



BOARD COMMITTEE TRANSMITTAL

**April 23, 2012**

**To:** Members of the Board of Directors  
**From:** <sup>WK</sup> Wendy Knowles, Clerk of the Board  
**Subject:** 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

Legislative and Communications Committee Meeting of April 19, 2012

**Present:** Directors Amante, Bankhead, Crandall, Dalton, Glaab,  
Hennessey, Herzog, and Nguyen  
**Absent:** Director Herzog

**Committee Vote**

No action was taken on this item.

**Staff Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.



**ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

## **2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

### **Staff Report**



**April 19, 2012**

**To:** Legislative and Communications Committee  
**From:** Will Kempton, Chief Executive Officer  
**Subject:** 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

**Overview**

The Orange County Transportation Authority Strategic Plan supports gathering feedback from customers and stakeholders to ensure there is an ongoing dialog between the Orange County Transportation Authority and its customers. Conducting periodic surveys of customers is extremely useful in determining ways the Orange County Transportation Authority can improve its bus transit service. This report summarizes the results of two surveys – a fixed-route bus customer satisfaction survey and an ACCESS paratransit survey.

**Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.

**Background**

As part of an ongoing effort to deliver quality bus service, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) conducts customer satisfaction surveys. In 2011, OCTA conducted two bus customer surveys – one for fixed-route bus service (Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey) and one for ACCESS paratransit bus service (ACCESS Survey). Rea & Parker Research of San Diego conducted the Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey, and tabulated data and analyzed results for the ACCESS Survey.

**Discussion**

**Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey**

The 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey was designed to gather information about OCTA's core, fixed-route customers, and results serve as a baseline for the purposes of measuring customer satisfaction for OCTA's strategic plan.

The goals of the 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey were to:

- Measure overall satisfaction with the bus riding experience
- Determine travel characteristics such as reasons for riding the bus, trip purpose, and fare payment methods
- Collect demographic information
- Identify how various service features are perceived
- Identify usage of, and preferences for, various communication channels
- Determine levels of access to electronic media

#### Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey - Sampling Methodology

The 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey was an intercept survey of customers at high volume, key bus stops. The sample was created in consultation with OCTA's planning staff to ensure it would yield a statistically valid representation of OCTA's core bus customers. Approximately 10,800 surveys were distributed and 1,954 surveys completed - a response rate of 18 percent. This sample yielded a margin of error of +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence. The 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Executive Summary is included as Attachment A, and the full report is available online at [www.octa.net/bus](http://www.octa.net/bus).

#### Satisfaction Levels

Overall, customer satisfaction is solid, with 80 percent of respondents reporting that they are either very or somewhat satisfied with OCTA bus service. By comparison, when asked for similar feedback in 2005, satisfaction levels were at 90 percent and in 2007 were at 82 percent. A possible explanation for the decline can be attributed to the recessionary economic conditions of the past several years and OCTA's actions in significantly reducing bus service to maintain the most efficient, affordable service for the greatest number of customers.

As part of the survey, customers were asked to rank how satisfied they were with a list of service features. The features that customers were most satisfied with included closeness of bus stop to home, information in the Bus Book, closeness of the bus stop to destination, safety on the bus, and cleanliness of the bus. The features that customers were the least satisfied were frequency of service, on-time performance, and information availability at bus stops.

The survey also asked customers to rank the same service features by how important each feature was to them. Using the responses, a quadrant analysis of satisfaction versus importance was done. This analysis revealed that of

those features most important to customers, they were less satisfied with on-time performance, frequency/wait time, safety at bus stops, cost of riding, and travel time. This analysis proved valuable in prioritizing areas for improvement in fixed-route bus service.

#### Travel Characteristics

OCTA's core bus ridership is extremely transit dependent. Forty-two percent of respondents report the reasons for riding the bus are that they cannot afford to purchase or maintain an automobile, and 23 percent lack a driver's license or are unable to drive. The largest portion of respondents - 43 percent - report they use the bus to commute to and from work, followed by those that run personal errands (16 percent), and or travel to college/trade school (12 percent). Respondents indicate they are very frequent users of OCTA bus services, with 82 percent using the bus four to seven days per week, and another 15 percent riding one to three days per week. Other findings:

- Customers often walk two or more blocks in addition to taking the bus (60 percent), followed by using another OCTA bus (29 percent), bicycling (13 percent), and carpooling (7 percent).
- For the trip where customers received the survey, 47 percent were using cash to pay their fare, followed by 19 percent who use a regular 30-day pass, and 13 percent who use a one-day pass purchased on-board the bus.

