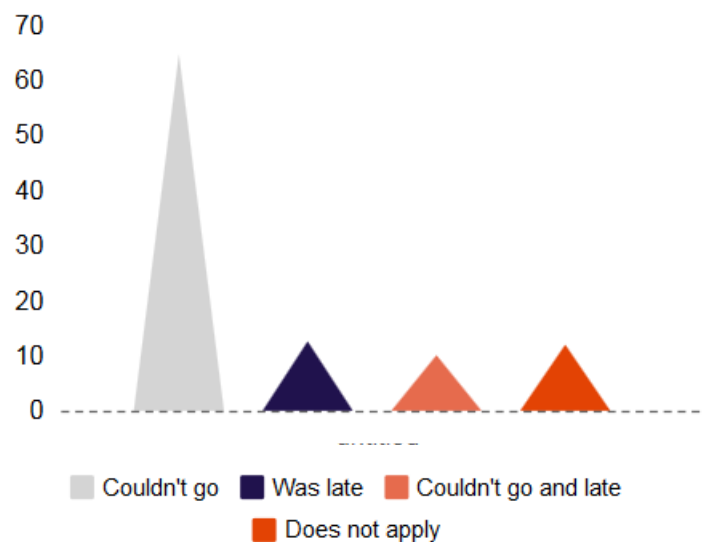
Work or Job Interview



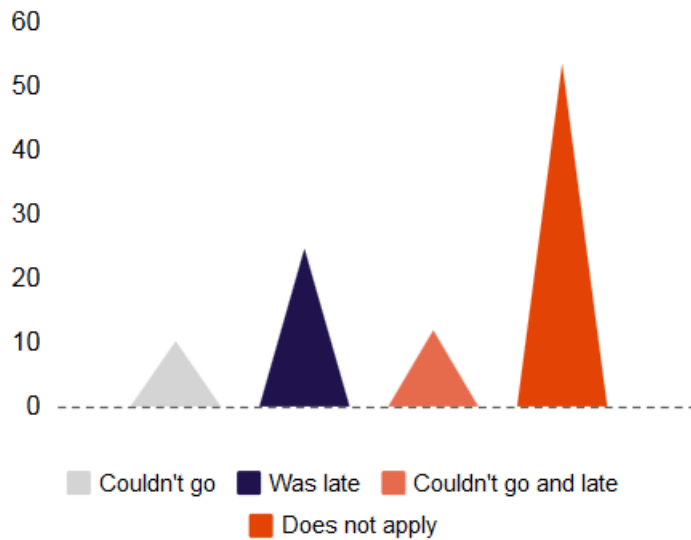
Meeting up with Friends



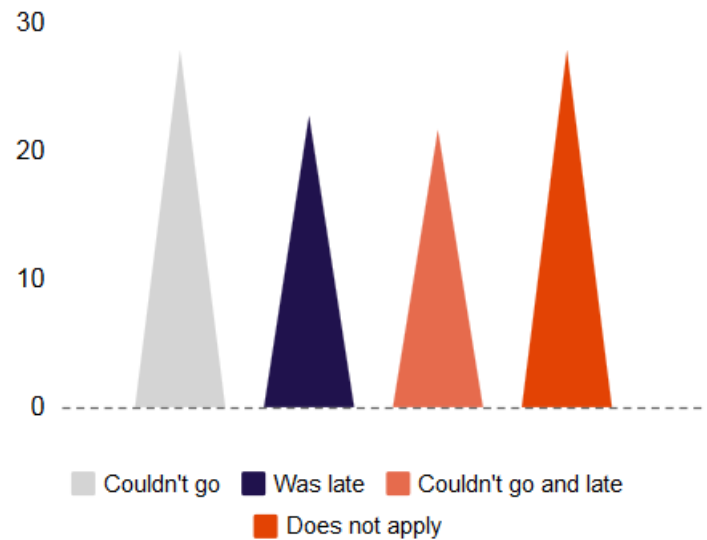
Grocery Store



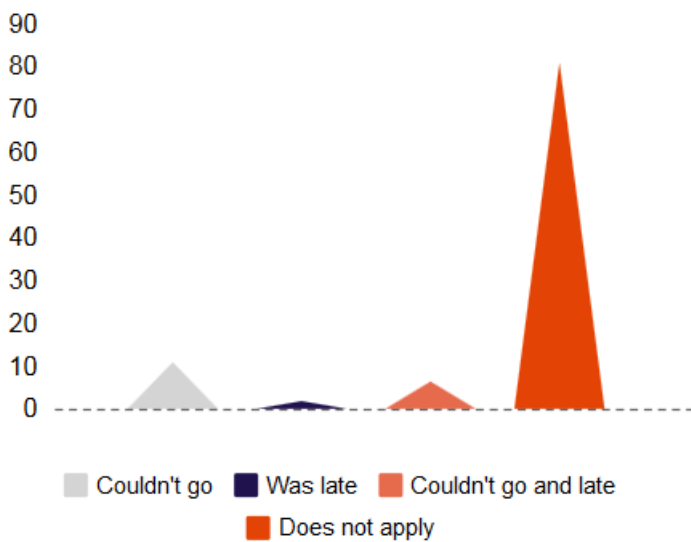
Going Home After an Activity



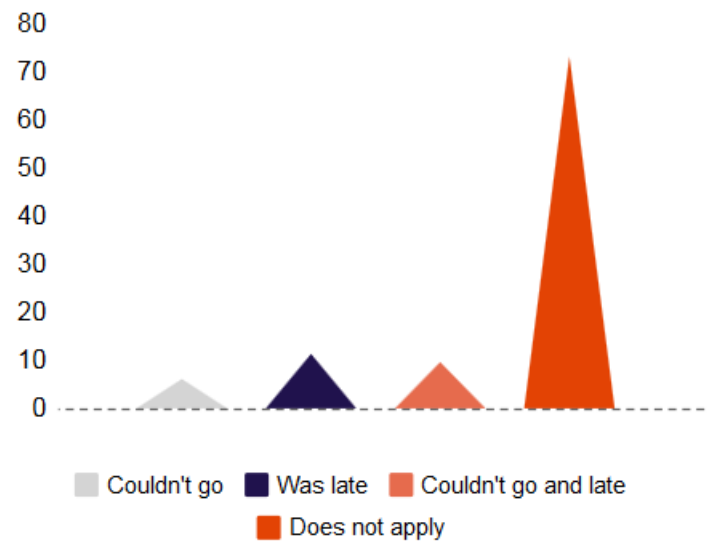
Medical Appointments



Voting or Civic Activities

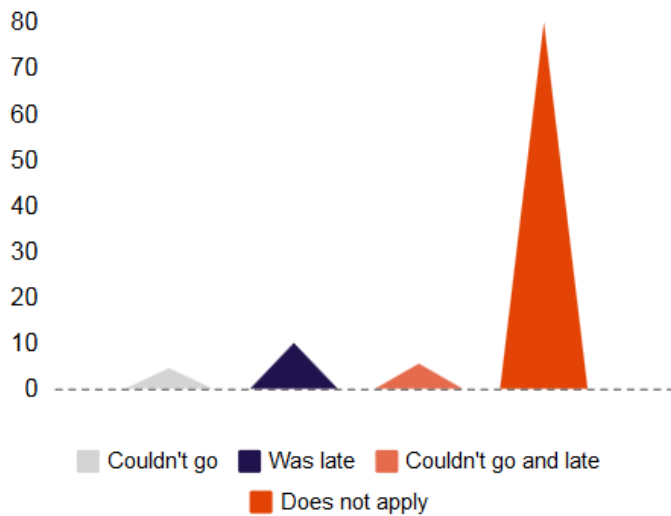


Church

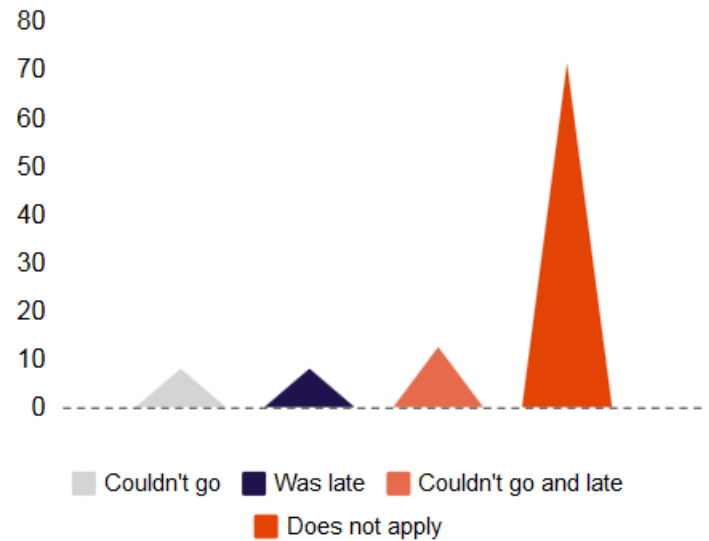




School or College



Family Gatherings



Court



CONCLUSION

Studies show that a lack of affordable transportation options result in reduced quality of life and possible economic hardship.⁴ This study shows a need for increased transportation options throughout northwest Ohio. In particular:

1. **We need public transportation systems in areas that have no transportation at all.** 23.1% of Respondents answered that they do not use public transportation because there is no public transportation by their homes.
2. **We need public transportation systems that have longer hours.** 36.5% of Respondents answered that public transportation in northwest Ohio needs evening hours.
3. **We need public transportation systems that offer quicker and more timely service.** 3.9% of Respondents wanted faster, more direct routes and 31% wanted drivers that come on time.
