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**Understanding How Marginalized Genders Travel Using NJ TRANSIT  
FINAL REPORT**

December 2024

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In cooperation with

New Jersey  
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and  
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<b>16. Abstract</b> <p>Through this research, NJ TRANSIT sought to understand how women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer plus community, sometimes referred to as sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The objective of this study was to explore the travel behavior and experiences of public transit users in New Jersey and to understand the relationship between travel experiences, perceptions of safety, gender, and sexual orientation. The hypothesis is that women and SGMs have different travel behaviors and experiences than men and that women and SGMs are more likely to have concerns about safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT. To achieve this objective, the research team conducted a comprehensive literature review and peer agency interviews to assess the state of knowledge on this topic and to document how other agencies are addressing the needs and concerns of women and SGMs using public transit. The research team also conducted a statewide travel behavior survey and six focus groups with NJ TRANSIT customers.</p> <p>Results show that that there are differences in how women and SGMs use NJ TRANSIT services and that SGMs, particularly transgender/gender non-conforming persons, were disproportionately likely to have safety and security concerns, and to have experienced harassment while using NJ TRANSIT services. The research further found that the vast majority of harassment incidents (84 percent) go unreported and that SGMs were less likely to trust authorities when reporting a harassment incident compared to other populations. When controlled for other variables, these differences were generally not explained by differences in race and income. NJ TRANSIT mode also played some role in perceptions and experiences safety and harassment, with light rail users being more likely to report having safety/security concerns or having been harassed/assaulted while using transit compared to users of other modes. This may be due to the fact that light rail operations are conducted on an honor system, generally with fewer NJ TRANSIT employees present during service hours.</p>			
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
BACKGROUND .....	15
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES .....	15
INTRODUCTION.....	16
LITERATURE REVIEW AND PEER AGENCY OUTREACH .....	16
SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS .....	35
FOCUS GROUPS .....	41
TRAVEL BEHAVIOR SURVEY .....	53
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	83
APPENDIX A - REFERENCES.....	95
APPENDIX B – PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARIES.....	100
APPENDIX C – FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES .....	109
APPENDIX D – SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS .....	135
APPENDIX E – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	176

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. NJ TRANSIT's strategic goals	83
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## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Recommended actions for NJ TRANSIT	12
Table 2 – Focus group dates, time, and locations	41
Table 3 – Focus group participant characteristics	43
Table 4 – Reasons for satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT among focus group participants	44
Table 5 – Reasons for dissatisfaction with NJ TRANSIT among focus group participants	45
Table 6 – Strategies to avoid harassment or assault among focus group participants	52
Table 7 – Qualtrics fraud detection methods	55
Table 8 – Respondent profile	57
Table 9 – Travel frequency by mode, all trips	59
Table 10 – Travel mode by purpose, all trips	60
Table 11 – Transit use	61
Table 12 – Most frequent trip by NJ TRANSIT	62
Table 13 – Travel experiences for those traveling with children	63
Table 14 – Opinions regarding the comfort and condition of NJ TRANSIT facilities	64
Table 15 – Opinions about interacting with others while using NJ TRANSIT	64
Table 16 – Perceptions of safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT	65
Table 17 – Experiences with harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT	67

Table 18 – Reporting incidents of harassment/assault that occurred while using NJ TRANSIT	68
Table 19 – Effects of harassment/assault on individual well-being	69
Table 20 – Strategies used to avoid harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT	70
Table 21 – Top three things NJ TRANSIT can do to improve customer experience	70
Table 22 – Gender influence on perceptions of safety, by gender and sexual orientation	72
Table 23 – Regression results for safety concerns when riding NJ TRANSIT	74
Table 24 – Prevalence of harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT, by gender and sexual orientation	76
Table 25 – Frequency of harassment or assault among respondents who reported being harassed or assaulted.	77
Table 26 – Regression results for whether respondents have ever been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT	78
Table 27 – Percent agreeing with statements concerning NJ TRANSIT safety, by gender and sexual orientation.	80
Table 28 – Logistic Regression Results for Feelings of Safety in the Presence of NJ TRANSIT Police	81
Table 29 – Recommended actions for NJ TRANSIT	91
Table 30 – Number of survey responses by mode and gender	144
Table 31 – Estimated riders by mode and gender	144
Table 32 – Percentage of trips by transit by gender and orientation, nationally	146
Table 33 – Average transit trip duration by gender and orientation, nationally	147
Table 34 – Percentage of work trips on transit	147
Table 35 – Percentage of work trips by transit mode	149
Table 36 – Average duration of one-way work trips (minutes)	149
Table 37 – Percentage of work trips by time of day	151
Table 38 – Percentage of trips by transit by age, gender, and orientation, nationally	152

Table 39 – Average transit trip duration by age, gender, and orientation (minutes), nationally	153
Table 40 – Percentage of trips by transit by race, gender, and orientation, nationally	153
Table 41 – Percentage of trips by transit by ethnicity, gender, and orientation, nationally	154
Table 42 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose, gender, and orientation, nationally	155
Table 43 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose, by age, gender, and orientation, nationally	156
Table 44 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose by race, gender, and orientation, nationally	157
Table 45 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose by ethnicity, gender, and orientation, nationally	159
Table 46 – NJ TRANSIT customer age by mode and gender	160
Table 47 – NJ TRANSIT customer race and ethnicity by mode and gender	162
Table 48 – NJ TRANSIT customer household income by mode and gender	163
Table 49 – NJ TRANSIT customer peak and off-peak travel by mode and gender	165
Table 50 – NJ TRANSIT customer trip purpose by mode and gender	166
Table 51 – NJ TRANSIT customer work trip frequency by mode and gender	168
Table 52 – NJ TRANSIT customer trip frequency for non-work trips by mode and gender	170
Table 53 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select station, stop and vehicle characteristics	173
Table 54 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select schedule, information, and communication characteristics	174
Table 55 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select reliability and experience characteristics	175



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is well known in the field of transportation planning that many factors influence travel, including gender, age, race/ethnicity household size and income, number of children present in the household, number of personal vehicles available and the type and frequency of activities individuals participate in. Through this project, NJ TRANSIT sought to understand how women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer plus community, sometimes referred to as sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. While women and SGMs may face common socio-economic and structural barriers regarding travel needs, each demographic may have their own mobility needs and they may face their own unique challenges when traveling. Ultimately, meeting the needs of each group may demand different solutions.

The goal for the research was to gather and analyze identity-specific data that reflects how women and SGMs travel that can be incorporated into future planning and decision-making. Specific objectives included:

- Identify and understand the mobility needs, barriers, challenges, and concerns that women, girls, and SGMs face when using NJ TRANSIT,
- Develop recommendations on what can be done to address the concerns, challenges, and needs of women, girls, and SGM riders so changes can be incorporated into the design of both public transportation infrastructure, such as bus stops, train, and light rail stations, as well as rolling stock,
- Identify ways to improve safety and security for women, girls, and SGMs, and improve customer-facing employee training to better understand how to serve these populations without bias or discrimination and with an understanding of the unique needs of these populations.