#### Customer Characteristics and Demographics

OCTA bus customers are long-term riders, with 62 percent indicating they have been riding for at least four years. There are slightly more females riding the bus (56 percent female, 44 percent male), but there are a variety of ages and ethnicities:

- Fifty-five percent fall within the 25 to 54 year age group, 24 percent are younger than 24 years of age, and 21 percent are 55 years or older.
- Fifty-eight percent classify themselves as Hispanic, 24 percent Caucasian, seven percent Asian/Pacific Islander, six percent African American, and five percent other ethnicities.

Thirty-four percent of respondents are full-time employees, 21 percent are part-time employees, and 15 percent are students. Of those employed, three

main occupations/industries emerge – service industries (23 percent), hospitality industry (16 percent), and retail (12 percent).

Eighty-six percent of respondents report they have an annual household income of \$35,000 per year or less.

### Communications

Customers reveal they have used many different types of bus information including the printed bus books (84 percent), information at bus stops (65 percent), Customer Information Center (55 percent), electronic Bus Book (53 percent), and Text4Next (53 percent). In terms of language, 61 percent indicate they prefer to receive information in English and 35 percent prefer Spanish.

A large percentage of customers have access to electronic media, with 59 percent using cell phones and 27 percent using smart phones. The cell phone is the most favored electronic media for obtaining service information (46 percent) followed by the internet on the respondent's computer (28 percent).

### Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey – Recommendations

#### Service

Survey results reveal that customers were less satisfied with on-time performance, frequency/wait time, safety at bus stops, cost of riding, and travel time, while ranking these features high in importance. To help enhance future customer satisfaction, these are the areas to focus on. This can be accomplished by adding resources and/or fine-tuning schedules.

To address the perceptions of safety at bus stops, additional information is required. Staff will probe this issue via a customer roundtable to identify whether there are particular locations to target for improvement. In addition, staff is exploring the use of Measure M Safe Stops Program funds which are dedicated to enhancing the 100 busiest bus stop locations. Improvements might include better lighting and other amenities.

To improve travel time, it is recommended staff continue to analyze customer trip patterns to adjust routings and fine tune schedules between transfers. New service concepts such as a State Route 22 Bus Rapid Transit route will be tested as recommended by the Transit System Study as another means to provide faster travel times. In addition, station van concepts will be designed to improve “last mile” connections.

### Marketing

Given the diverse customer base reflected by the age distribution, ethnic composition, and variety of trip purposes, marketing and communication programs should be focused to reach targeted market segments with customized programs.

One interesting finding was that cell phones are the most favored media for obtaining information about OCTA scheduling and route information. Transmitting service information through mobile applications and other internet services may go a long way to assist customers in obtaining current and up-to-date information on bus service and schedules.

To introduce more people to the benefits of public transportation, it is recommended OCTA promote the perceived strengths of bus service. This includes positive feedback about safety on the bus, cleanliness, and coach operator knowledge.

### Bus Pass

Finally, with 60 percent of customers utilizing passes, OCTA is examining ways to expand pre-paid pass usage which will minimize bus dwell time. In addition, a new fare option to offer pre-paid single trip tickets is under review. OCTA should continue to promote its popular Summer Youth and Holiday Jingle passes, and examine opportunities to develop additional seasonal passes. Other areas for promotion include OCTA's current college pass program.

Bus customers indicate they prefer to purchase passes at retail or grocery stores and, if possible, these distribution networks should be expanded. OCTA already distributes passes via Vons, Ralphs, and Northgate Markets, and will explore opportunities to increase bus pass sales at Walmart, Target, and other retail stores as a way to grow the pass sales network.

### Next Steps

In the coming months, OCTA staff will conduct customer roundtable discussions to gain more insight into the issues of greatest concern. A marketing program will be implemented to stimulate trial use with an ultimate goal of increasing ridership. Based on the results generated from the program, staff will conduct a cost-benefit analysis and report findings to the Board of Directors. Lastly, staff will report on the progress of the Transit System Study pilot programs.

## 2011 ACCESS Survey

Because ACCESS bus service requires advanced reservations, OCTA can easily reach its customer base by mail. The 2011 ACCESS Survey was mailed to 13,578 ACCESS customers, resulting in 2,732 surveys returned, representing a 20 percent response rate. The 2011 ACCESS Customer Satisfaction Survey Executive Summary is included as Attachment B, with the full report available at [www.octa.net/bus](http://www.octa.net/bus).

