



Citizens for Modern Transit Fare Survey

Summary Report | May 2023

Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) in partnership with Metro Transit and the St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD) released an online survey in February of 2023 to obtain input from riders in the St. Louis region regarding current fare payment options and other experiences tied to their commute via public transit. The survey was distributed via:

- Postcard mailing linking recipients to the online survey via QR code.
- Transit advertisements with the QR code linking to the online survey.
- CMT electronic newsletter linking to the online survey.
- CMT social media accounts posting the link to the online survey.
- Community engagement day at a variety of MetroLink stations and Transit Centers where information about the survey was shared with transit riders.

The results of the survey, compiled in May of 2023, are outlined below.

The fare survey was completed by 186 respondents and provides valuable insight into how riders get to their destinations, preferred methods of fare payment and how riders would like to see fare options evolve going forward. **Highlights from the survey include:**

- Most respondents ride MetroLink over all other transportation options.
- Those respondents not currently riding MetroBus indicate long wait times as the primary reason.
- Weekly passes are not frequently utilized.
- Most respondents use cash to pay MetroBus fare.
- The ability to reload a pass online and to use a smartphone to pay fare were identified as the most useful potential payment features.
- Most respondents access fare information via Metro's website, followed by signage at transit stops.

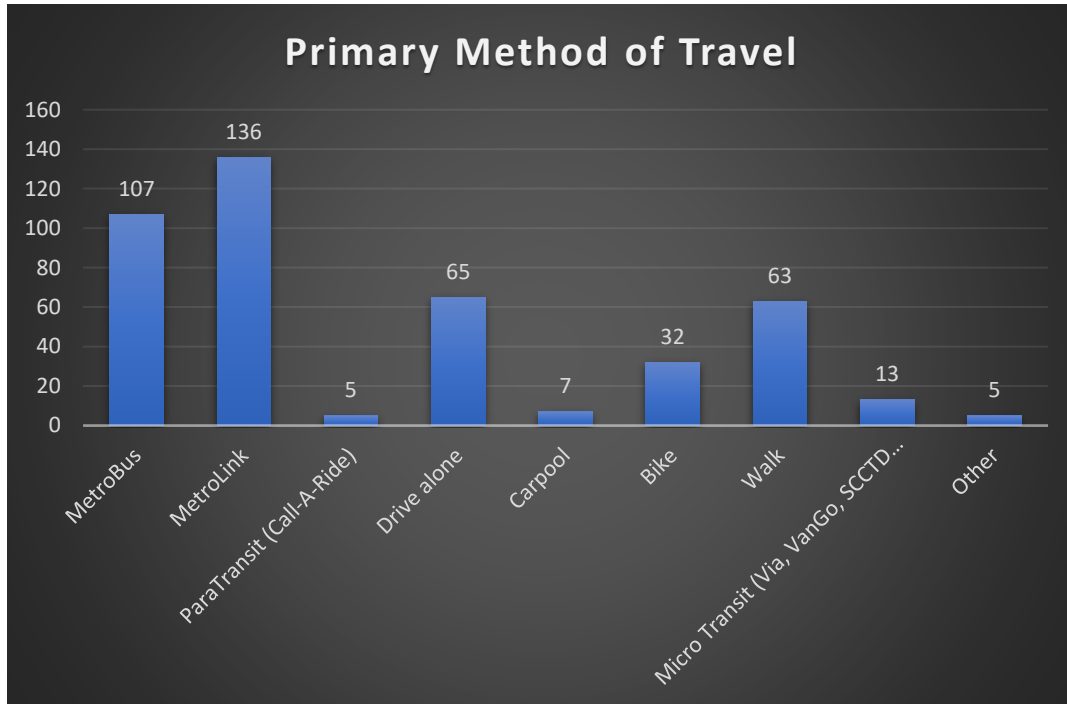




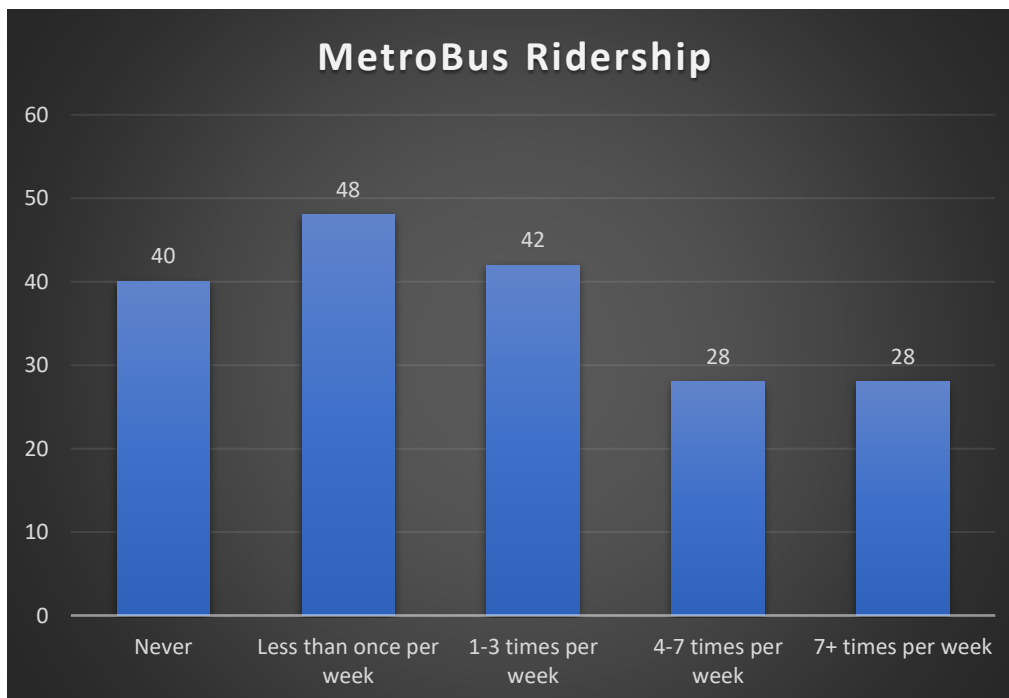
Summary Charts:

Method of Travel

What is the primary way you travel? (Select all that apply)

