

Human Services Chamber of Hamilton County



Transportation Empowerment

Education, Innovation, and Growth Committee

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2018 HSC Public Transit Survey

- >700 clients and staff of member agencies participated.
- Responses from over 45 unique zip codes
- 49% were from households with incomes below \$25K.
- 38% were from households with incomes below \$15K
- Both riders and non-riders participated



Findings

Low Income Residents Rely on the Bus



- Over 60% of riders use the bus at least 4 days per week.
 - 58% of riders regularly use the bus to get to work or school.
 - 76% of these riders have household incomes below \$25K.
 - 84% of these riders do not have a car.
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Low Income Residents Rely on the Bus

- 42% of riders use the bus to go grocery shopping
- 38% of riders use the bus to get to medical appointments.





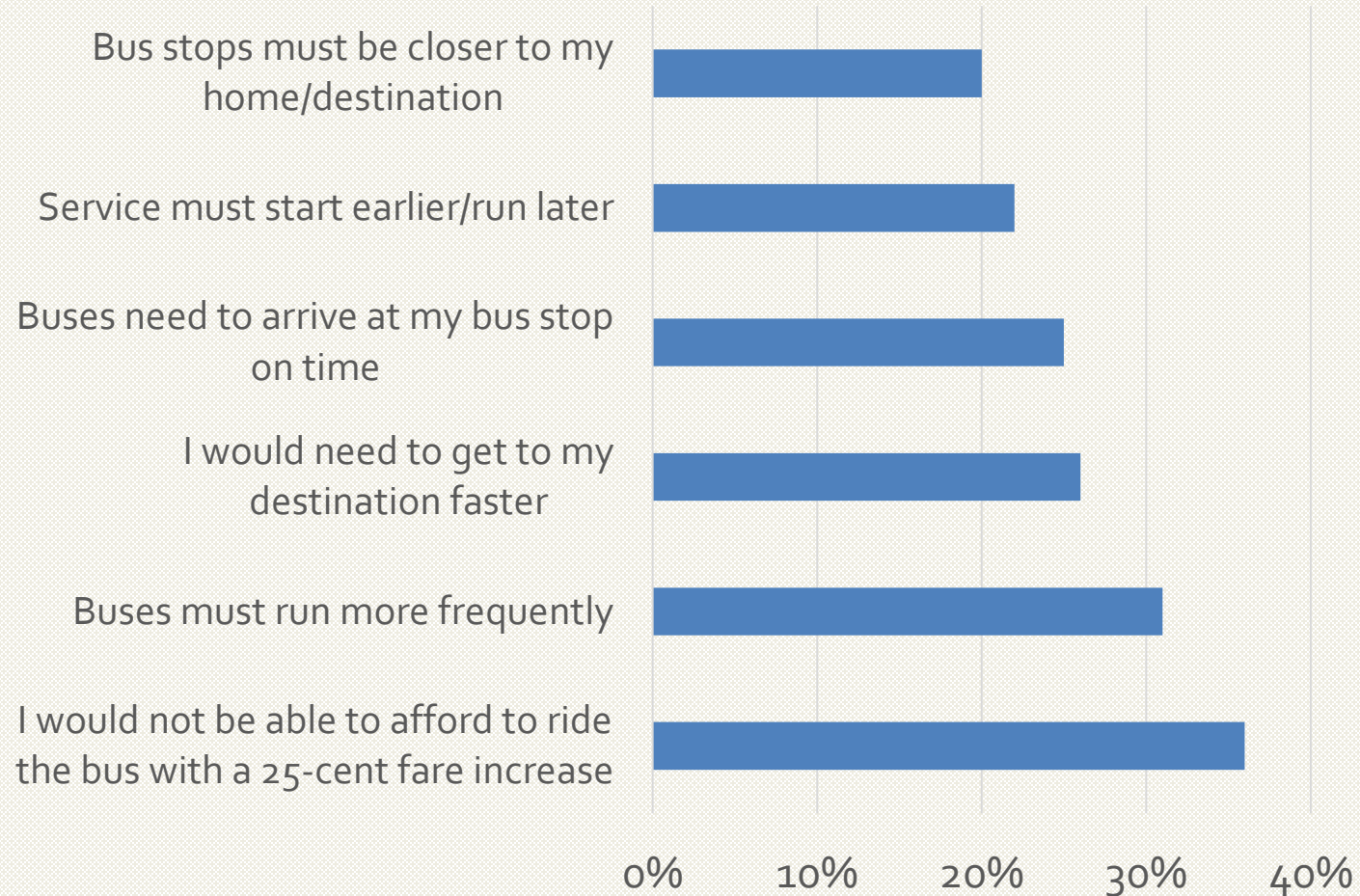
Proposed Fare Increases

- The **Reinventing Metro Plan** calls for annual fare increases amounting to an overall increase of \$1.05 by 2028.
- Zone 1 Fare would increase from \$1.75 to \$2.80.
- 60% increase in fares over 9 years.