### Satisfaction

Almost nine of ten ACCESS customers are satisfied with the service. Eighty-eight percent report they are either very or somewhat satisfied – an increase from the prior survey conducted in 2008 where 85 percent reported similar satisfaction levels. Areas with highest levels of ACCESS customer satisfaction include cleanliness of the bus, safety on the bus, and bus driver courtesy. The service area, on-time performance, and the 30-minute pick-up window received lower satisfaction ratings; however, levels are still within the “satisfied” range.

Customer perception about ACCESS service quality remains strong. Ninety-four percent of respondents believe ACCESS service is the same or better than it was 12 months ago.

When asked about taxi services used to provide ACCESS for some trips, respondents indicated improvement in all service characteristics. Customers are most satisfied with travel time and safety aspects of the taxi trip. ACCESS customers can also utilize same-day taxi service, a supplemental service not required under the Americans with Disabilities Act. When asked about this service, more than eight of ten (83 percent) respondents report they are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied. This is an increase over the 70 percent level reported in a 2008 survey.

### Travel Characteristics

Frequency in riding ACCESS service varies. Forty-seven percent use the service one to seven days per week; 31 percent use the service at least one time per month. The most frequent trips are for work (3 trips/week) and school (2.4 trips/week).

Trip purposes vary with respondents indicating they use ACCESS as follows:

- Health/doctors appointments 75%



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- Recreational/social 37%
  - Personal business/errands 36%
  - Shopping 34%
  - Work 12%
  - School 11%
  - Other 7%

#### Customer Characteristics and Demographics

As with the Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey, a larger share of ACCESS Survey respondents are female – 69 percent are female and 31 percent are male. This is consistent with data in the overall ACCESS customer database where 62 percent are female. There are also many seniors using ACCESS with 70 percent age 60 years or older.

Survey respondents indicate they are long-term customers, with most having used ACCESS for more than four years.

#### Awareness and Communications

Diverting costly ACCESS trips to less expensive fixed-route bus service is one of OCTA's paratransit growth management strategies. To do this, OCTA offers a reduced fare identification card (RFID) for eligible customers to use on a fixed-route bus. Of the ACCESS Survey respondents, 25 percent are aware of the RFID, 20 percent have used this service, and 3,500 ID cards have been issued to ACCESS customers. One third of the respondents indicate they are interested in participating in travel training to ride the fixed-route buses.

Currently, ACCESS trips are booked over the telephone. Staff has been exploring other ways to take trip reservations including online methods. The ACCESS Survey findings indicate that 28 percent of respondents are interested in booking their ACCESS reservations online, with another 24 percent unsure of whether they would use this service.

#### ACCESS Survey - Findings

ACCESS customers continue to be extremely satisfied with the quality of the service. Given the nature of the service, we know the population is extremely transit-reliant, having special travel needs. However, some may be able to use the lower cost fixed-route service, with about a third willing to participate in some sort of travel training program. A continuing emphasis on travel training and promotion of the RFID will help manage overall transit trip costs. In addition,

maintaining high performance levels in taxicab services will also help meet demand and manage costs.

**Summary**

As part of an ongoing effort to deliver quality customer service to bus and ACCESS riders, bus customer satisfaction surveys were conducted in 2011. Results from the surveys help OCTA better understand the needs and perceptions of its bus customers, as well as provide insight to continuously improve services.

**Attachments**

- A. 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Report Executive Summary
- B. 2011 ACCESS Customer Satisfaction Survey Report Executive Summary

**Prepared by:**



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**ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

## **2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

### **Attachment A**



**Orange County  
Transportation  
Authority**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**2011 Bus Satisfaction  
Survey Report**



**Prepared by Rea & Parker Research  
January, 2012**

## 2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey

### Executive Summary

#### Introduction

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) was formed in June 1991 to address ongoing transportation needs in Orange County and to create one agency to develop and implement transportation programs designed to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. OCTA serves as the county transportation commission responsible for planning, funding and delivering transportation improvements in Orange County – including freeway, street and transit systems. As part of OCTA’s commitment to enhancing customer satisfaction by understanding, connecting with and serving the diverse communities and partners as outlined in the OCTA Strategic Plan, the Authority periodically conducts surveys to gather data on its bus customers. By collecting and analyzing perception data and comparing the results to prior related surveys where appropriate, these studies provide OCTA with statistically reliable information that can provide valuable insight in understanding the customer base, and provide a foundation for future marketing and operational decisions.