4. **We need public transportation systems that cover more area and allow people to access the totality of northwest Ohio.** 36.9% of Respondents answered that public transportation in northwest Ohio needs to go outside their City. The top four locations that Respondents could not access via public transit were: Perrysburg, Ohio; Oregon, Ohio; Bowling Green, Ohio, and Oak Harbor, Ohio. The top four locations that Respondents wanted to access were: Toledo, Ohio; Perrysburg, Ohio; Maumee, Ohio; and Sylvania, Ohio. Behind Sylvania by two Respondents was Oregon, Ohio.
5. **A lack of public transportation is interfering with the Respondents' ability to get to needed locations.** The top three activities that Respondents could not access via public transit were medical appointments; getting home after an activity; and meeting up with friends.

From a review of the results, it is clear that people who rely on public transportation in northwest Ohio have difficulty getting places in a timely manner, at the time they need to be there, and have trouble with regional access outside their own community. In order to strengthen our community, we need to work on expanding and streamlining access to public transportation in northwest Ohio.

⁴ Kevin DeGood, Transportation for America, *Aging in Place, Stuck Without Options: Fixing the Mobility Crisis Threatening the Baby Boom Generation*, 3, available at <http://t4america.org/docs/SeniorsMobilityCrisis.pdf> (accessed 6/20/2016).