



Service Planning Survey

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

FY 2022

What is BRTA?

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) is one of 15 regional transit authorities in Massachusetts. BRTA currently serves 27 communities within Berkshire County and uses federal, state, and local funding to provide accessible fixed route and paratransit public transportation services.

Why conduct a service planning survey?

Although BRTA continually solicits feedback from customers throughout the year, a planning survey is a valuable tool for obtaining input for a variety of specific questions and other areas of opportunity identified by the Authority.

Questions in this survey were focused on multiple topics including; current services, perception of services, future vehicle fleets, and potential service types like express/regional networks and on-demand options. Survey responses will aid BRTA in future service planning and may be considered for additional evaluation or public comment.

By the Numbers

Active: 12/2/2021 – 01/15/2022 (45 calendar days)

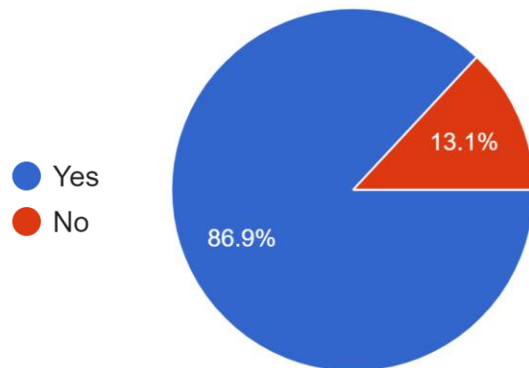
Advertised: berkshirerta.com, Facebook, on vehicles, at ITC, online www.bit.ly/brta-survey-2021

Target Sample Size: 300 responses¹

Total Responses: 291

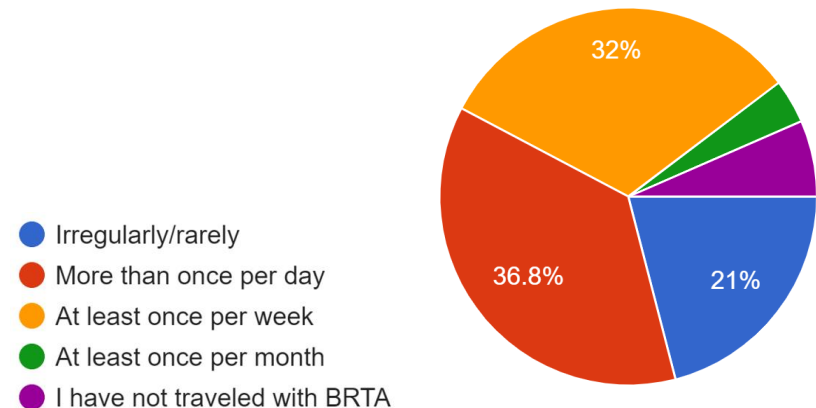
Do you currently, or have you recently, traveled on any BRTA bus services?

291 responses



How often do you use the BRTA bus routes?