#### Goals of Study

To assist in this effort, OCTA selected Rea & Parker Research to design the research plan and conduct the 2011 Bus Satisfaction study. The current study seeks to determine the following information:

- Measure customers’ overall satisfaction with their bus riding experience, as well as how they feel OCTA bus service is meeting their travel needs;
- Profile customer’s travel behavior, including frequency and timing of use, and trip purpose;
- Identify the relative importance that customers place on specific performance aspects when riding OCTA buses;
- Identify customers’ methods of fare payment as well as access to electronic media to receive scheduling and route information;
- Collect demographic information on OCTA bus patrons; and
- Identify customers’ current usage of and preferences for various OCTA communication strategies.

Results of the survey have also been disaggregated and presented for each of the five supervisorial districts in Orange County. The last survey was in 2007. However, it should be noted the 2011 and 2007 survey results are not directly comparable in that the data for each survey was collected from different sources. In 2007, the study was designed to highlight the differences between OCTA-operated services and contractor-operated services. Therefore, there was an emphasis on express and StationLink bus service. In the 2011 study, the emphasis was on system-wide fixed route bus service and this study should be viewed as a baseline report for OCTA’s Strategic Plan. Survey quotas were targeted by specific bus stops so that the survey team could conduct intercept surveys with random respondents while waiting at these specific bus stops.

#### Overview of Methodology

OCTA contracted with Rea & Parker Research to conduct the study. Rea & Parker Research obtained a sampling of methodology from OCTA’s Planning department to ensure the sample was statistically valid and representative of OCTA’s current fixed route bus system. OCTA provided to Rea & Parker Research a list of key bus stops identified by supervisorial district which also included average daily boardings at each stop and a target of surveys to obtain from each location. Rea & Parker Research distributed survey forms to bus riders at these selected bus stops throughout Orange County. Approximately 15,000 survey forms were printed (11,000 in English, 3,500 in Spanish, and 500 in Vietnamese), and 10,800 were actually distributed to potential respondents. A total of 1,954 completed surveys were returned. Based upon those who accepted a survey form at the bus stops, this represents a response rate of 18 percent. This sample yields a margin of error of +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence.

## Key Report Findings

### Satisfaction with Bus Service

- Satisfaction with bus service continues to be high - 40 percent are very satisfied and an additional 40 percent are somewhat satisfied for a combined 80 percent satisfaction rating.
- Nearly one-third (32 percent) of respondents feel that bus service has gotten better over the past 12 months and nearly 20 percent perceive that bus service has worsened in the last 12 months.
- Respondents are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with closeness of their bus stop to home (80 percent), information in bus book (77 percent), and closeness of bus stop to destination (76 percent). These are followed closely by safety on the bus (75 percent) and cleanliness of the bus (73 percent). In 2011, the features that received satisfaction ratings that were lower were frequency/wait time (43 percent) and information at bus stops (54 percent).
- On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very important and 5 = very unimportant, respondents accord the greatest level of importance to safety on the bus (mean of 1.47) and on-time performance (mean of 1.49). Respondents feel that number of transfers (mean of 1.80), information at bus stops (mean of 1.77), and accuracy of telephone information (mean of 1.75) are less important to them.
- Frequency of service and overcrowding inside buses are priorities for improvement in bus service. These areas of improvement are followed by increased weekend service and increased evening service.

### General Bus Usage

- Respondents are very frequent users of OCTA bus services, with 82 percent using the bus 4 to 7 days per week and another 15 percent using the bus 1 to 3 days per week.
- Of the more frequent riders, 38 percent are employed full-time and 22 percent are employed part-time, especially in the service, hospitality and retail sectors.
- Respondents who are less frequent riders (less than 4 days per week) are more widely spread across the employment spectrum to include homemakers, students and disabled residents.
- More frequent riders use a greater number of transfers – those that travel 4 to 7 days per week have a mean of 1.90 transfers per trip versus less than 4 days per week, a mean of 1.65 transfers per trip.
- Respondents in the survey are long-term riders of OCTA buses with 62 percent have been riders for at least 4 years.
- The most important reason respondents are riding OCTA buses instead of using alternative modes is that they cannot afford to purchase or maintain an automobile (42 percent) followed by the lack of a driver's license or the inability to drive (23 percent).