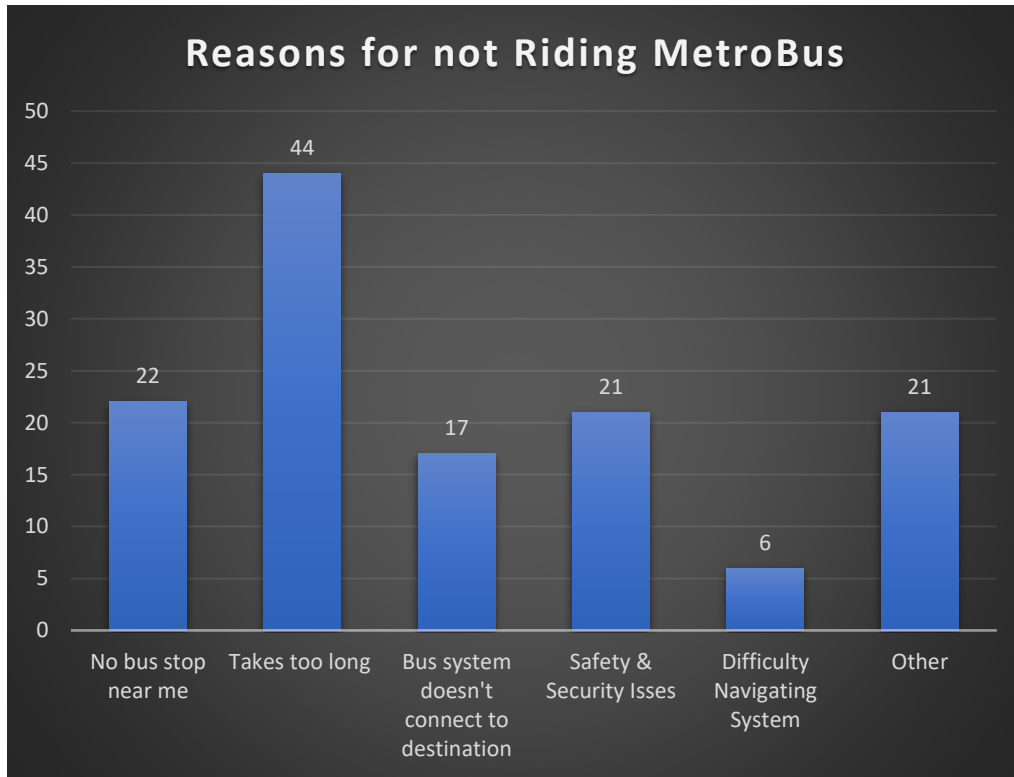


How often do you ride MetroBus?

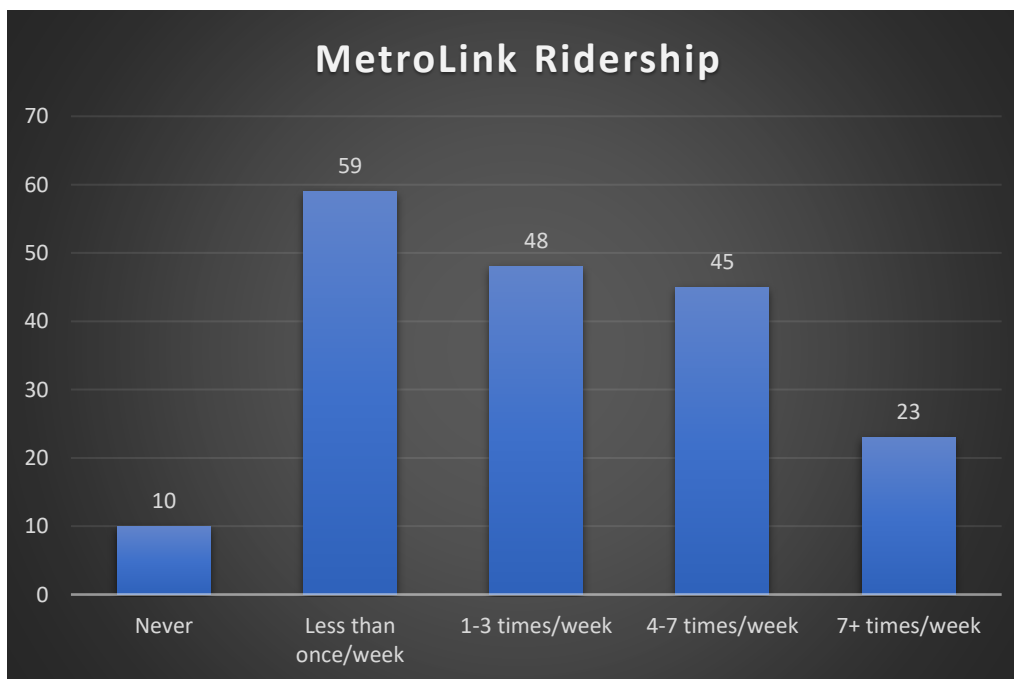




Why don't you ride the MetroBus more often? (Select all that apply)

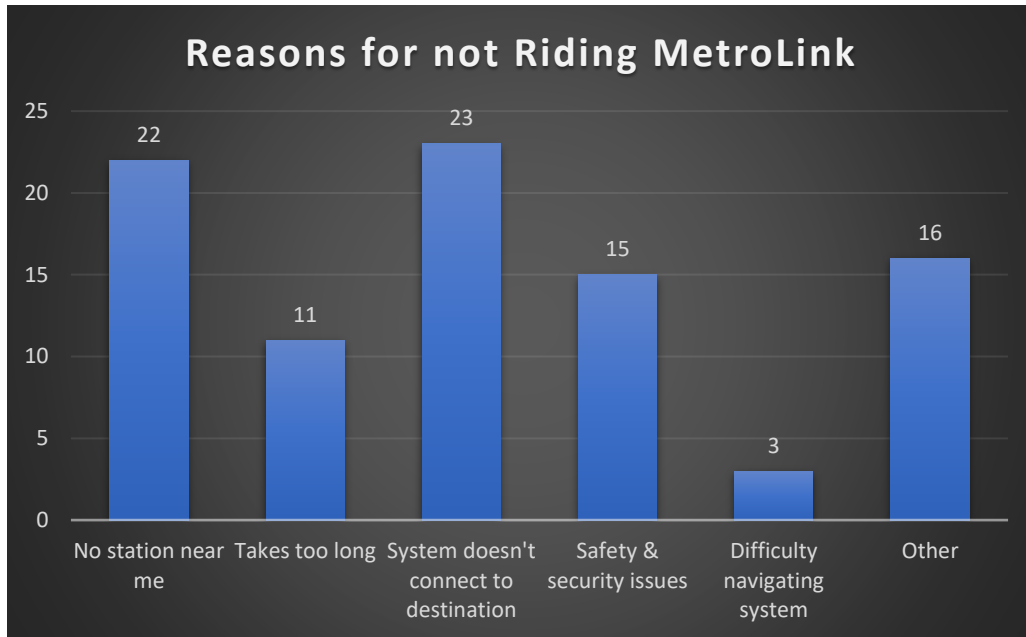


How often do you ride MetroLink?