291 responses



¹ sample population 135,000;
confidence interval 5.65;
confidence level 95%

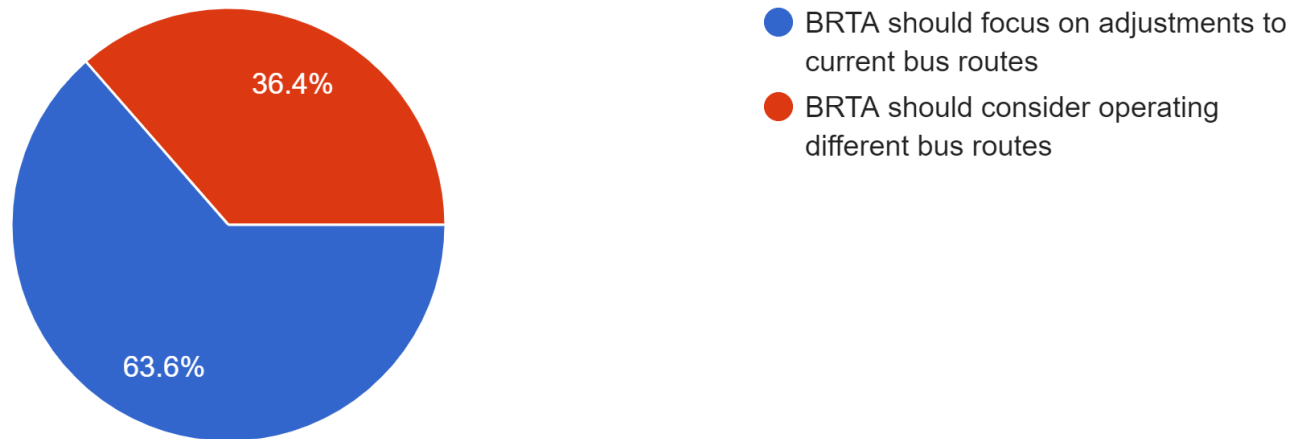


Conflicting Priority Questions (n=291)

Respondents were asked to choose between two conflicting design priorities. In this section, both options are not usually possible at the same time. BRTA will weigh future service considerations against these responses.

Would you prefer that BRTA focus on making improvements or adjustments to the current bus routes, or that BRTA focus on operating different bus routes?

291 responses

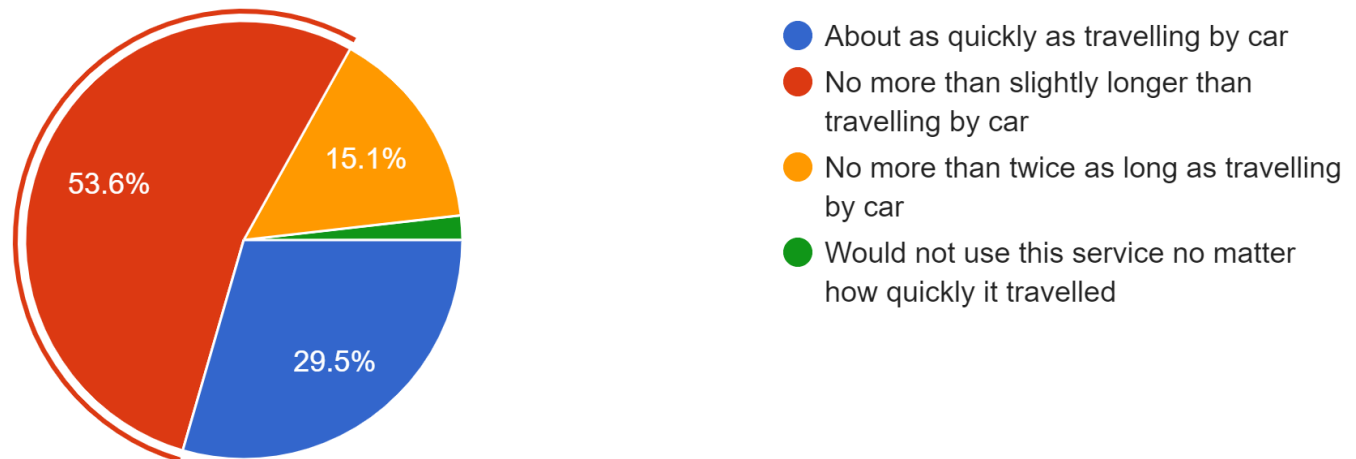


Express/Regional Bus Service Questions (n=278)

Respondents were asked to evaluate two possible options for future BRTA services. Respondents were first provided with a definition of each service, they were then asked questions focusing on travel habits, fare/cost, and hypothetical destinations chosen to represent areas both within and outside of Berkshire County.

How quickly would the bus need to travel for the service to be enticing to you?

