



Voter Telephone Survey Report - Excerpt

Submitted: November 15th, 2013

[Note: Ellipses indicate missing sections]

Selected Survey Participant Comments

"Very beneficial to very many people." / "Good for veterans and others and to get kids to RCC."

"Why would we increase our taxes?" / "Very much against it." / "I'm really against it!"

"It's about time we had public transit." / "Extremely important." / "Much needed!" / "We need it!"

"My grandson rode his bike to RCC for two years because there was no bus."

"Start with basic service and then increase." / "Been needed for a long time!"

"Great to have service!" / "Really good idea!" / "I hope It goes through!"

"Public transportation should be self-supporting, not paid for by property owners."

"Bus service is needed for kids and teens." / "Elder folks and kids need help getting around."

"Lots of disabled retirees in the area. They need help getting to shopping and medical."

"Don't want it. Don't want the tax." / "Transit should be self-sufficient." /

"This should have been done 5 - 10 years ago! I can't drive because of medical problems.
Even a shuttle to the V.A. would help."

Introduction

*"The purpose of this survey is to help the City evaluate whether to pursue bringing public transit to our area, and the degree to which it would be supported by this community. This survey is voluntary, anonymous, confidential...."*¹

¹ Public Transit Questionnaire, October 2013 (Telephone Survey Form).

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In early September 2013, city officials were referred to Feed-back.com (F-B) by an executive with the regional Transportation District (TD). City and District representatives were coordinating efforts to assess registered voters potential support for new bus services. The project was conducted with participation of a stakeholder group of 25 individuals representing the interests of business owners, elected officials, health / medical / senior service providers, residents, and the school district.

Long-term TD (TD) goals were:

- Determine needs and destinations
- Identify public transit alternatives
- Engage the public to evaluate services and preferred strategies
- Estimate costs
- Develop financial and “conceptual operating” plans (e.g. fares, stop locations, and routes) for short and long-term horizons
- Evaluate and recommend “an appropriate oversight and governance model for administering public transportation that is either RVTD or non-RVTD provided.”

City officials and stakeholders funded the independently conducted telephone survey to gauge residents’ support for extending an existing bus route. A TD transit study (“Existing Conditions Report”) was completed in April 2013 to estimate ridership, funding sources, etc. Annual operating costs were estimated to be in excess of \$200,000. Property tax and fares could cover up to 12% of the total. A survey project was being considered to determine if a sufficient number of residents would vote for transit service in a future ballot (initial target date of November 2014).

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Survey Findings

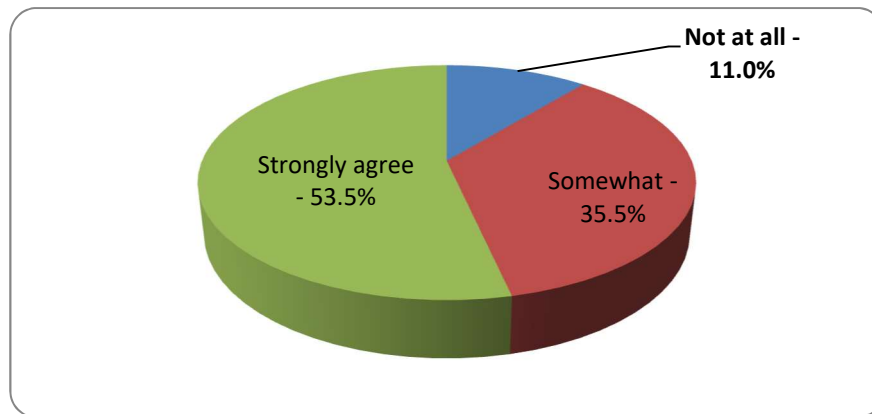
Based on survey-takers’ informal assessments, most respondents were older adults. As intended, the survey was anonymous and confidential. However, raw data are available for a designated non-partisan party to evaluate and summarize findings at the aggregate level (e.g., age, gender, neighborhood, etc.).