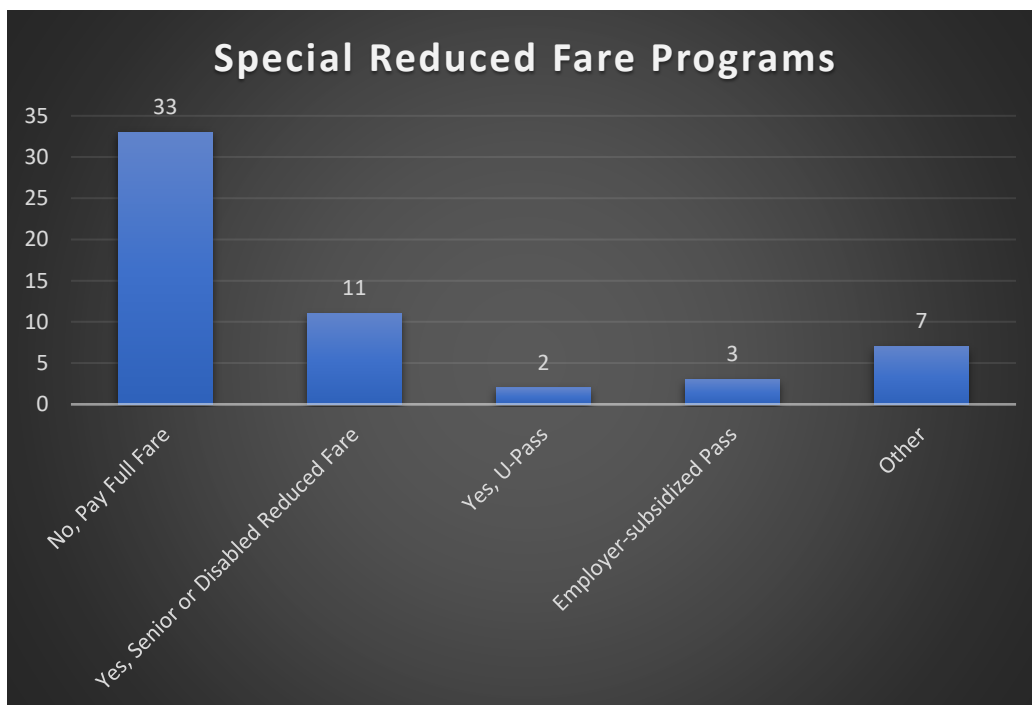


Why don't you ride MetroLink more often? (Select all that apply)



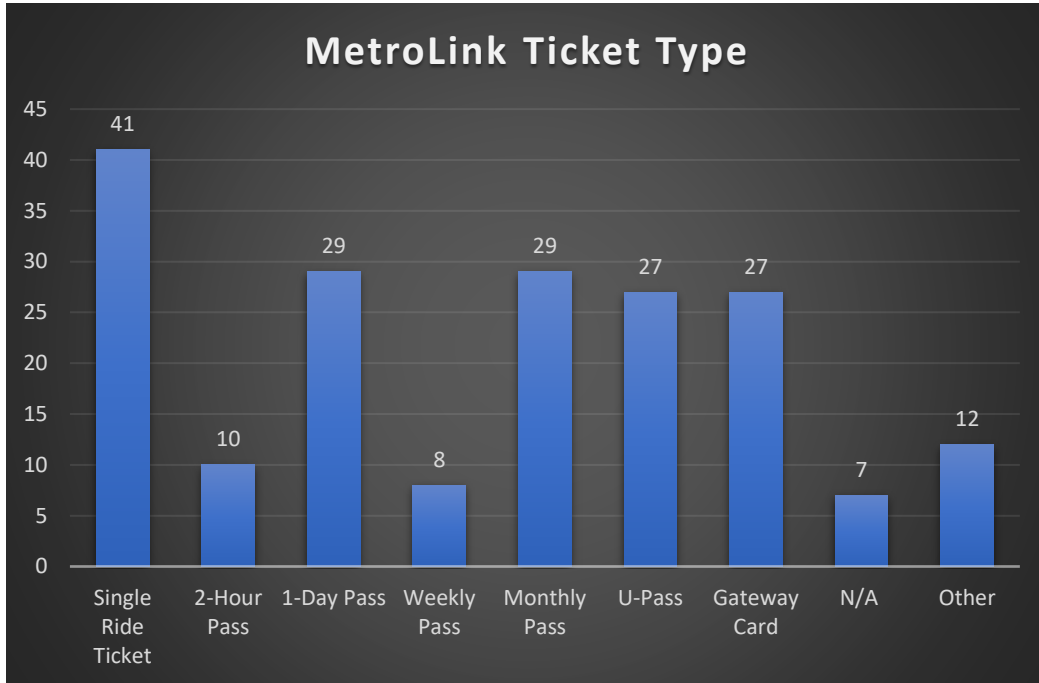
Fare Options

Do you qualify for a special fare program?

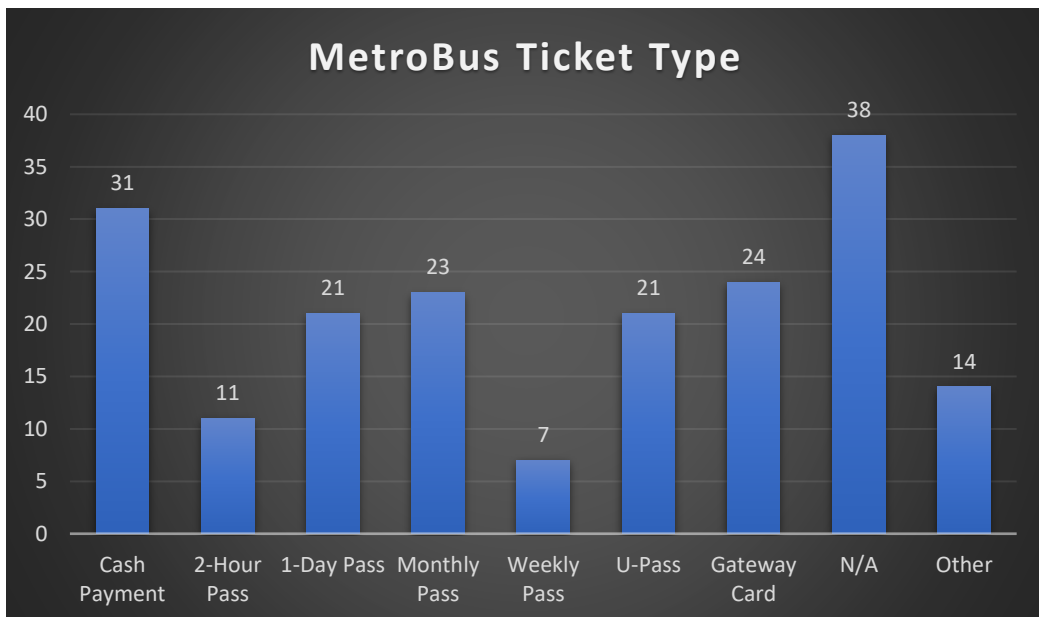




Which type of MetroLink ticket do you use? (Select all that apply)