## Summary of findings

The following is a summary of key findings from the research:

### ***What did we learn from the literature review and peer agency outreach?***

#### **Women's travel**

- According to the National Household Travel Survey, women account for 55 percent of transit riders in the U.S. U.S. women are more likely to use bus and other roadway modes than men who use rail more, and women are more likely to make multiple stops between the journey to and from work. (1)

- Women take more trips per day than men and have more exposure to travel burdens, such as cost, stress, and safety risks. Their trips are more varied and more likely to serve the needs of someone else. Women are also more likely to be carless and to carpool, and more likely to travel mid-day and to trip chain than men. (2)
- Women are less likely to have a driver's license, more likely to report perceived danger at night, more likely to identify fear of crime and poor sidewalk conditions as barriers to walking. They are also more likely to use more than one mode to travel in any given day. (3)
- Women make more and shorter trips, often with children and packages, and women are more likely to travel during off-peak hours due to higher caregiving responsibilities. However, off-peak hours often have lower transit frequency, exposing women to long wait times, security threats, and physical tiring. (4)
- Identity related behavioral differences in travel have financial implications. For example, women in New York City spend an average \$26 -50 more than men on transportation per month because women's experiences on transit lead them to make different transportation choices than men such as mode shifting which can be more costly. (5)

### **Travel by SGMs**

- A 2022 Gallup poll found that 7.2 percent of U.S. adults and nearly 20 percent of Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2004) identify as part of the queer community. The proportion of U.S. adults who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community has doubled over the past decade and is expected to grow in future years. At the same time, most surveys don't collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity. This leaves a large gap in understanding how these traits impact travel decisions. (6)
- Individuals in same-sex coupled relationships walk, bike, carpool, and use transit more than individuals in opposite-sex coupled relationships. These patterns persist after controlling for other individual and neighborhood characteristics. (7)
- A 2015 analysis of data from U.S. Transgender Survey found that two thirds of the respondents used public transit in the prior year. Thirty four percent of respondents had one or more negative experiences (denied equal treatment or service, verbally harassed, or physical attacked) when using public transportation where employees thought or knew they were transgender. (8)
- SGMs often incur hidden costs to travel safely, such as compromising their identity, reducing their visibility, or experiencing heightened levels of fear. Like women, LGBTQ+ people may also sustain additional financial costs by foregoing the use of public transit altogether in favor of more expensive taxis or rideshare services, to avoid feelings of unsafety on public transit. (9)

- Compared to gay men, lesbians, bisexual, and trans women more often contend with economic disadvantage, employment discrimination, and trans-misogyny which impacts mobility. Gender identities associated more with masculinity enjoy greater spatial mobility. (9)

### **Harassment and discrimination**

- Harassment, discrimination, and violence are major concerns for women and SGMs who ride public transit. However, these experiences are often underreported, so agencies may not perceive this to be a problem. (10)
- Women who experience frightening situations while using transit adopt strategies to avoid certain destinations, routes, and travel modes to prevent situations that may result in male violence. (11) In a New York City study, 75 percent of women survey respondents reporting having experienced harassment or theft on public transportation. (5)
- A 2017 survey of the LGBTQ+ New Yorkers found that 47 percent of respondents believed they had been denied equal treatment or services or been verbally or physically harassed in public as a result of their gender identity or sexual orientation. (12)
- A similar survey in San Francisco found that 14-15 percent of lesbians and gay men, 21 percent bisexual respondents, 40 percent of transgender women, 27 percent of transgender men, and 28 percent for genderqueer and non-binary respondents feel unsafe on public transit either “all of the time” or “more often than safe” (13)
- Women and SGMs often must do things to avoid harassment and feelings of unsafety, including more careful trip planning, switching modes, traveling at different hours, behaving differently in public, and hiding identity characteristics.

### **Leading practices**

- A number of transportation agencies throughout the world have investigated and taken action to address the unique needs of women and girls that use public transport systems. Examples, include: LA Metro, Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Transport for London, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- The most advanced U.S. example is LA Metro, which established a women and girls governing council in 2017. The council is comprised of 60 women and men that work for the agency in various departments. The council’s mission is to apply a “gender lens” to Metro’s policies and decision making. The council evaluates Metro as an employer, a service provider, and a catalyst for economic development in the LA region. They meet monthly and work to identify gaps and barriers related to gender and recommend solutions to Metro’s CEO. (14)
- In 2019, LA Metro published the results of their *Understanding how women travel study*. The study involved a review of national literature and secondary data, a customer survey,

three focus groups, 100 hours of participant observations, three participatory workshops with Metro riders and a number of “pop-up” engagements. The study confirmed that women’s travel in the Los Angeles region was similar to that documented in national research and collected data on how women in Los Angeles felt about safety, and their opinions about access, convenience, comfort, and reliability. Customers also shared ideas for how LA Metro could improve. (2)

- In 2022, LA Metro released Metro’s Gender Action Plan which makes recommendations to address the barriers and challenges identified in their 2019 women’s travel study. Recommendations cover staffing, safety and security, fare policies, station, stop, and vehicle design, service changes and future investments. (15)
- According to LA Metro staff, some keys to their success include disaggregating gender data whenever feasible, having a dedicated staff person to advance the action agenda and facilitate internal coordination, deploying a “gender analysis tool” which provide LA Metro staff with a gender lens checklist to inform decisions across the agency, and establishing performance metrics for each recommended strategy, which can be monitored over time to assess progress.

### ***What did we learn from NJ TRANSIT customers?***

#### **Travel behavior in general**

- Women travel more days per week for all trip purposes than men.
- Men take transit more often for work trips and are more likely to take rail.
- Men and women are near evenly split in terms of transit use for other trip purposes.
- Women use Uber/Lyft/Taxi more often than men for various trip purposes.
- SGMs travel fewer days per week for work than either men or women overall.

#### **Travel using NJ TRANSIT**

- More than two-thirds of survey respondents reported being regular riders, using NJ TRANSIT to make trips on a daily or weekly basis.
- The most common trip purpose was to go to work. This was true for women, men and SGMs. Men reported work trips at a slightly higher rate than women and SGMs. The second most common trip was for recreation/entertainment purposes.
- The vast majority of survey respondents started their NJ TRANSIT trip from home. This was true for women, men and SGMs.

### **Traveling with children**

- Approximately 15 percent of survey respondents reported regularly traveling with children 17 years old or younger. Women were more likely to report caregiver responsibilities while using NJ TRANSIT than either men or SGMs.
- Less than half of women and SGMs agreed that it was “easy to get around,” or “easy to get on/off vehicles” when traveling with children. Fewer than 20 percent agreed that “there were enough family-friendly restrooms at stations/stops,” and only about one-third of women and SGMs agreed that “other riders are courteous to people traveling with children.”
- More than half of women and SGMs regularly travel with children reported altering their travel times and about one third said they used different stops when traveling with children. A slight majority of women and SGMs that travel with children agreed that it would be good to have designated place to park strollers.
- The experiences of men differed from that of women and SGMs. Men were consistently more likely to report more positive experiences when traveling with children.

### **Comfort and convenience**

- While a majority of respondents, 59 percent of women, 62 percent of men and 56 percent of SGMs, agreed that “NJ TRANSIT feels comfortable” while traveling an important minority of respondents did not or were neutral in response to this question.
- Significant majorities of women, men, and SGMs agreed with the statements NJ TRANSIT employees “are courteous” and “treat me with respect,” while only 35 percent of women, 38 percent of men and 33 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “other riders are courteous.”
- Only about one-third of respondents, 31 percent of women, 37 percent of men, and 31 percent of SGMs, agreed that “NJ TRANSIT employees respond quickly to incidents.”
- Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the cleanliness of facilities. Only 38 percent of women, 40 percent of men, and 35 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “waiting areas and public space at facilities are clean.”
- The vast majority for respondents had negative opinions regarding restrooms. Twenty percent of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed that “restrooms are clean.” Only 25 percent of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed that “restrooms feel safe.”