Question 1: Necessity

“Do you think public transit (bus, paratransit) is a necessary service for The City?”

The majority of respondents strongly agreed that public transit is needed (53.5%). Adding individuals who expressed less certainty brought the “favorable” portion to 89.0%.

Figure 1: Necessity

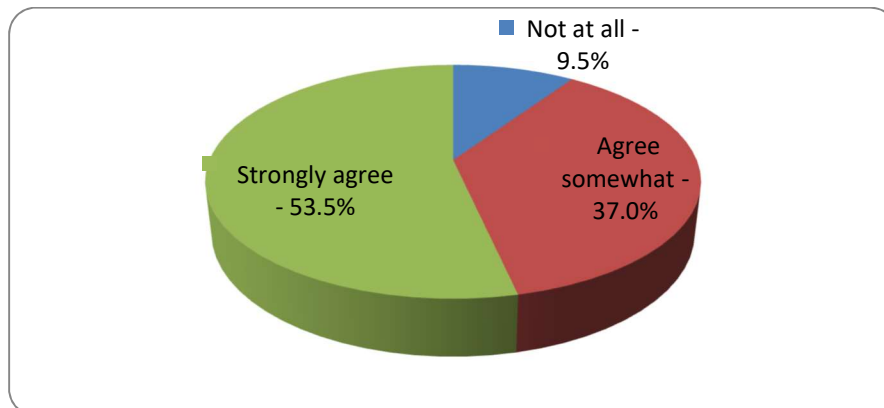


Question 2: Economic Benefit

“Do you think bringing public transit to the City would benefit the local economy by providing access to higher education, employment opportunities, shopping and medical appointments?”

Similar response levels to those for Question 1 were expressed for the role of public transit to benefit the local economy. An identical portion of respondents was strongly for the service (53.5%). Compared with Question 1, a slightly higher percentage was marginally supportive (37.0%). The combined total was 90.5% “favorable.”

Figure 2: Economic Benefit



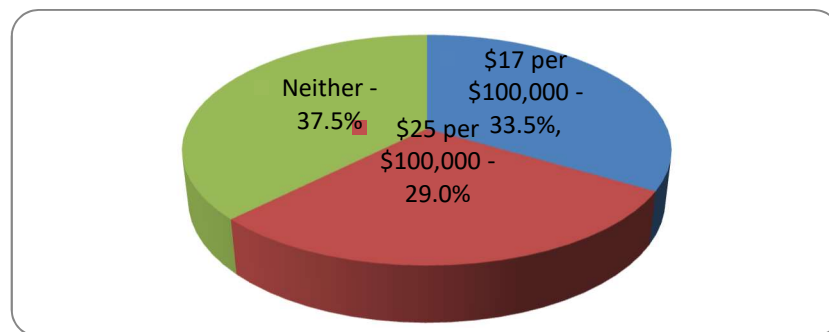
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Question 4: Property Tax

“How much of an increase in property tax would you support to bring public transit to The City?”

Most respondents (66.5%) supported a property tax increase, with the majority favoring the lower rate of \$17 per \$100,000 assessed value (37.5%). The rest (29.0%) choose the \$25 per \$100,000 option.

Figure 4: Property Tax



Summary

Surveys provide a snapshot of a moment in time. Events happen, and opinions change. Other factors may also influence the findings:

- A respondent’s situation at the time of the call (in a rush, wanting someone to chat with, etc.)
- Talking with a real person may generate different responses from completing and submitting a written form.

[At the time, the Voter Telephone Survey findings indicated that most respondents were in favor of the service and willing to support a moderate tax increase.²]

² City voters rejected the extended bus service in the November 2014 special election. The lack of support was most likely due to the unexpected addition of a regional TD taxation measure that was approved. Voters had not been surveyed about their opinions if dual city and county tax increases were included on the same ballot.