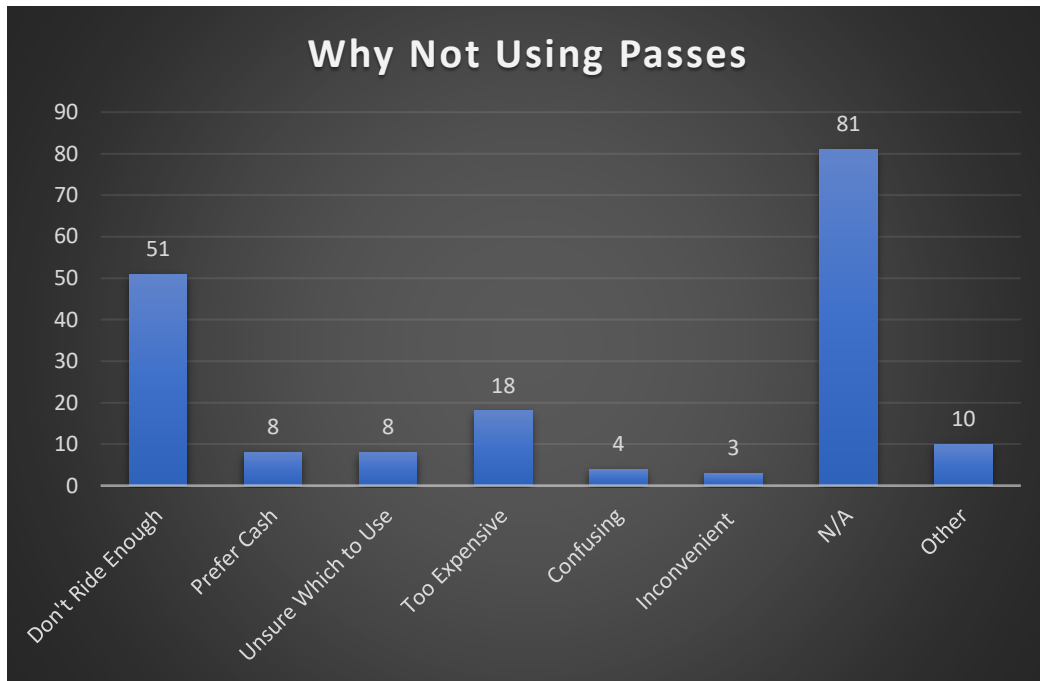


Which type of MetroBus ticket do you use? (Select all that apply)



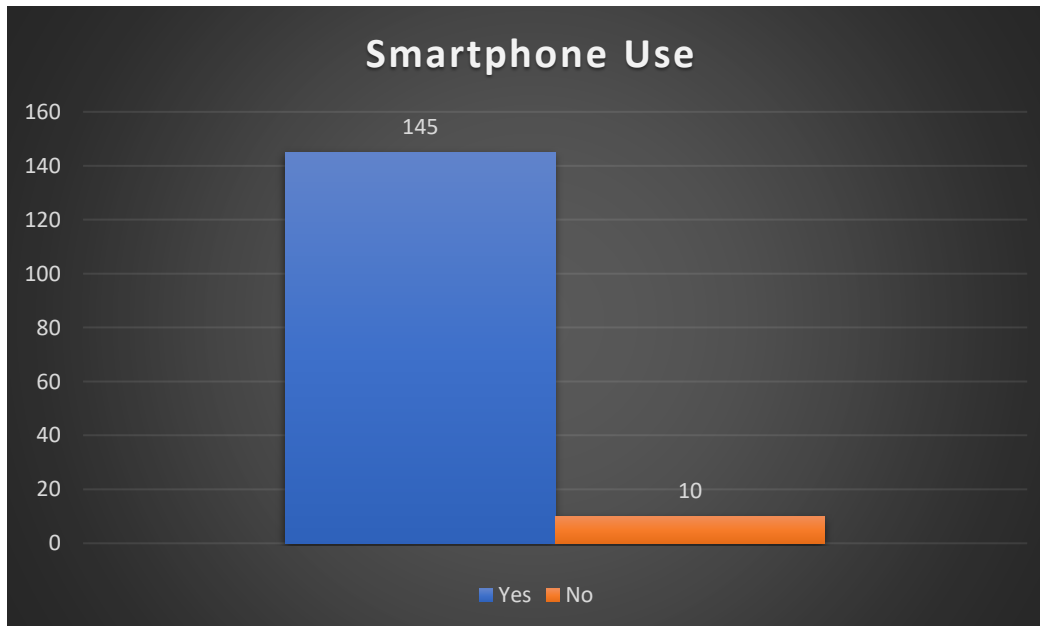


If you don't utilize a pass, why not? (Select all that apply)



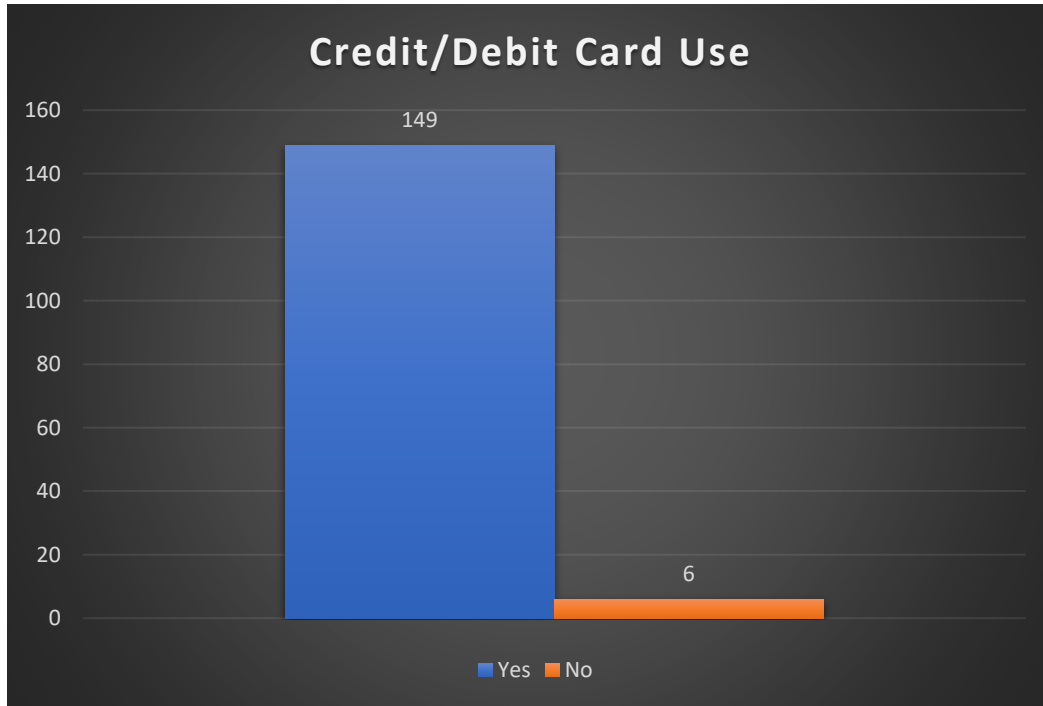
Payment Options

Do you own a smartphone?