## **Concerns about safety and security<sup>1</sup>**

- The vast majority of NJ TRANSIT customers surveyed were not concerned about safety or security. With that said, a significant number of customers, 29 percent of women, 20 percent of men and 33 percent of SGMs indicated that they have felt concerned about safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT services.
- Cisgender women were 1.6 times more likely to have a safety or security concern than cisgender men.
- Transgender and gender non-conforming persons were 1.7 times more likely to have a safety or security concern than cisgender men.
- LGBTQ+ persons were 1.5 times more likely to have a safety or security concern than straight persons.
- People using NJ TRANSIT Light Rail to get to work were nearly 3 times (2.8) as likely to have a safety or security concern than those using NJ TRANSIT bus, rail, Access Link, or other non-NJ TRANSIT modes.
- Concerns about safety and security were more prevalent at night when it is dark outside.
- Women and SGMs were more likely to be concerned about safety and security both during the day and at night. This was true traveling to their boarding stop/station, while using station/stop parking, while waiting at a stop/station, on the vehicle, and traveling from their alighting stop to their final destination.
- Both women and SGMs felt least safe using station/stop parking, waiting at their origin stop/station, and traveling from their alighting station to their final destination. Only about half of women and SGMs said they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” in these situations.
- Only about half of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed with the statement “stops/stations have adequate lighting.” As might be expected, a majority of customers reported feeling safer when others are around.
- Sixty three percent of women, 54 percent of men, and 58 percent of SGMs, reported feeling safer “when other customers are around.”
- Fifty seven percent of women, 61 percent of men and 47 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “I feel safer when NJ TRANSIT police are around,” and 57 percent of

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the topics of both safety and security are referenced. Generally, “safety” refers to physical safety related to injuries like trips and falls or the physical condition of one’s surroundings, including pavement, lighting, and snow removal. NJ TRANSIT’s Safety Department addresses these types of concerns. “Security” refers to personal security related to criminal activity, suspicious behavior, or disorderly conduct, and is addressed by NJ TRANSIT’s Police Department.

women, 52 percent of men, and 60 percent of SGMs agreed that they “feel safer when other NJ TRANSIT employees are around.”

- While a majority of women and men agreed they felt safer when NJ TRANSIT police were around, less than half of SGMs said the same. Further, while men were more likely to feel safer when police are present, SGMs were more likely to feel safer when other NJ TRANSIT employees are present. When asked about the number of police officers present while using NJ TRANSIT services, very few respondents agreed with the statement “there are too many officers,” while 53 percent of women, 48 percent of men, and 43 percent of SGMs agreed “there are too few officers.”
- Cisgender men are statistically more likely to feel safer in the presence of police than women and gender minorities. In particular, cisgender men are over two times (2.3) as likely to agree with the statement that they feel safer with NJ TRANSIT police than gender minorities.
- LGBTQ+ respondents were 1.4 times less likely to report feeling safe with police presence, compared to straight respondents.
- As age increased, respondents tended to report feeling safer with police presence.
- Race was generally not found to be a significant variable in determining feelings of safety and security when police are present, although, Asians were slightly more likely to feel safer with police presence (1.4 times) than whites.
- Respondents who used NJ TRANSIT Light Rail were more likely to feel safer with police presence than those using other NJ TRANSIT modes.
- Women were more likely than men and SGMs to say that there are “too few” officers and SGMs are more likely to say there are “too many” officers.
- A majority of respondents agreed that security cameras make them feel safe and less than a quarter of respondents agreed with the statement “there are enough security cameras.”

### **Experiences with harassment/assault**

- The vast majority of survey respondents use NJ TRANSIT services without experiencing harassment or assault. However, approximately 13 percent or nearly 1,000 survey respondents, reported having experienced harassment/assault in the past while using NJ TRANSIT services.
- Of those respondents that have experienced past harassment/assault, 32 percent reported the incident happened “only one time,” while 61 percent reported it happening, “but not often,” six percent reported experiencing harassment/assault “a least half the time” they ride.” Several respondents reported being harassed “every time” they ride.

Women and SGMs were more likely to report frequent incidents of harassment/assault, with harassment/assault among SGMs the most prevalent.

- Cisgender women were 1.5 times as likely to have been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared cisgender men.
- Trans/gender non-conforming were 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to men.
- LGBTQ+ persons are 2.1 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to straight persons.
- Persons aged 35+ were more likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to persons under 35 years old.
- Respondents using NJ TRANSIT Light Rail were nearly 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT than people who took NJ TRANSIT Buses to work.
- Respondents who rode NJ TRANSIT frequently were nearly 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted compared to those who rode infrequently.
- In terms of the types of harassment that occur, the most commonly reported type among women, men and SGMs was verbal comments, including slurs. Also common were invading personal space, blocking passage, and staring/leering. Less common but still frequently mentioned forms of harassment/assault were more serious in nature. These included verbal comments of a sexual nature, being followed and unwanted/unwelcome touching or brushing. Two thirds of respondents with past experience with harassment/assault indicated that the incident(s) occurred within the past 12 months.
- Most incidents of harassment/assault go unreported. Only 15 percent of women and SGMs and 18 percent of men that have experienced harassment/assault reported the incident(s) to police.
- The reasons given for not reporting the incidents to police were varied, but the most common reasons given were that the victims felt reporting “would not have made a difference,” or they “did not think it was a big deal at the time.” Women and SGMs were more likely to cite these reasons than men.
- Importantly, other common reasons for not reporting the incidents were because the victims “did not know who to report to” or “how to report it.” SGMs were more likely than women or men to say they “feared interacting with authorities” or were “uncomfortable sharing what happened.”
- A majority of respondents reported fear that they might be injured or harmed during the incident and more than 20 percent feared for their lives. This fear was more common



among women and SGMs than men. Only about 5 percent of respondents reported that they were actually physically injured during the incident.

- It was common for victims to report that the incident cause them to “experience anxiety worse than before” the incident happened. Again, women and SGMs were more likely than men to report post-incident anxiety. Less common, was feeling “depressed more than before” the incident happened.
- Sixty two percent of women and 67 percent of SGMs “believed that the harassment/assault happened because of their “gender identity or expression.” Men were far less likely to attribute the harassment/assault to this reason.
- Women and SGMs were also more likely to believe that the incidents occurred because of their “physical size or stature.” Men were more likely than women and SGMs to say the harassment/assault occurred because of their “race” or “economic status.”
- Many survey respondents, whether or not they have experienced past harassment/assault, reported altering their behavior and taking actions to avoid being harassed or assaulted. The most common strategies mentioned were “avoid making eye contact,” “move to another seat or location,” “alert others about travel plans,” and “choose a seat away from other people.” Many also reported traveling at certain time of day and avoiding nighttime travel. Men were more likely than women or SGMs to report that they “do not take precautions or alter my behavior.”

## **Discussion and Recommendations**

The goal of this study was to investigate how women and SGMs travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. While women and SGMs may face common socio-economic and structural barriers regarding travel needs, each group faces their own unique challenges. This research collected and analyzed identity-specific data that documents how women and SGMs travel using NJ TRANSIT and how their experiences in some cases differ from men and cisgender individuals. Insights from the analysis can be incorporated into future planning and decision-making.

This research provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of the barriers and challenges faced by women and SGMs that use public transit. This can lead to solutions that improve the travel experiences, safety, and security of women and SGMs and, ultimately, for all customers that use NJ TRANSIT. Implementation of the strategies recommended below also has the potential to improve the standing of NJ TRANSIT in terms of customer experience as well as real and perceived safety and security, perhaps leading to increased ridership.

Based on the results of this research, NJ TRANSIT decision-makers should consider implementing these and potentially other strategies to improve the travel experiences of women and SGMs using NJ TRANSIT services. The following recommendations are made in the spirit

of renewing NJ TRANSIT's commitment to customer service, valuing diversity in NJ TRANSIT's customer base, prioritizing customers' real and perceived physical safety and personal security, and being open to experimenting with new approaches. More detailed descriptions of proposed recommendations are included in the Discussion and Recommendations section of this report.

### **Policy, planning and human resources**

- Develop and deploy a gender analysis tool/checklist to better integrate gender-inclusive perspectives into transportation projects and decision-making.
- Enhance training for NJ TRANSIT front-line staff to help employees appreciate the transit experience from the perspective of women and SGMs, be aware of and look out for potential incidents of harassment targeted at women and SGMs and be prepared to respond to customer requests for assistance. Provide “ally” pins to those that complete LGBTQ+ training.
- Encourage the development of land uses such as grocery stores or retail within and adjacent to transit stations and stops to ease the burdens of travel for those responsible for household maintenance duties, which are more likely to be women than men. Leverage transit-oriented development and transit-friendly planning efforts to support this strategy.
- Adjust transfer policy to accommodate trip chaining to eliminate or reduce the financial burden customers experience when relying on transit to meet daily travel needs.