What improvements or changes would make a 25-cent fare increase worth it to you? (choose up to 3 responses)

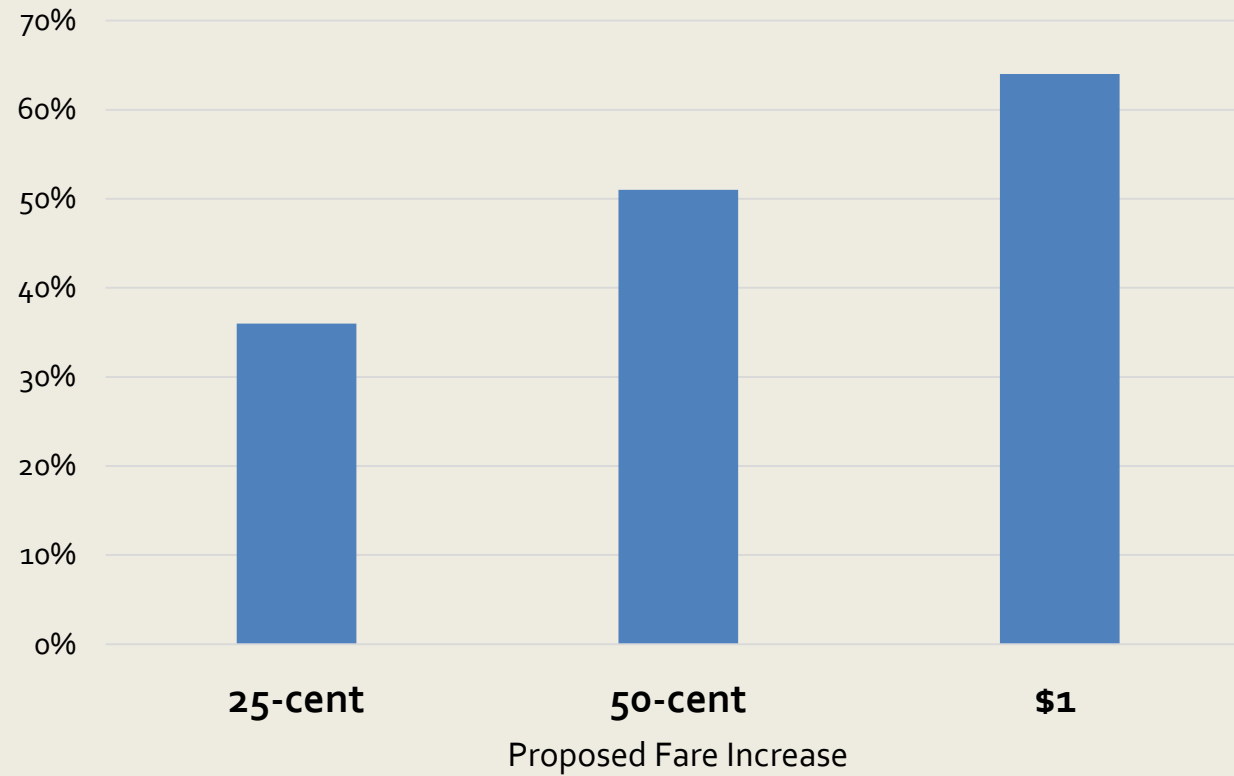
Respondents with households below \$25K





Many Low Income Residents Could Not Afford a Fare Increase

Percent of respondents with households under \$25K who said they could not afford a fare increase





Other Survey Findings

- 57% of riders ride the bus between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., outside of rush hours.
- 26% of those who regularly ride bus to work/school have a commute that is over 45 minutes.
- 63% transfer buses during their commute to work/school.



Transportation Empowerment Fund

Transportation Empowerment Fund



- Provides free or discounted bus passes or other types of ride options to eligible low-income citizens through participating non-profits or government organizations.
- Similar programs in Austin, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland.
- Also similar to Cincinnati's former Everybody Rides Metro program, but with more flexibility to meet needs of riders.





How It Works

- Participating organizations buy bus passes at a 50% discount.
- Organizations offer these passes to eligible recipients for free or at a discounted rate.
- Single-ride passes, day passes and monthly passes would be available through the program.





Eligibility

- Household income below 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- Primary purpose of passes:
 - Employment/Job-seeking
 - Education/job-training
 - Medical/mental health appointments
 - Services from a human services agency
 - Court related appointments
 - Trips to grocery store
 - Childcare

Governance



- Advisory board will oversee distribution of passes.
- Board comprised of:
 - Bus riders
 - SORTA
 - Business community
 - Human services sector
- Existing, non-participating non-profit will serve as fiscal sponsor for the fund.





Funding

- \$300K/year for 3 years.
 - Example of annual impact: discounted monthly passes for 1,400 workers.
- Potential expansion of program to rideshare after first year.
- Transit Tax Fund is one potential source of funding.



Thank you for allowing us to present.