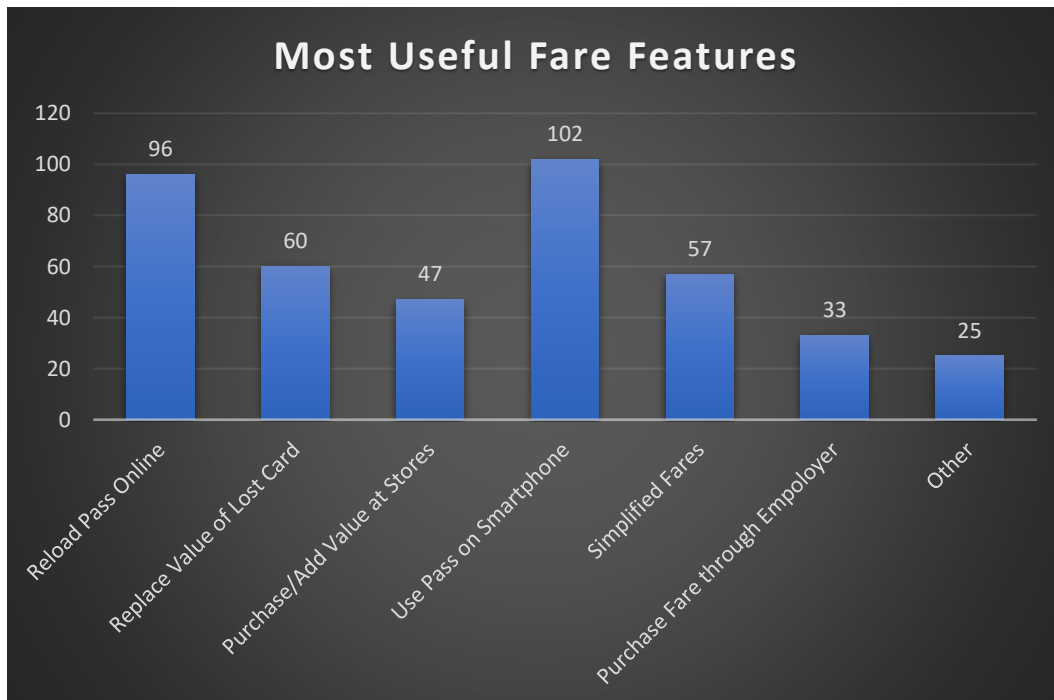




Do you have a credit or debit card?



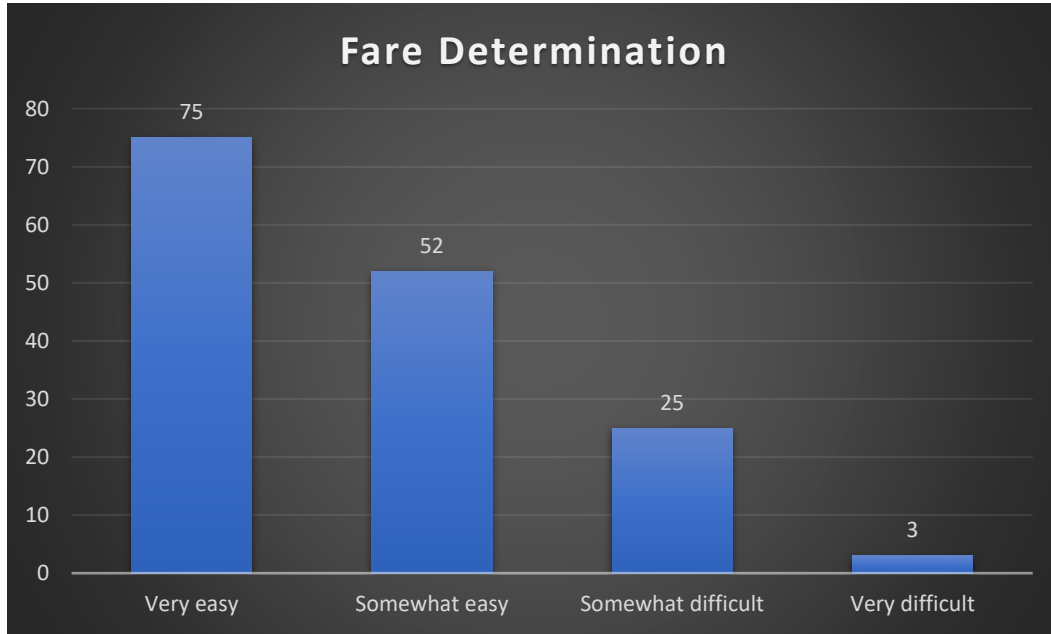
Which features would be the most useful? (Select all that apply)



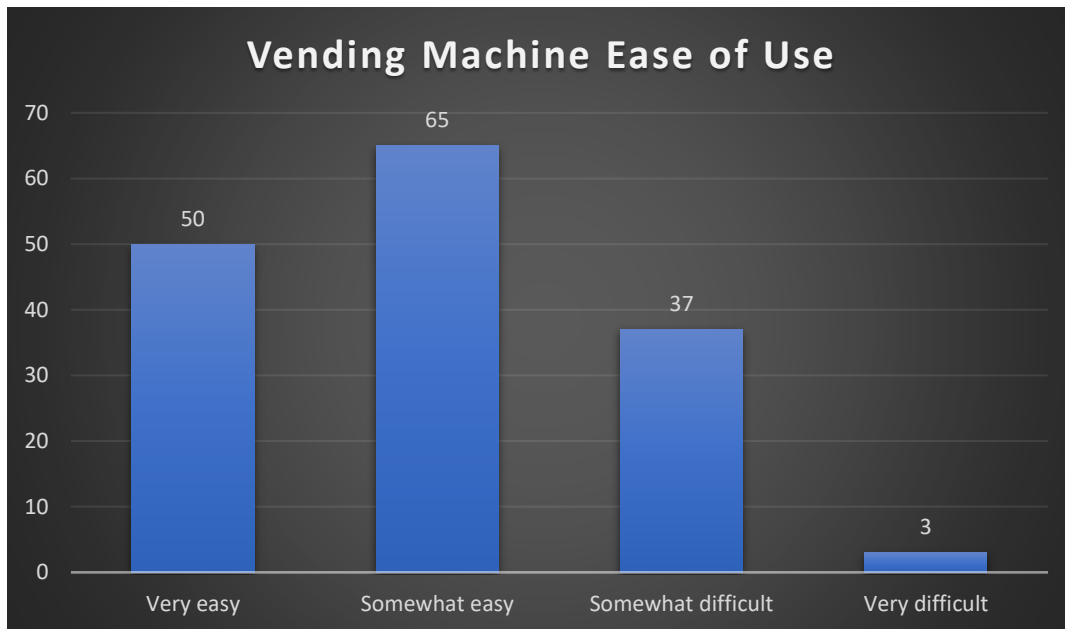


Current Fare Payment

How easy or difficult is it to determine what fare to pay and how to pay it?