### **Facilities**

- Conduct station/stop access, design, and safety assessment and use the results as the basis for a multiyear, systematic station improvement program. Priority areas should include improving signage, upgrading lighting, and increasing the number of visible security cameras present in stations and at stops where needed.
- Open more restrooms, update restroom design and maintenance standards to include elements like changing stations, varied sink levels, and vending machines for toiletries, including diapers.
- Consider creating “amenity zones” on rail platforms and in bus terminals where amenities such as seating, lighting, security personnel, and security technology (e.g., emergency call boxes and security cameras) are concentrated in one location where customers can congregate which can increase a sense of comfort and safety while waiting for their train or bus.
- Explore creative ways to increase the level of amenities at bus stops and improve bus stop maintenance. One way this might be achieved is to implement an adopt-a-stop program that encourages partnerships with community-based organizations, businesses,

and other organizations to add lighting and other amenities and help maintain areas around bus stops while promoting a sense of community pride.

- Increase employee and police presence in stations and on vehicles to promote safety and security.
- Address cell service/Wi-Fi gaps to ensure customers' ability to request help and report incidents of harassment.
- Consider implementing emergency call boxes where cellular service and Wi-Fi is not available or unreliable and to provide a way for those without cell phones to request assistance.

## **Service and operations**

- Encourage bus and train operators to assert respectful, positive authority. During the focus groups some customers highlighted how the attitude and presence of the bus operator or train conductor can reinforce respect for the customer while at the same time projecting authority and presence. This sends the message that the employee cares about the customer experience and is watching the conduct of customers while they travel on NJ TRANSIT. One way to do this is to make friendly announcements to an entire bus or train which can signal to passengers that the operator and conductors are present and aware of their surroundings, which might discourage harassment and help to create an environment where women and SGM passengers feel comfortable.
- Explore installation of silent alarm strip or button on new buses and trains to provide a discrete method of alerting authorities that assistance is needed.
- Update vehicle design standards to allow for new vehicle interior configurations (e.g., seats, handles, straps, etc.) that better address customer needs.
- Clean/repair vehicle more often to ensure a comfortable and safe customer travel experience.
- Allow flexible alighting of buses at night and then make customers aware that the option is available.
- Adopt a family-friendly stroller policy that does not require strollers to be collapsed.

- Provide better scheduling, especially for transfers to reduce time spent waiting at stops and stations.

## Marketing, communications, public and government affairs

- Add a visible “travel tips” section to NJ TRANSIT’s customer facing website. Travel tips could address things like traveling with children and how to instructions for new and infrequent riders.
- Improve the process of reporting incidents of harassment.
- Collect, report, and integrate inclusive data in planning and policy activities, including transportation/travel behavior modeling to account for gender differences in how customers use NJ TRANSIT.
- Identify opportunities to engage women and SGMs in service and project planning.
- Continue the agency’s commitment to inclusive customer service.
- Expand and build on the Ride Kind initiative to include anti-sexual and LGBTQ+ harassment messaging.

The following table categorizes recommended actions by topic area and identifies whether each action is short-, medium-, or long-term in nature.

Table 1 – Recommended actions for NJ TRANSIT

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Timeline	Justification
<b>Policy, Planning, and Human Resources</b>	Develop and deploy a gender analysis tool/checklist	Medium-term/moderate	Requires coordination with internal teams and training for staff
	Enhance training for NJ TRANSIT front-line staff	Short-to medium term/easy	Can be incorporated into existing training programs
	Encourage development of household-serving uses near transit	Ongoing TOD work	Requires partnerships with developers and local governments
	Adjust transfer policy to accommodate trip chaining	Medium-to long term/moderate	Policy review and fare structure adjustments required
<b>Facilities</b>	Conduct station/stop access, design, and safety assessment	Medium-term/moderate	Requires audit and funding allocation

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Timeline	Justification
	Use assessment results for systematic station improvements	Long-term/challenging	Large-scale capital investment required
	Open more restrooms and update restroom standards	Long-term/challenging	Requires funding and construction approvals
	Create "amenity zones" at stations	Medium-term/moderate	Design and implementation require funding and planning
	Increase amenities at bus stops	Medium-term/moderate	Partnerships and funding required
	Increase employee and police presence	Medium-term/moderate	Staffing and budget considerations needed
	Address cell service/Wi-Fi gaps	Long-term/challenging	Infrastructure upgrades and coordination with providers required
	Implement emergency call boxes	Medium-term/moderate	Requires installation at key locations
	Address loitering and homelessness issues	Long-term/challenging	Requires coordination with social services and policy changes
Service and Operations	Encourage bus/train operators to assert positive authority	Short-term/easy	Can be addressed with training and messaging
	Install silent alarm buttons on buses/trains	Long-term/challenging	Requires procurement and retrofitting of vehicles
	Update vehicle design standards	Long-term/challenging	Requires coordination with manufacturers and capital investment
	Increase cleaning and maintenance of vehicles	Medium-term/moderate	Needs funding and staffing increases
	Allow flexible alighting of buses at night	Short-term/easy	Policy change that can be implemented quickly
	Adopt a family-friendly stroller policy	Medium-term/moderate	Requires policy revision and driver training
	Improve scheduling for transfers and reduce wait times	Medium-term/moderate	Needs service analysis and potential resource allocation

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Timeline	Justification
<b>Marketing, Communications, Public &amp; Government Affairs</b>	Add a visible "travel tips" section to NJ TRANSIT website	Short-term/easy	Simple website update
	Improve process of reporting harassment incidents	Medium-term/moderate	Requires app/website enhancements and internal process changes
	Collect, report, and integrate inclusive data	Medium-term/moderate	Requires updates to data collection processes
	Engage women and SGMs in service planning	Medium-term/moderate	Requires targeted outreach and sustained engagement
	Expand NJ TRANSIT's "Ride with Pride" initiative	Short-term/easy	Can be integrated into existing outreach efforts
	Expand the "Ride Kind" campaign	Short-term/easy	Can be expanded with new messaging

### Recommended next steps

This study represents a first step in what will need to be a sustained process for addressing the needs of women and SGMs that use NJ TRANSIT services. The following are recommended next steps:

- Cultivate buy-in from senior leaders.
- Formalize the internal stakeholder committee into an ongoing advisory body that can support interdepartmental collaboration, advise senior leadership and support the development of an implementation action plan.
- Develop an implementation action plan that lays out implementation steps, assign responsibilities, set a schedule, establish a process to monitor progress, measure success, and identify resources to support implementation.
- Identify easy wins and celebrate success in ways that can help to build momentum for further implementation.

See the Discussion and Recommendations section of the report for more detail.

## **BACKGROUND**

According to the National Household Travel Survey, women account for 55 percent of transit riders in the United States. (1) LA Metro's "Understanding How Women Travel" study found that women use the Metro system more. Women have different travel patterns than men and have different commute demands. (2) Similar research by Transport for London's series of reports "Understanding the Travel Needs of London's Diverse Communities" identified differences in trip making by gender including more and shorter trips, often with children and packages, as well as personal safety and security concerns. (16) The NYU's Rudin Center's "The Pink Tax on Transportation" report found that women in New York City spend an average \$26 to \$50 more on transportation per month for safety and security reasons, and more if they are the family's main caregiver. The study also suggests that women's experiences on transit have led them to make different transportation choices than men. (5)

These studies have determined that women have a disproportionate burden of the household's transport needs, while at the same time having more limited access to available means of transport. Their relative need for transportation and difficulties encountered in transit use may vary across changes in age, employment status, and family responsibilities. A full understanding of how people of all genders travel cannot be achieved without studying the LGBTQ+ communities travel patterns and experiences.