278 responses



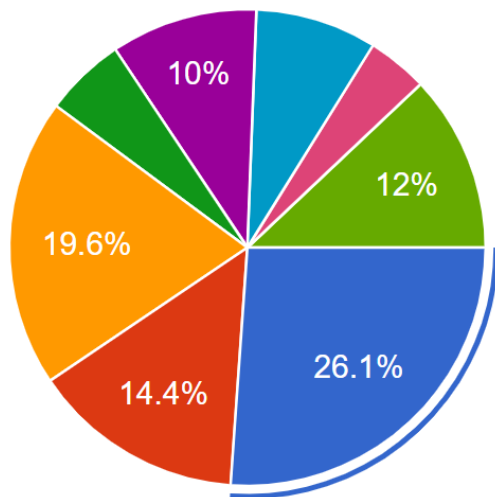
Most respondents (53.6%) noted that the service is most enticing when traveling with BRTA takes only slightly longer than travelling by personal car. This supports the need for “limited stop” service models so that any version of the proposed services are competitive against private car travel.



Express/Regional Bus Service Questions (n=291)

Respondents were asked to rank BRTA service amenities.

Most Important



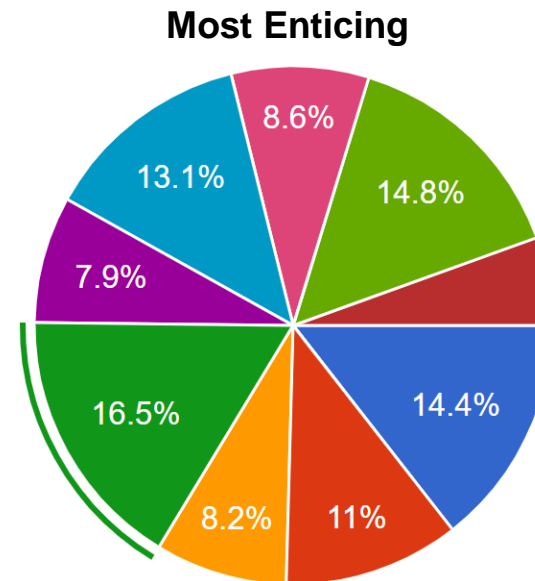
- Faster Travel times
- Wi-fi onboard buses
- Comfortable seating
- Space to travel with luggage
- Outlets or charging ports for electronics
- Enhanced bus shelters and bus stops
- Space to travel with bicycles
- Increased frequency of buses

1. **Faster Travel Times**
2. **Comfortable Seating**
3. **Wi-Fi Onboard**



Express/Regional Bus Service Questions (n=291)

Respondents were tasked with ranking potential regional or express service destinations. These routes are hypothetical, but the destinations were chosen due to their connections with population centers, employment opportunities, or connecting public transit services such as other regional transit systems and/or Amtrak.



- 1. Pittsfield to Northampton**
- 2. North Adams to Bennington**
- 3. Pittsfield to North Adams *via Adams, Cheshire***



Conclusions

- Customers retain a relatively positive perception of BRTA's worth within our community, while also indicating some room for improvement.
- Customers desire faster travel options, both within and between communities, and they may be willing to pay higher fares in exchange for these services.
- Customers primarily travel with BRTA for work but may increase their travel frequency if new services were implemented such as a regional/express network or on-demand bus services.
- Expanded evening service is well received, in concept, and may benefit from future expansion.
- Customers indicated they may travel more frequently if BRTA purchased/operated electric vehicles.
- Customers prefer that BRTA revise its current service before implementing new service.
- Customers considering an express/regional bus service may be most affected by destination and frequency of service, rather than fare cost.
- Customers considering an on-demand bus service may be most affected by travel time on the vehicle, the method required for trip scheduling/payment, and overall hours of availability.

Next Steps

- Consider evaluation of current services, or any potential services, regarding these survey responses and national trends.
- Consider evaluating where service efficiencies may be gained, or which programs may be planned, in consideration of these responses and funding opportunities.
- Consider follow-up surveys for topics of interest before, and after, implementation.