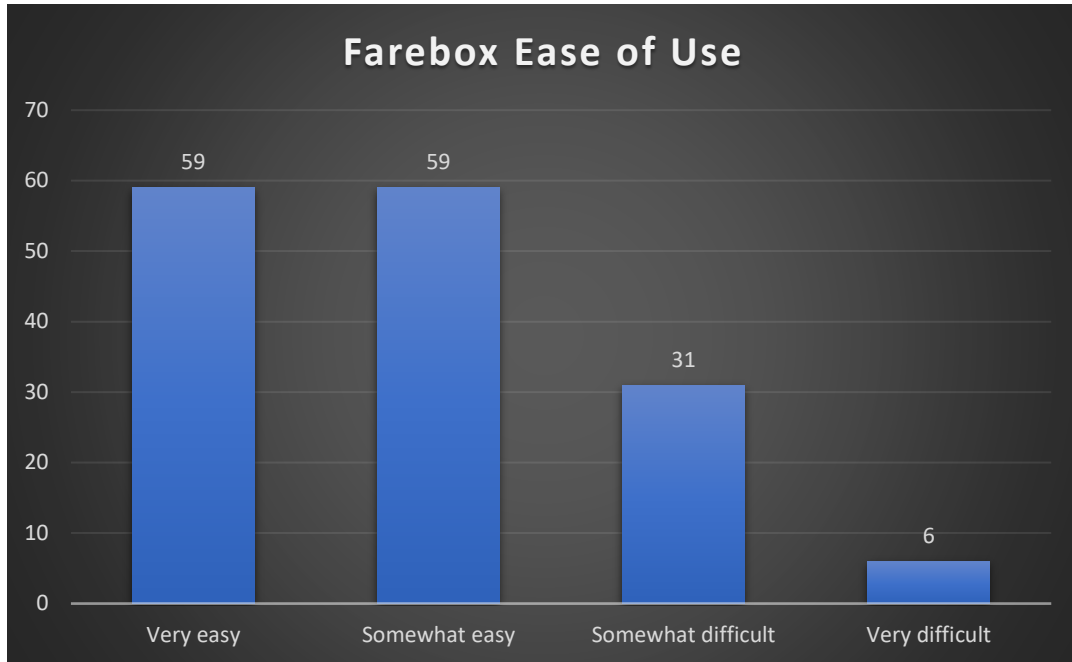


How easy or difficult is it to operate ticket vending machines?

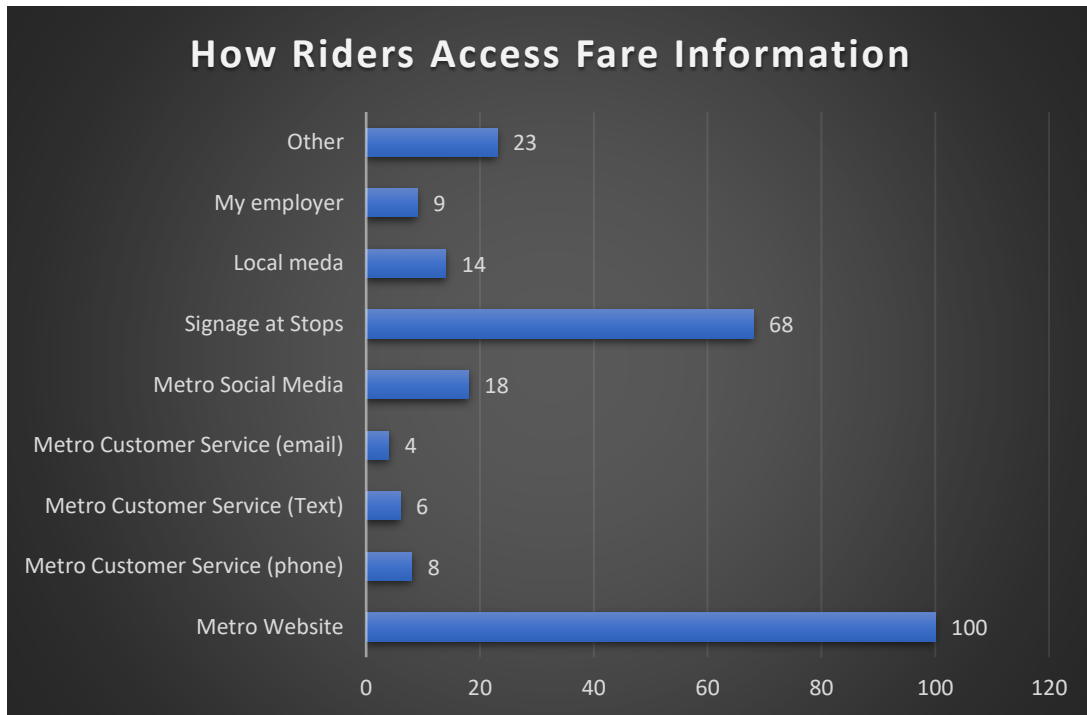




How easy or difficult is it to pay your fare using the fareboxes on MetroBuses?



How do you typically access information about fare options or fare changes? (Select all that apply)





Open-ended responses

Question 2: If you answered never or less than once per week, why don't you ride MetroBus more often?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- I have a car
- I ride bike
- I am lazy and use my car too much.
- Not apart of destination commute.
- I prefer to bike
- I don't have a regular commute.
- Route inconsistencies and unreliability
- work at home
- Difficulty navigating and connecting different bus routes to reach my destination
- Don't. Need
- To get to work I need to take two busses but often my connecting bus (#11) leaves just as my first bus (#70) is pulling up to the stop. I think higher frequency would solve this problem. I can't rely on the bus if I have to factor in a 20 minute delay each way and when it takes 35 minutes without a delay but only 20 to bike and 15 to drive
- More convenient to drive car, plus would have to drive quite a ways to get to metrolink
- I am 75 years old and if I rode the MetroBus I would have to walk more than 5 blocks and would get home after dark.
- busses come too infrequently
- unreliable - late and canceled trips/ routes
- I generally don't like busses 😊
- Reduced headways on #95; poor routing of #8
- Express Bus was cut from I-55 & Reavis left with no other option after almost 40 years taking a bus
- There's a MetroLink station convenient to home, work and other destinations. It's faster and much more appealing than the bus.
- The service on the #49 and #57 aren't as frequent as they should.
- I technically have connections, but it is a circuitous route from my house (Southwest Garden Neighborhood) to work (Downtown). A line up vandeventer/chouteau would be WONDERFUL



Question 5: If you answered never or less than once per week, why don't you ride MetroLink more often?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- I don't ride transit everyday. I use MetroLink when it's close to my destination.
- I have a car
- I don't have a regular commute.
- work at home
- I ride only when it's convenient to my destination. Plus, I find it difficult to ride with my bicycle. In Portland, there are overhead hooks to park the bikes.
- It's not anywhere near my work
- My one bus takes me right in front of my job.
- It doesn't reach far enough into the county to be useful for me
- I would need to drive to the MetroLink at North Handley and still have to use a MetroBus to come back to my job site. Poses a hassle for me.
- I will no longer ride until there is a turnstile system
- It will be best for St. Louis to build MetroLink station from west to east near STL premium mall to Clayton metro link Stn, that will connect commuters from west side to STL downtown and will reduce traffic and air pollution.
- I've been busy after work
- My work trip also includes taking children to school, which is not possible on MetroLink based on their school locations.
- Even if the time to destination was more competitive to driving, it would still be more expensive.
- Security. Need security guards that are always checking fares and behavior rather than staring at their phones and smoking while on the clock.
- The bus is more convenient

Question 6: Do you qualify for and use a special fare program for transit services?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- Metro retiree
- I have a Gateway Card that I replenish.
- Never ride
- I am buying 12 bus tickets for 10 from the transit app
- As a Bi-State employee, I ride free of charge.
- Yes, I qualify but no, I am not enrolled in the program.