Through this project, NJ TRANSIT seeks to understand how women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer plus community, sometimes referred to as sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. While women and SGMs may face common socio-economic and structural barriers regarding travel needs, each demographic may have their own mobility needs and they may face their own unique challenges when traveling. Ultimately, meeting the needs of each group may demand different solutions.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this research is to gather and analyze identity-specific data that reflects how women and SGMs travel that can be incorporated into future planning and decision-making. The objectives of this research are to:

- Identify and understand the mobility needs, barriers, challenges, and concerns that women, girls, and SGMs face when using NJ TRANSIT,
- Develop recommendations on what can be done to address the concerns, challenges, and needs of women, girls, and SGM riders so changes can be incorporated into the design of both public transportation infrastructure, such as bus stops, train, and light rail stations, as well as rolling stock,

- Identify ways to improve safety and security for women, girls, and SGMs, and improve customer-facing employee training to better understand how to serve these populations without bias or discrimination and with an understanding of the unique needs of these populations.

## **INTRODUCTION**

To achieve the research objectives for this study, the research team implemented a mixed methods research approach that included both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The team completed a comprehensive literature review, conducted structured interviews with peer agencies, convened six focus groups, analyzed a range of secondary data, and conducted a statewide travel behavior survey. Once the research tasks were complete, the team presented findings to an internal NJ TRANSIT stakeholder committee and collaborated with the committee to identify and prioritize recommendations. More detailed research methods and findings are presented in the sections that follow.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND PEER AGENCY OUTREACH**

To gain a foundational understanding of the current state of knowledge regarding the travel needs and experiences of women and SGMs, the research team conducted a comprehensive review of available literature. The aim of the literature review is to summarize past studies and research about how different groups travel by public transit and other modes. Other topics addressed include the terminology used to describe SGMs, gender history and dynamics, and patterns and experiences of harassment and discrimination by women and SGMs in different settings, including while using transit. Next, the literature review explores the intersectionality of travel needs and experiences based on race, income, transit-reliance, and differing abilities. Finally, the literature review discusses policy and planning recommendations aimed at improving transit experiences for women and SGMs.

To complete the literature review, the research team used an array of scholar tools, including numerous full-text publications and databases (such as ProQuest, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library) available through Rutgers University's library system and the Transport Research International Documentation (TRID) database maintained by the Transportation Research Board. The research team also used various search engines, such as Google Scholar and others to conduct a multitude of key word searches to explore what academic and grey literature (i.e., materials and research produced by organizations outside of the traditional commercial or academic publishing and distribution channels) resources.

### **Key terms**

A core component of this research is to understand better how gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation interact to define mobility needs and travel experiences. As



such, an important first step was to investigate and document current definitions for a variety of key terms. The following is a summary of those terms and definitions.

- **Cisgender** refers to people whose current gender identity corresponds to the sex they were assigned at birth. (17)
- **Gender** is a multidimensional construct that links gender identity, gender expression, and social and cultural expectations about status, characteristics, and behavior that are associated with sex traits. (17)
- **Gender Expression** refers to how people express their gender identity. Everyone expresses their gender identity in different ways: for example, in the way they dress, the length of their hair, the way they act or speak and in their choice of whether or not to wear make-up. (18)
- **Gender identity** refers to how people see and identify themselves; for example, some people identify as female; some people identify as male; some people as a combination of genders; as a gender other than male or female; or as no gender. For example, transgender girls identify as girls but were classified as males when they were born. Transgender boys identify as boys but were classified female when they were born. Everyone has a gender identity. (18)
- **Gender nonconforming** refers to people who do not follow other people's ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male sex they were assigned at birth. (18)
- **Intersex** refers to people whose sex traits (physiological traits) do not all correspond to the same sex. (17)
- **Mobility** simply defined is the ability or capacity to move. (19) In the context of transportation planning, mobility is the ability to move people and goods from point to point. Mobility is sometimes contrasted with the related concept of **accessibility** which is the ease of reaching goods, services, activities, and destinations (20), which may or may not require transportation. For example, one can access work remotely without needing to move from one location to another.
- **Nonbinary** is an umbrella term for gender identities that lie outside the gender binary of male or female. (17)
- **Sex** is a multidimensional construct based on anatomical and physiological traits (sex traits) that include external genitalia, secondary sex characteristics, gonads, chromosomes, and hormones. (17)
- **Sexual orientation** is a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction, identity, and behavior. (17) Terms often used to describe sexual orientation include:

- **Straight** or heterosexual are terms used to refer to individuals that are emotionally or sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex or gender.
- **Gay** is a term used to refer to individuals that are emotionally or sexually attracted to people of the same sex or gender (The term is most often used for a man who's emotionally or sexually attracted to men.)
- **Lesbian** is a term used to refer to a woman who is emotionally or sexually attracted to women (Some women may also identify as being gay.)
- **Bi or bisexual person** are terms used to refer to individuals that are emotionally or sexually attracted to both men and women.
- **Pansexual** is a term used to refer to an individual that is emotionally or sexually attracted to any gender or sex.
- **Asexual** refers to an individual that is not sexually attracted to others and may or may not be emotionally or romantically attracted others (21).
- **Transgender or Trans** individuals refers to people whose current gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. (17)
- **Two-Spirit** is an intertribal umbrella term used by Indigenous people to serve as an English-language placeholder for tribally specific gender and sexual orientation identities that are centered in tribal worldviews, practices, and knowledge. Because Two-Spirit is a term by and for Indigenous peoples and is culturally anchored with particular meaning and, potentially, social status, it is not appropriate for use by non-Indigenous populations. (17)
- **Queer** is a word that describes sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people may all identify with the word queer. Queer is sometimes used to express that sexuality and gender can be complicated, change over time, and might not fit neatly into either/or identities, like male or female, gay or straight. (22)

Sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) include, but are not limited to, individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, transgender, Two-Spirit, queer, and/or intersex. Individuals with same-sex or -gender attractions or behaviors and those with a difference in sex development are also included. These populations also encompass those who do not self-identify with one of these terms but whose sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or reproductive development is characterized by non-binary constructs of sexual orientation, gender, and/or sex. (23)

### **Factors that influence travel patterns and needs**

Decades of research has demonstrated that travel patterns and needs and transit utilization vary based on a variety of factors, including sociodemographic characteristics such as gender, age, race and ethnicity, household size, household income, number of children and number of

vehicles available. For example, an analysis of 2001 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) data found that Hispanic households generate more trips per household than Asian, Black, or White non-Hispanic households, while non-Hispanic White households generate the highest per person number of person trips. The same data shows that Black, Asian, and Hispanic individuals use public transit at substantially higher rates than Whites. Further, "...per person, Hispanics walked 75 percent more miles on average than all other ethnic groups." (24) Data from the 2017 HNTS showed that these patterns persist. (25)

In addition to race and ethnicity, household income is a significant factor that influences travel. Data from the 2001 NHTS showed that households with income above \$75,000 per year made significantly more person trips annually than low-income households that earned less than \$15,000. In fact, higher-income households made nearly 1,400 more trips annually than the average household, while low-income households made about 1,500 fewer trips than the average household. Nearly 20 years later, the magnitude of difference has converged somewhat but in 2017 similar patterns were evident. Low-income households made 926 fewer annual trips than the average household, while higher-income households made 893 more trips. (26) Average trip length also increases with household income for both auto and transit travelers. (25)

Vehicle ownership impacts individual and household travel characteristics. For instance, the number of vehicles available in a household has a dramatic impact on mode choice. Data from the 2017 NHTS indicates that the vast majority of trips taken by persons living in households with zero vehicles are non-motorized (47.9 percent) or transit (25.4 percent) trips, while 8.7 percent are non-motorized and one percent are transit trips among households with three or more vehicles available. (25)

National data also shows that trip making varies based on gender. Since 1990, in the U.S., women have consistently made more annual person trips per person than men for all trip purposes except to and from work. The number of person trips taken per person annually has been falling for both men and women since 1995. At the same time, daily person miles traveled by men is consistently higher than women. (26) Similarly, age effects how much we travel, with daily person miles increasing steadily from age 16 to 35 and then declining steadily from age 36 through older adult life. (26)

In addition to sociodemographic factors, activity participation has also been shown to influence travel behavior. For example, Lu and Pas used activity survey data to model the relationships between sociodemographic characteristics, activity participation, and number of trips taken, trip chaining, travel time and mode choice. They found that age, gender, employment status and number of children were "systematically important in explaining variations in activity participation," which in turn influenced the need to and the characteristics of travel. More specifically, they found that employed persons spent less time traveling for non-work purposes, households with children traveled less for out-of-home activities (defined as recreation or amusements that take place outside of the home), and women made more trips related to maintenance activities such as food shopping, medical, and other trips. (27)

## Travel patterns, needs, and experiences of women

Research in gender and transportation theory examines the travel and mobility of women as they move through the built environment. In this literature, there are research areas that cover topics including travel patterns and needs, fear of male violence, gender shaping mobility and mobility shaping gender (or, how gender norms shape people's travel patterns and how travel impacts gender expression; for example, if a gender-nonbinary person has less mobility because of their gender expression, they may adjust their physical appearance to achieve more mobility) (28) Women's mobility is different than men's, impacting opportunities to participate in urban life. (29) COVID-19 caused the worsening of inequalities between men and women, including mobility. (30) This is especially true for women who are also situated within other marginalized groups based on other facets of identity such as race, age, ability, and location. This will be addressed using a lens of intersectionality in the section below.