### Bus Usage Information Specifically Pertaining to the Rider's Current Bus Trip

- The dominant purpose of travel was for work (43 percent) followed by personal errands (16 percent) and college/trade school (12 percent).
- Respondents most often complete their trip by walking 2 or more blocks (60 percent).
- The mean number of transfers during their survey trip was 1.86.
- The median travel time for the 2011 survey trip (1 hour and 30 minutes) was considerably longer than the median travel time for the survey trip in 2007 (55 minutes). This is consistent with the larger number of transfers in the 2011 sample. It is noteworthy that the sample population in 2007 included StationLink and Community bus routes.

### **Sources of Information**

- Printed bus books (84 percent) and information at bus stops (65 percent) are the most important sources of information regarding OCTA bus service.
- Nearly three-fifths (59 percent) of respondents access electronic media through their cell phone (including 27 percent with smart phones).
- The cell phone is the most favored media for obtaining scheduling and route information about OCTA bus service (46 percent) followed by using the Internet on the respondent's computer (28 percent).
- The dominant languages preferred to receive bus information includes 61 percent in English and 35 percent in Spanish.

### **Fare Payment**

- For the current survey trip, 47 percent used cash to pay their fare, 19 percent who used a regular 30-day pass and 13 percent who used a one-day pass purchased on-board the bus.
- Combining payment methods for the current survey trip and previous OCTA bus trips, the majority have at some point in time paid their fare in cash (85 percent), followed by those who have paid their fare through a one-day pass purchased on-board (63 percent) and through a regular 30-day pass (46 percent).
- Three-fifths of the 25 percent who have never used a bus pass (15 percent of the total population) indicate that they have never used a bus pass because they have no need to do so. Another 28 percent (7 percent of the total) did not make this purchase because they are not aware of where to do so.
- Potential and actual pass holders (66 percent) would prefer to purchase bus passes at retail locations such as grocery stores and convenience stores.

### **Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents**

- The sample respondents overall are 44 percent male and 56 percent female.
- The majority of the respondents are Latino (58 percent), followed by Caucasian (24 percent).
- The age of the respondents is mixed, with 55 percent falling between the ages of 25 and 54, 24 percent 24 and under, and 21 percent 55 and older.
- Bus riders represent a low income population—with 44 percent earning under \$10,000 per year and another 29 percent with an annual income of \$10,000 but under \$20,000. Of the total, 86 percent identified a household income of \$35,000 and under.
- High school graduates represent 28 percent of respondents, and 33 percent have attained some college education, technical training, or an Associate degree.
- Nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of all surveys returned were completed in English, 27 percent were completed in Spanish, and 1 percent was completed in Vietnamese.
- Among the survey respondents, there is considerable unemployment and underemployment, with 34 percent employed full-time and 21 percent employed part-time. Another 15 percent are students who are not employed. Of total respondents 30 percent simultaneously attend school and work.
- Respondents are employed to a great extent in three occupations/industries – services (23 percent), hospitality (16 percent), and retail (12 percent).
- Of those that are employed, 17 percent work in Anaheim followed by 16 percent who work in Santa Ana.
- Where respondents attend school follows a similar pattern, with 33 percent attending school in Santa Ana followed by Fullerton (17 percent) and Anaheim (10 percent).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

- Overall satisfaction with OCTA bus service is very high – 80 percent are satisfied. One-third feel that bus service has gotten better over the past 12 months.
- OCTA customers are frequent users of the bus – over 80 percent use the bus 4 to 7 days per week. Customers also tend to be long term riders, with over 60 percent riding for at least 4 years.
- The customer base is extremely transit-reliant, as 69 percent cannot afford a car, do not drive or their car is not working.
- The underlying core demographic is mixed – in age, reason for using the bus, as well as ethnicity. For this reason, future marketing decisions may include a targeted marketing approach as opposed to a of a “one-size fits all” approach.
- Marketing and outreach to new customers to reinforce the benefits of riding the bus could stimulate trial use and increase ridership and the customer-base.
- The core areas that make OCTA a popular and successful provider of transportation services are as follows: safety on the bus, closeness of bus stop to destination, information in bus book, bus driver knowledge of service area, cleanliness of bus, and closeness of bus stop to home. These characteristics are important to respondents and they are satisfied with the service quality in these area. It is important that OCTA maintain a high level of service in these areas in order to ensure that high satisfaction levels will be sustained.
- There are some areas of service that are important to OCTA bus riders, but they are not as satisfied with their quality of provision by OCTA as they are for other OCTA bus service features. Investment in improving these areas could have a substantial impact on increasing the overall satisfaction with OCTA bus service. These characteristics include: on-time performance, safety at bus stops, frequency/wait time, cost of riding, and travel time. OCTA is actively addressing customer issues regarding bus stop safety, and sustained efforts in this direction are strongly encouraged. On-time performance can also be addressed or, at least, mitigated with the provision of real-time information.
- OCTA bus riders still dominantly pay their bus fare in cash and when purchasing passes, prefer to purchase them at retail and grocery stores. OCTA has an opportunity to increase bus pass sales by expanding retail pass outlets, as well as informing bus riders of the availability of bus passes and where and how to purchase them.
- Cell phones are the most favored media for obtaining information about OCTA scheduling and route information. The provision of mobile applications and other internet services, for the purpose of providing scheduling and routing information to customers via cell phones and smart phones, may go a long way toward assisting customers in attaining current and up-to-date information on bus service and schedules.





**ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

## **2011 Bus Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

### **Attachment B**



**Orange County  
Transportation  
Authority**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**2011 ACCESS  
Customer Satisfaction  
Survey Report**



**November 2011**

# **2011 ACCESS Customer Satisfaction Survey**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), in addition to fixed route bus service, runs a complementary, specialized paratransit service known as ACCESS. ACCESS is a shared-ride service for people who are unable to use the regular fixed route service because of a disability. Maintaining a “customer first” focus is a priority for OCTA and a detailed communication plan is vital to achieving this. Furthermore, establishing and maintaining customer communication is vital and is particularly important when working with special needs customers. In 2008, OCTA conducted a large-scale customer satisfaction survey to ACCESS customers. In June 2011, OCTA embarked on the same task in order to gather customer feedback about ACCESS service, including the expanding modes of service such as the utilization of taxi service.

### **Goals of Study**

The current study seeks to determine the following information:

- Measure customers’ overall satisfaction with ACCESS paratransit service;
- Profile customer’s travel behavior, including trip frequency and purpose;
- Identify the relative importance that customers place on specific performance aspects when using ACCESS service;
- Identify satisfaction with use of taxi service for use in ADA and non-ADA service to ACCESS customers; and
- Identify customers’ interest in use of fixed route service for some trips.

The last ACCESS Customer Satisfaction Survey was conducted in 2008 and, where applicable, 2011 survey results are compared.

### **Overview of Methodology**

The survey instrument was developed by OCTA staff, utilizing several questions contained in the previous 2008 survey in order to track response trends. OCTA mailed surveys to ACCESS customers who had made at least four trips on ACCESS service during the previous 12-month period. A total of 13,578 surveys were mailed. A total of 2,732 surveys were returned, a response rate of 20 percent. Rea & Parker Research was hired to conduct the tabulation and analysis.

### **Key Report Findings**

#### **Satisfaction with ACCESS Transportation Service**

- ACCESS customers exhibit a strong level of satisfaction with ACCESS transportation services. Specifically, 88 percent of ACCESS customers are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with ACCESS services overall. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents very satisfied and 5 represents very dissatisfied, the mean satisfaction score is 1.59. These ratings represent significant improvement over the already high satisfaction ratings reported in the 2008 ACCESS

survey, where 85 percent were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with ACCESS service and the mean rating was 1.73.

- Supporting this high level of satisfaction is the finding that 37 percent of ACCESS customers feel that ACCESS service is better than it was 12 months ago while only 6 percent feel that it has gotten worse. A similar level of satisfaction regarding perceived improvement in ACCESS service was expressed in the 2008 ACCESS survey. Older customers are more inclined to view ACCESS service as having improved during the last 12 months.
- Consistent with their overall satisfaction, ACCESS customers are largely satisfied with individual service characteristics associated with ACCESS transportation service. These mean satisfaction levels range from 1.30 for cleanliness of the bus interior to 1.91 for 30 minute on-time pick-up window. It is noteworthy that the satisfaction level for each characteristic has increased since 2008 and reflects the overall (all service characteristics combined) improvement in satisfaction – from 1.81 in 2008 to 1.56 in 2011.
- Older ACCESS users, ACCESS customers who use the service less frequently, and riders who do not have a long tenure as an ACCESS customer tend to exhibit a particularly strong level of satisfaction toward ACCESS service features.
- Satisfaction with the characteristics associated with travel time and on-time performance are the most important considerations in predicting overall satisfaction toward ACCESS service. Efforts to improve overall satisfaction with ACCESS can be most effectively and powerfully addressed through improvements in these specific service characteristics.