Question 7: Which type of MetroLink ticket do you use?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- Metro retiree pass
- WU Employee
- Washington university pass



- Transit app
- stlcc semester card
- I have the gateway card but don't use it because it seems pointless. I save the money in case I need it for the bus
- Wash u , annual pass
- Semester employee/ student pass
- Never ride
- Transit app
- through transit app
- Please see my earlier message

Question 8: Which type of MetroBus ticket do you use?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- Metro retiree pass
- WU Employee
- Transit App
- Electronic ticket from the Transit app
- stlcc semester pass
- Semester employee/ student pass
- Never ride
- Single bus transit app ticket
- Single ride via Transit App
- I use the MetroBus and MetroLink tickets when I participate in the TenToe Express walks only.
- Transit app
- Transit app, one ride pass
- 12 bus tickets for \$10
- Transit app

Question 9: If you don't utilize a pass, why not?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- The tickets aren't usually checked on the metrolink, so I can get away with buying a single pass and just activating it when asked
- Because the buses only take cash
- The two hour pass in the TVMs is not good on the bus
- Never ride
- I use transit app
- I got a Gateway card because the Metro Link Vs Bus passes are confusing. I used to always get the wrong fare and then get denied bus entry
- Please see my earlier suggestion for building metro link in west county
- As a Bi-State employee, I ride free of charge.
- I am part of the On the Way ADA Paratransit program



- I use gateway card

Question 12: Of the following features listed, which do you believe would be the most useful?

Other: (please specify)

- The ability to reload a pass at the ticket vending machine.
- Free passes
- Ability to purchase for more than one person on a phone. Or have a family pass.
- Having one pass for all modes- one pass to access the metro link, metro bus, and scooters
- i use upass
- I use u pass so I wouldn't personally find the above helpful but I think they're all good ideas
- Buy bus passes at ticket machines
- Fare free transit
- Being able to reload my Gateway pass online
- Higher frequency of service so a 5 minute delay doesn't cost me 20 minutes
- Free Transit
- Never ride
- A reduced price or free low-income fare option, for people who qualify
- Apple Pay with fair capping.
- Free fares for all
- Integrated fare payment across all systems- even scooters and bikeshare
- Free fares like Kansas City, Columbia, and Cape Girardeau, where passes are not needed.
- None of the above. Will not use phone as pass
- The ability to cancel the ticket without penalty!!!
- Purchase tickets with my phone at the kiosk.
- For Call-a-Ride, have a fixed fare (\$2.00) for the entire system including the general public areas on Call-a-Ride.
- It isn't a matter of cost, its a matter of access and speed: there should be NO fares for the bus. It takes so long, it should be free. Metro is fast and direct, keep the fares there if you want, but a system like ours, that is so heavily subsidized already and serves mostly the lowest-earners/most vulnerable, should be free.
- Gateway card to be reloaded online, Sometimes the machines are not working at metro stations

Question 16: How do you typically access information about fare options or fare changes?

Answer: Other (please specify)

- Transit App
- The posters on the train.
- Transit app
- Transit app
- not relevant--I get a pass through my employer
- News
- Transit app



- Transit App
- transit app
- The transit app
- Google
- The Transit App
- Transit app
- Transit app
- At the station
- Never ride
- Transit app
- At the MetroLink station when I participate with the Ten Toe groups
- transit ap
- transit app
- Senior fares don't change, so I'm not affected
- I read the information on the Fare box on the bus

Question 17: Please share any additional comments you have regarding fare payment options.

- For the love of God can you please modernize the user experience aspect of the system. Digital boards that show when the next train is arriving would be a start! GPS trackers on buses so people know when their next bus is arriving. The kind of basic things that transit systems started to implement roughly 20 years ago. So backwards!
- The murders and rapes on metrolink are the number one issue
- Ability to change devices more
- We need \$45 monthly bus passes most people cannot afford to pay \$78 each month for a monthly bus pass. It would be nice to have an affordable annual bus pass
- Many people ride the metro without a ticket. A more secure system for entering the metro would generate much more revenue
- Would be nice to be able to use a credit or debit card.
- Is there a way to pay with card without the metro app? The Day passes are awesome!
- You should be able to buy a metro pass and load it into your Apple Wallet just like a ticket for an airline or a hotel reservation.
- I appreciate the Gateway card for seniors because it is convenient for me to add value and the fare box display helps me to be aware of the balance getting to the dollar amount when I add more funds. I like the ease of the farebox scanning the Gateway card (always accurately) and the benefit of efficient boarding. I hope Metro will encourage riders to try a Gateway card to learn that it is better than cash or having to get a new weekly or monthly pass every month. My first (non-senior) Gateway card was free when I signed up at the Earth Day Fair many years ago on a Metrobus.
- Should speed up buses with all door boarding
- cheaper weekly passes
- Cheaper weekly passes
- I don't have a problem with the fair I'm disabled my fair is only 15.00 for a month



- Please allow call-a-ride (paratransit) fares to be paid with a card or some sort of app. Not everyone has easy access to a bank and pays in cash. it is very inconvenient to have to pay drivers in singles!
- Bring back the day passes on the buses
- If a passenger uses monthly passes and saves the expired ones for 12 months you should be able to get 1 month free. Give back to the riders you take advantage of poor and rude service.
- I feel when a bus is out of service due to no driver. Customers should be reimbursed.
- Please look into fare free transit. It's not out of the realm of possibility. We don't need turnstiles, we need better paid drivers and more reliable service and free or low fares with simple pay options.
- I just learned that East Saint Louis isn't offered Flyer on demand for \$3. Highly wrong!
- Go back to having discount rates for monthly pass holders. Have a family pass option and or allow one account on the transit app to purchase tickets for more than one person.
- I started to ride the bus as a secondary commuting option only after I learned about the Transit app, which is so easy to use.
- They need to have a virtual app
- Bring back paper transfers and paper 2 hours passes
- Question 7, option "Single ride pass" should say "Single ride pass".
- A service that's integrated across the system is best. Require micro mobility providers to integrate into that fare platform
- Most of the stops I've been at the ticket machines don't work and there's no signs saying to use the transit app
- To many drivers let people ride for free, or let the solicit other passengers for their fare.
- make it easier to bring bicycles on Metrolink for combo commute
- I think it's ridiculous that my employer pays for their employees to ride the metro but, soooo many people don't pay , not that security asks for passes but if they see security at a stop they wait to see what doors they come in and then get out the other doors and wait for the next train. I see this happen daily . Security is a joke , the trouble makers are hi fiving when they get off or security just ignores them period .
- you need more security on the train and platforms
- I use U-pass but I think link pricing should be lower. The metro link is very limited in location and frequency, so it's unfair to charge comparable costs to cities with more developed public transit.
- I don't like that to get a semester pass, you need to go to 8th and pine. I would prefer buying it online.
- It's tricky to have passed for metrolink and metrobus at the same time on the transit app and then access one because it kinda hides them. It's also difficult to redeem two at once like if I'm riding with a friend and it's easier for me to buy a ticket for both of us so they don't need to get the app
- Please add more security on the Metrolink trains. Every time I get on in the evening there is a fight or pot smoking.
- Moving as much online as possible would be fantastic! Though the app is not very user friendly. Thank you!