Women's travel patterns are impacted by their circumstances, experiences, and decisions. For example, a 2019 study conducted by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) found that women are less likely to have a driver's license than men, are more likely to report perceived danger at night, and are more likely to identify fear of crime and poor sidewalk conditions as barriers to walking. The same study found that women are more likely to use more than one mode to travel in any given day and that women are more likely to trip chain. (3)

LA Metro's "Understanding How Women Travel" study identified four travel behavior trends. First, women take more trips per day than men and have more exposure to travel burdens, such as cost, stress, and safety risks. Second, women's trips are more varied and more likely to serve the needs of someone else. Third, women are more likely to be carless and to carpool, and fourth, women are more likely to travel mid-day and to trip chain than men. (2)

These behavioral differences have financial implications. The NYU Rudin Center's "The Pink Tax on Transportation" report found that women in New York City spend an average \$26 to \$50 more than men on transportation per month for safety and security reasons, and more if they are their family's main caregiver. The study also suggests that women's experiences on transit lead them to make different transportation choices than men. (5) According to a study in Canada, women are also more likely to be members of the service industry with travel patterns focused on commuting that is not limited to a single core, not matching the design of many transit systems. (31)

Another thread of literature in this topic area examines how women's mobility is impacted by their experiences and fear of male violence. According to a study by Transport Scotland, women experience anticipatory anxiety usually related to potentially dangerous encounters with men. The researchers write: "Although women often found it difficult to pin-point their exact fears, most participants described feeling the need to maintain a constant state of 'vigilance', rather than feeling 'unsafe' per se." (32) Women who experience frightening situations adopt strategies to avoid certain destinations, routes, and travel modes to prevent situations that may result in male violence. (11) The NYU Rudin Center report found that 75 percent of women respondents had

experienced harassment or theft on public transportation. (5) Women-only transportation is often presented as a solution to increase women's mobility and use of public transport. However, this approach is critiqued as it reproduces ideas that women are to blame for gender-based violence, rather than men. (33)

Studies on the topic of gender shaping mobility have found that women bear a disproportionate burden of a household's transport needs, while at the same time facing more limited access to available means of transport. Miralles-Guash et. al. examined the everyday mobility of women in urban and rural territories using a travel survey from Spain, identifying the ways that gender shapes mobility and vice versa. (34) Their findings show that women make more trips, women travel by more sustainable means of transport, including walking and public transit, and women travel for a more diverse set of reasons than men. (34) Further, they argue that women's mobility patterns do not necessarily reflect limitations when compared to men's, but rather provide a model for more environmentally sustainable mobility practices. (34) In other words, understanding women's travel as more environmentally sustainable suggests that planners should look towards women's behaviors and patterns to inform more sustainable planning, rather than continuing to consider men's travel as the model.

In turn, mobility and immobility shape the creation, meaning, and challenging of gender. Hanson provides an overview of this literature in the field of geography, citing works that examine a historical association of women and femininity with home spaces and men and masculinity with public spaces, a binary challenged in theory and in practice. (35) Mobility is tied to opportunity, and there are empowering benefits of mobility that shape gendered experiences. In other words, lack of mobility reproduces gendered inequalities, and mobility allows gender norms to be challenged and changed through time and space.

While the mobility of girls appears less well studied in the literature there has been some effort to address this topic. Children are present in transportation spaces, but they are marginalized in spatial politics such as policy making and planning. (36) The mobility of girls is constrained because of gendered difference. For example, parents may allow boys to travel to more spaces across the city, while daughters are limited because of fear of victimization. (37) This example also illustrates the ways mobility shapes gender, as it reproduces ideas of women as victims, women as weaker than men, and women as being spatially limited.

### ***Use of transit by women***

The differences in women's travel patterns and mobility impacts their use of transit. According to the National Household Travel Survey, women account for 55 percent of transit riders in the United States. (38) Several cities, including Los Angeles and London, and countries, including Ireland and Canada, have conducted research that reports on the travel and transit needs of women. As noted above, LA Metro's "Understanding How Women Travel" study found that women use the Los Angeles Metro system more, have different travel patterns, and have different commute demands than men. (2)

Women in the United States are more likely to use bus and other roadway modes than men, while men are more likely to use rail modes. (1) Women are more likely to make multiple stops between the journey to and from work. Women also use different modes of transit for their needs. For example, a study of Montreal's light-rail transit suggests that women are less likely to use light-rail transit, especially for leisure and discretionary travel. (39) This study suggests that it is important to consider who benefits from certain types of transit investments. Based on the National Household Travel Survey, Jin and Yu suggest that transportation agencies can instead examine gendered perspectives on transit, such as women aged 40 and older who would benefit from on-demand shuttles and better facilities, or women 65 and older who would benefit from bus stops located closer to senior centers and improvements to physical amenities such as ramps.

Similar research published in Transport for London's series of reports titled "Understanding the Travel Needs of London's Diverse Communities" identified differences in trip-making by gender including more and shorter trips for women, often with children and packages, as well as personal safety and security concerns. (16) In Canada, researchers identified that women's travel often takes place during off-peak hours due to higher caregiving responsibilities. (31) However, off-peak hours often have lower transit frequency, exposing women to long wait times, security threats, and physical tiring. (4)

Gender also impacts perceptions of transit. Transport Infrastructure Ireland's report "Travelling in a Woman's Shoes" found that public transportation was not viewed as attractive to women from a functional and experiential perspective. (40) This is especially true for women who, as they age, take on more work, household, and childcare responsibilities. In "Understanding How Women Travel," researchers discuss reliability as a major issue for women using transit. Unreliable service exacerbates women's safety and security concerns and financial burdens as women experience pass-ups, no shows, and late buses. In addition, uncomfortable experiences with transit, including lack of space on transit vehicles and stops without amenities impact women's choices to use transit over other transportation modes. (2)

The topic of women, mobility, and transit is also linked to location, as remote and rural areas have less accessible public transportation. This creates transportation disadvantage for people in these communities and shapes experiences of gender. (41) It is necessary to improve transit options in rural areas where women have less access to private transportation. (34)

### **Travel patterns, needs, and experiences of SGMs**

A 2022 Gallup poll found that 7.2 percent of U.S. adults and nearly 20 percent of Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2004) identify as part of the queer community. (6) The proportion of U.S. adults who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community has doubled over the past decade and is expected to grow in future years. (6) While trends show that more people are self-identifying as SGMs, a gap in data and knowledge has become increasingly apparent.

Identifying SGMs in large public datasets can be difficult because definitions vary and most survey instruments lack questions that collect data on sexual orientation and non-binary gender identity. This is true of two of the most common datasets used in transportation research, the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS). (7) This data gap was recently highlighted in a report by New Jersey's Transgender Equality Task Force, which noted that there is a lack of gender identity data at the local, state, and federal level. One of their recommendations is for state agencies to begin collecting data to better understand the needs of LGBTQ+ New Jerseyans. (42)

Without data on non-binary gender identities or sexual orientation, traditional travel datasets have limited value when attempting to document the travel needs and experiences of SGMs. As a result, there is a paucity of literature on this topic. With that said, some researchers (43) (7) (44) have explored travel by LGBTQ+ individuals using a work around methodology.