### **ACCESS Usage Characteristics**

- Current ACCESS customers use ACCESS service with some frequency. Specifically, nearly one-third (32 percent) of riders use ACCESS 1-3 days per week and 15 percent use the service 4-7 days per week. This is similar to the high usage found in the 2008 ACCESS survey.
- Current riders, as well as riders in the 2008 survey, have considerable tenure as ACCESS eligible riders in that nearly 50 percent of customers in both surveys have been using ACCESS for 4 years or more.
- Customers of ACCESS in the current survey largely use the service for health and doctor's appointments and other health-related trips (75 percent).
- Women are more likely than men to use ACCESS for shopping, social/recreational trips, and personal business trips.
- The work trip is most common among those in the primary working age group (25 -34 years of age; school is a major purpose for customers in the 18-34 age group; social/recreational trips and trips to the doctor or other health-related purposes represent a high percentage of ACCESS trips

among ACCESS customers who are 18 years of age or younger; and personal business trips are major trips for those 35 years of age or older and under the age of 75.

- More than one-half of male customers use ACCESS at least once per week, whereas less than one-half of women use it that frequently. This finding is quite similar to the results of the 2008 survey.
- The main regular users of ACCESS are between the ages of 18 and 44 (44 percent using ACCESS 4 days per week or more). In 2008, the ACCESS users were also dominantly in the 18-44 age groups, with 56 percent using the service 4 or more days per week.
- Customers of ACCESS in the 35-64 age groups have the longest tenure in using ACCESS service.
- Over one-fourth of ACCESS survey respondents would book ACCESS reservations online if this service were available. Men and younger ACCESS customers are more likely to book reservations online.

### **Use and Satisfaction with Taxicabs for Providing ACCESS Trips**

- Customers who have used taxicabs to make ACCESS trips are highly satisfied with various features of that service. Mean ratings range from 1.48 (travel time) to 1.60 (cleanliness of taxicab). The level of satisfaction for each characteristic has increased from the 2008 ACCESS survey.
- Stronger satisfaction levels for taxi trips are associated with older ACCESS users, those who use ACCESS service less frequently, and customers who primarily use Tagalog or one of the Indian languages.
- Customers are somewhat split in terms of their awareness of Same Day Taxi Service. However, there is an increase in the use of Same Day Taxi Service by ACCESS customers since the 2008 survey – from 23 percent to 32 percent. Among those who use Same Day Taxi Service, the frequency of use is not high with 53 percent using the service only a few times per year.
- There is considerable satisfaction with Same Day Taxi Service among those who have used this service, and this satisfaction has grown since 2008. In the current survey, 83 percent are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with Same Day Taxi Service while 70 percent were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied in 2008.
- Among those who have not used Same Day Taxi Service, 57 percent are not aware that the service exists. Older residents are less likely to use Same Day Taxi Service and they are less aware that this service is available.

### **Satisfaction with the In-Person Functional Assessments Provided to Determine ACCESS Eligibility**

- ACCESS customers are highly satisfied with various selected characteristics of the functional assessment process. Mean ratings range from 1.41 to 1.51 and represent an increase in satisfaction levels from the 2008 survey.
- Older ACCESS customers, those who use Tagalog and American Sign Language as primary languages, and those who use ACCESS frequently for social/recreational purposes portray stronger levels of satisfaction for in-person functional assessments.

### **Awareness and Use of Fixed Route Service for ACCESS Customers**

- A substantial percentage (75 percent) of ACCESS customers is not aware of the reduced fare program that enables ACCESS customers to use fixed-route bus service for 25 cents. The most senior ACCESS customers are less aware of this program than are the other ACCESS customers. Those whose primary language is Spanish or English are also less aware of this program.
- One-fifth (20 percent) of ACCESS customers have used fixed-route bus service in addition to ACCESS service. Among the 80 percent of ACCESS customers who have not used fixed-route bus service, about two-thirds would not consider fixed route travel training even if such training could enable them to ride fixed-route buses at a reduced fare.
- Males and younger ACCESS customers are more likely to have used fixed route service in addition to ACCESS service. Also, males are more likely to consider participating in fixed route travel training.