- A reloadable fare card would be awesome.
- Bus drivers need to start enforcing the rules, not only when they mad or annoyed. And When it's cold they supposed to let us on the bus, and they don't.
- The more I can do via the Transit App, the better. I have my phone with me all the time, so the ability to handle all of my fare and ticket options on my phone is essential.
- It's great it's a dollar
- Monthly Bus Passed should Really Lower prices, Life is Racing .
- Make it easier with app link tix
- We need fare-free transit to prevent security or police from harassing riders who are in between jobs or struggling with housing security.
- I wish I could reload my Gateway Pass online or have it where I can load a certain amount to build up to a monthly pass
- Phone app for fares would be ideal
- I've talked to a lot of people who think transit should be free, or maybe at least bus fare be free. If having the revenue from bus fare is critical, I think it's great that Metro is at least keeping fares so low. Taking transit is usually considerably slower than driving, but the fact that it's cheaper goes a long way to convince people to take it!
- The fare structure is expensive for people who ride a bus and the train in one trip. Train fare is 2.50 and bus fare is 1.00 total 3.50. It was 3.00 before COVID and the elimination of transfers. Some of your survey questions indicate that you do not understand the current fare structure.
- There needs to be a way that everyone pays such as turnstiles. Also not convenient to get the senior card to obtain the senior discount. Need more patrolling of trains and platforms, it doesn't feel safe for people to ride the metrolink
- Gateway card often doesn't work. Please fix.
- I like the senior reduced fare permits
- I live in North STL, please dont raise the fare anymore as most people up here cant afford it & sneak on the train.
- Not checking fares on metrolink is a missed opportunity for revenue
- Having access to print or email the disability form for reduced fare so our physicians can fill it out and send it back in would be nice .
- I wish fare didn't exist, the city/county should fund it.
- I quit on the walking program from Shrewsbury because it was so far away
- There is a need for a reduced price or free low-income fare option, for people who qualify. Similar to the youth fare option.
- Metro should increase marketing of the Transit app, ensure accurate real time data for all trains and buses, and lobby for a reduction in auto oriented subsidies and make fares free for all riders.
- The Transit app integration is very convenient!
- If possible, fare integration with Chicago's ventra would be amazing.
- Even though I have a phone and credit card, I don't always take them with me, and it's useful to have cash as a secondary option
- The Transit app is great and solves most of these problems, in my opinion.



- would be great to be able to reload cards at metro/bus stations as well or allow gas stations and grocery stores near transit stops to sell fare passes
- The emphasis on fare enforcement for MetroLink could be spent elsewhere. The \$52,000,000 spent on the new ticket gates could help make the MetroLink and buses more reliable and frequent. We need to make it easier and more attractive for people to take transit, not more difficult. Thanks for your hard work!
- I hope you can get some drivers so the buses are reliable. The last ap seemed to drop tickets purchased ahead of time.
- In order to increase transit speed and frequency, buses should transition to proof-of-payment methods or possibly fare-free transit.
- Transit should be free
- The secure platform plan is a massive mistake. Why are we spending so much money to make it harder to access our transit system--by increasing walking times to enter MetroLink stations and creating further barriers for low-income individuals--when other cities are eliminating fares altogether? We need to invest in our riders, not in walls and officers with guns that makes it a challenge to be a rider.
- I feel they should bring back transfers because it is hard to have to stop and pay at the machine when your trying to catch a train. Not have to pay so much fare if you have to catch multiple buses.
- The fare will never be worth the cost if the bus or train runs only once every hour and I don't feel safe when I ride. I like that you're looking at options for this, but please focus on fixing the chronic, systemic flaws as well.
- I think the Gateway Card works great. Being able to see my remaining balance at each use is nice. The only problems I've had are the ticket vending machines not reading credit cards (swiping). Tap-to-pay sensors may be more weather resistant.
- I belong to TenToes walk program and I have so many single ride tickets that I bought in fall of 2019 before Covid hit. Rather than have to exchange them twice yearly figure out a way to transfer them to my Gateway card
- You must make riding Metrolink safer. It's the biggest reason I don't use it more often.
- Had the Gateway card early on in the testing phase, in theory it was convenient, but not being able to add money online was a killer (at the time I was primarily riding only the bus). Switched to the transit app and am generally happy with it. I do wish there were fare caps like many places have though
- Need an express service in south county area going into downtown Not everyone has a smartphone and computer
- Leave the fare the same
- Please bring back the Human ticket sellers they can answer questions better than those ticket fare boxes! My friend got her hours cut because of those ticket fare boxes! She loved working for Metro but had to get a different job to make ends meet because of her hours being cut!!!
- I purchase a discounted monthly pass through my employer. The few times I buy tickets at vending machines, I purchase round trip tickets. I'm 55 now and wonder when/how to qualify for reduced fare. I miss having real people at kiosks to assist riders.



- Kansas City is so much more progressive than St. Louis. They are making it more convenient, less expensive and more attractive to take transit. In St. Louis we are spending \$50-60 million to add barriers to make it less convenient.
- I do not like the amount of change that is given back in coins.
- I think for Call-a-Ride, rather than charging taxicab type fares, how about charging no more than \$2.00 all over the entire St. Louis area. I feel that it is stupid to charge more like up to \$40.00 to go from Kirkwood to Eureka. Just to make it easier, I would love for Metro to contact Walgreens to land a deal with selling both fare tickets for the bus. If we had a fixed fare of \$2.00 for the entire St. Louis area on Call-a-Ride regardless of where the person lives or wants to go, I am sure we would see a massive increase on Call-a-Ride.
- Look to what KCATA has done with their Zero Fare program. I think a pilot program on one major corridor (I suggest Grand) for a year would help you learn a lot about ridership, equity, and access.
- I could not reload my gateway card at the Forest Park metrolink. The guard told me it had not been working since the flood. I don't know if it is working now.