The method uses data on cohabitation of same-sex partners to infer sexual orientation, but this method still has some limitations. For example, the approach does not capture LGBTQ+ individuals that are single or those that don't identify with a binary definition of gender and therefore their findings do not represent the full spectrum of SGMs. (7) Further, findings based on this method are also likely skewed "...older, whiter, and more highly educated" because gay and lesbians in partnered relationships are more likely to exhibit these characteristics than single gays and lesbians. (43)

Using cohabitation data from national travel datasets, various researchers have documented that individuals in same-sex coupled relationships walk, bike, carpool, and use transit more than individuals in opposite-sex coupled relationships, and that these patterns persist after controlling for other individual and neighborhood characteristics. (7) (44) In a 2008 analysis of ACS and NHTS data, Klein and Smart found that after controlling for various potentially explanatory variables, "men in same-sex couples are 12 percent more likely to carpool than similarly situated men in different-sex couples, as well as 57 percent more likely to use transit, and 65 percent more likely to commute to work by biking or walking. Lesbians are 36 percent more likely to carpool, 38 percent more likely to use transit, and 33 percent more likely to commute to work by bike and walk than are similarly situated straight women." (7)

The limited literature available suggests that the travel needs and patterns of SGMs vary from cisgender men and women. This likely derives from the complex and varied experiences of SGMs, which are not uniform but shaped by diverse gender and sexual orientations, and a variety of life circumstances. While mobility allows SGMs freedom to experience and express gender and sexuality, it is also impacted by the social and spatial hierarchies that exist across spaces.

For example, research has shown that queer and trans people are much more likely to live in poverty and are significantly more likely to live in urban places vs. rural places. (45) (46) Coupled with research about how these factors influence mode choice, one can infer that SGMs are more likely to rely on public transportation than the general population to meet their mobility needs.

This is evidenced by the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, which found that two-thirds (66 percent) of those surveyed used public transportation in the previous year, suggesting higher-than-average transit use among transgender and gender nonconforming populations. (8)

SGMs often experience aggression based on “antagonism toward non-heterosexual relationships or gender identities other than those assigned at birth.” (9) This violence can manifest as verbal harassment, physical abuse, or systemic discrimination. The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 34 percent of respondents had one or more negative experiences (denied equal treatment or service, verbally harassed, or physical attacked) when using public transportation where employees thought or knew they were transgender. (8)

While SGMs are not always explicitly excluded from mobility opportunities, they often incur hidden costs to travel safely, such as compromising their identity, reducing their visibility, or experiencing heightened levels of fear. Consequently, LGBTQ+ people may sustain additional financial costs by foregoing the use of public transit altogether in favor of more expensive modes of travel, such as taxis or rideshare services, to avoid feelings of unsafety on public transit. (9)

Within this paradigm of mobility exclusion and discrimination exist more nuanced relationships between gender, sexual orientation, and mobility. Compared to gay men, lesbians, bisexual, and trans women more often contend with economic disadvantage, employment discrimination, and trans-misogyny. This extends into the realm of transportation and mobility. (9) Though gender identity should be viewed as fluid, gender identities associated more with masculinity enjoy greater spatial mobility. Research conducted at Portland State University (PSU), which included interviews with 25 transgender individuals about their experiences on public buses, light rail trains, and streetcars in Portland, Oregon, found that transmasculine riders experienced less discrimination on transit than transfeminine individuals, who experienced “severe, invasive, and frequent forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence, including a stabbing, sexual objectification and harassment, and unprovoked physical fights.” (47) (48) These findings indicate the presence of male privilege among trans people in transit spaces and demonstrate the relationship between more feminine gender identities and greater mobility exclusion.

The role fear plays in mobility exclusion is similarly complex and dependent on an individual’s gender and sexual orientation. Case studies conducted in the United Kingdom and Israel, which included surveys and in-depth interviews, found that lesbian women prefer to travel in groups due to fear more than gay men, especially at night, while trans people prefer to travel in groups regardless of other circumstances. (9) This suggests that men’s travel behavior with respect to group travel is less influenced by fear than that of women or trans individuals. Among LGBTQ+ people in the Israel study, high levels of fear correlated with adjustments to travel behavior based on time of day, mode, or route, and thus greater mobility exclusion and negative attitudes toward transit. (9)

LGBTQ+ individuals’ perceptions of crime and danger is also influenced by their gender identity and sexual orientation. In the UK and Israel case studies, participants frequently mentioned avoiding bus travel whenever possible. The UK survey found that gay men more frequently



viewed bus travel at night as unsafe compared with lesbian women (34 percent and 25 percent, respectively). (9) The same survey found that 57 percent of trans respondents viewed bus travel at night as either unsafe or very unsafe, and that few trans people felt “very safe” on either buses or trains during the day or the night. In the Israel study, while riding the bus and walking were the most common modes of travel among participants, they were also perceived as the least safe modes, indicating that LGBTQ+ people are often obliged to travel in such a way that they experience nearly constant fear and a toll on their physical and mental health.

## **Harassment and discrimination**

Harassment, discrimination, and violence are major concerns for women and SGMs who ride public transit. However, these experiences are often underreported, so agencies may not be aware of the extent of harassment within their services. (10) Experiencing violence and harassment is devastating to the psychological, physical, and emotional wellbeing of the victim. (49) In LA metro’s study, harassment and personal security were top concerns for women transit users. (2) Public transit can be frightening because it can be difficult to escape uncomfortable or threatening situations and people are generally sitting long enough to be noticed by other passengers.

While some SGMs may choose to travel in groups because it can feel safer, traveling this way may make it easier to recognize and target SGMs. (9) In addition, it is much easier for perpetrators to violate personal boundaries in transit spaces compared to other public places like restaurants and parks because transit spaces, such as vehicles and platforms, are much more confined spaces. (48) In the UK survey described by Weintrob et. al., 83 percent of respondents had witnessed a hate crime on public transit and 31 percent had experienced a hate crime targeted at themselves. (9)

In a 2017 survey of LGBTQ+ New Yorkers conducted by the New York City Comptroller’s Office, 47 percent of respondents indicated they believed they had been denied equal treatment or services or been verbally or physically harassed in public as a result of their gender identity or sexual orientation. (50) In that same survey, respondents cited public transportation as the venue where they most frequently experience denial of equal treatment or verbal or physical harassment.

A similar survey of the LGBTQ+ community in the San Francisco Bay Area found that 14 percent of lesbian respondents feel unsafe on public transit either “all of the time” or “more often than safe”. (13) That number was 15 percent for gay respondents, 21 percent for bisexual respondents, 40 percent for transgender women respondents, 27 percent for transgender men respondents, and 28 percent for genderqueer and non-binary respondents. (13) These results mirror research showing that trans women and gender non-conforming queer people are frequently subject to acts of violence. (9)

The Portland State University (PSU) study, which included interviews with 25 trans individuals about their experiences on public buses, light rail trains, and streetcars, found that most

discrimination is primarily initiated by other passengers at stations and stops rather than by transit staff. (48) The study found that discrimination and harassment most commonly involve staring, slurs, and invasive questions about gender identity and sexuality. The study further defined major discrimination as any incident that affects an individual's ability to ride transit, which was reported by 10 of the 25 participants. Reported incidents included assaults and one instance of stabbing.

The PSU study identified common strategies trans people employ to manage incidents of discrimination and harassment on transit. Strategies ranged from moderate behavioral adjustments, such as using books, headphones, or conversations with other riders to signal a desire not to be confronted, to drastic measures including modifying gender presentation or avoiding certain types of transit, routes, or times of day. (47) (48) Of those surveyed as part of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, 39 percent of non-binary people, 35 percent of trans women, and 27 percent of trans men reported a negative experience on transit in the previous year. (8)

To avoid harassment, queer women, transfeminine, and feminine-presenting non-binary individuals may "pass" by hiding certain identity characteristics or behaving differently while riding public transit. (9) Participants in both the UK and Israel case studies indicated feeling safer and more able to defend themselves against harassment when emphasizing more masculine aspects of their appearance and behavior. However, this strategy for managing harassment necessitates the modification of one's gender expression, not only placing the burden of avoiding an altercation on the potential victim, but for transfeminine people, undermining their recognition by others as a woman.

## **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is a framework of analysis developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw to examine questions of racial inequality and patriarchy. (51) An intersectional framework provides a way to better understand the complexity of women's and SGMs' experiences with mobility and transit. Intersections of gender and sexuality impact mobility. And intersecting identities impact what type of harassment may be experienced. (32) Queer women, for example, may experience "double victimization" based on their identities, and can be at particular risk for harassment that is motivated by homophobia, sexism, or both. (9) Further, women and SGMs have identities and embodied differences beyond gender and sexuality that impact their access and ability to exist in and move between spaces. Such identities and differences include race, ethnicity, class, ability, and age. Intersections between identities can impact perceptions of mobility and access to various forms of transportation.

Class and ability shape mobility, especially when considering travel time and costs. For example, women with lower household income are more dependent on public transportation. (40) Further, higher transportation costs fall on women with children, women with disabilities, and low-income women. (2) As mentioned previously, women will adapt their travel behavior based on their obligations and to feel more safe; however, the ability to change travel behavior is often a privilege for those with more flexibility with their finances and time, and is generally not an option

for more transit-reliant populations. (31) For transgender people, negative transit experiences are more common among those living in poverty and those working in the underground economy, including currently criminalized work like sex work or drug sales. (8)

Racial and ethnic identity also appear to impact the mobility of women and SGMs. In the New York Metropolitan region for example, racially segmented labor markets result in inequities in terms of travel distance and time, where white and Asian women have shorter commute times than other groups. (52) The 2017 San Francisco Bay Area LGBTQ Community Survey found that SGMs of color feel less safe on public transit and feel less likely to be helped in public than white respondents. (13) Similarly, the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey identified variations in transit experiences by race and ethnicity, finding that 48 percent of American Indian, 45 percent of multiracial, and 39 percent of Asian respondents were especially likely to have a negative experience on public transit. (8) In the Portland State University study of transgender transit riders, among those transmasculine participants who reported less discrimination, all identified as white, suggesting that both male privilege and white privilege play a role in transit experiences. (47) In that same study, participants of color reported experiences of racism on public transit which were sometimes separate from and other times connected to their gender identity or gender expression. (47) These experiences illustrate the layered systems of oppression faced by trans people of color when navigating public spaces.

Age and location are also important facets shaping the mobility of women. For example, older women in urban areas may rely more on walking or public transport for their daily mobility, and their activities are impacted by contextual conditions such as availability of transport arrangements, facilities, and timing. (53) In more rural areas, older women are less likely to drive and more likely to use public transportation, but experience lack of transportation due to its limited availability in rural places. (54)

Based on a study of Canadian transit systems, Babbar et. al. argue that public transit systems are designed and tailored for “the predominantly able-bodied white male” and do not account for the diversity of spatial and time distribution of other riders. (31) This applies across transit domains, from the timing and placement of routes and stops to the physical design of the vehicles, often with high steps, tall overhead handles, and lack of space for strollers, wheelchairs, and other equipment. People with disabilities may struggle with seat availability, especially those that have medical equipment such as wheelchairs or mobility scooters. (31) Lubitow et al. assert that certain groups, including people with disabilities as well as mothers with young children, are not well served by public transit; further, they argue that the ‘ideal rider’ is an “economically stable, able-bodied, white male commuter.” (55)

## **Policy and planning recommendations**

Available literature offers a range of policy suggestions for transit agencies to consider with the goal of creating a transit experience that is both safer and more inclusive for women and SGMs. This includes recommendations for planning projects and data collection, workforce and training, safety and security, and operations. In their publication of best practices in public transport, the

International Association of Public Transport noted one of the most important elements to making inclusive change is commitment of top-level management to implement and progress policies. (56)

### ***Planning projects and data collection***

Agencies should engage with women and SGMs to better understand and incorporate their perspectives in planning projects and services. People's experiences of public spaces, including transit stations, bus stops, and vehicles, is "different and based on individual needs, demographic backgrounds, and circumstances." (57)

Transit agencies should monitor and assess their services to specifically understand if the agency is meeting the travel needs of women and LGBTQ+ riders. (31) This includes assessing fare policies, considering practices such as trip chaining, collecting inclusive information regarding gender identity and sexual orientation on customer surveys, and engaging riders to better understand safety and security concerns. This data can be collected through multiple means, including surveys or smart fare collection systems. (31) For example, in the State of California, a law was passed to ensure the "top ten public transit agencies must survey riders about safety, sexual harassment, and racial and gender-based discrimination to learn more about threats to riders of buses and trains." (58)

Agencies should also employ service-based solutions like fare reduction programs for women and LGBTQ+ passengers, expanded service to LGBTQ+ events and venues, flexible alighting from buses at night, and taxi services. (9) For example, through its QueerCityPass, Berlin, Germany offers combined access to public transit and discounts for queer bars and cultural events. (59) In Ireland, Dublin Bus has for many years supported Dublin Pride, providing open top tours for the event. (59) These examples represent changes to how transit agencies provide service to customers that reduce financial burdens or improve convenience and safety, as well as celebrate and affirm LGBTQ+ riders.

Transit agencies should also account for gender in their transportation modeling. If women's travel patterns are understood as less car-dependent and more sustainable than men's, women's accumulated knowledge of mobility and transportation should be assessed and considered when developing transportation models. (34) Rodriguez De La Rosa et al. go as far as to suggest that in considering sustainable mobility, gender and density are key factors to consider, as both impact travel choices. (60) McAndrews and DiPrete Brown proposed and tested tools to engage with gendered experiences in Complete Streets practices, drawing again the connection between gender, mobility, and sustainability. (61)

Transit agencies can also employ publicly available tools to better integrate gender-inclusive perspectives into transportation projects and decision-making. The International Transport Forum (ITF) offers a [Gender Analysis Toolkit for Transport](#) for this purpose. (62) The Toolkit includes a Gender Checklist to help project managers to determine how well gender is incorporated into a project, Gender Indicators that provide a customized list of metrics to measure gender equality in transport, and a Gender Questionnaire that can serve as an

assessment tool for internal use when developing a project or policy. Another example is the [Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design](#) by World Bank, which included background information about gender and planning, details on gender and transportation and transit, and case studies that exemplify practices. (63) Transit agencies can use resources like these to ensure a gender-inclusive approach in the development and implementation of transit projects and policies

### ***Workforce and training***

Transit agencies should assess and recognize gender disparities in their workforce and aim to be more equitable in workforce and training practices. A publication by Sustainable Mobility for All identifies five entry points for actions and measures to reduce gender disparity in the transport sector, including: 1) Gender stereotyping for certain jobs, especially technical ones; 2) Discriminatory work cultures; 3) Lack of flexible working and childcare provision; 4) Invisible glass ceilings and restricted career options; and 5) Gender equity and its relationship with wider diversity, behavior, and culture change. (64)

Agencies can also implement internal policies such as mandatory gender and LGBTQ+ sensitivity training for staff, including workshops where transit operators exchange experiences with women and the LGBTQ+ community. (9) (48) Some literature suggests updating transit agencies' nondiscrimination language to include gender identity as a protected class. (47) (48) Such policies can demonstrate an agency's commitment to providing transit services that are safe and comfortable for all passengers, regardless of gender identity.

Agencies can also consider implementing policies that seek to improve comfort and feelings of safety and security for women and SGMS while on board transit, such as requiring staff to use gender-neutral pronouns when referring to passengers. (48) Some literature recommends that transit operators assert respectful, positive authority. A friendly introductory announcement to an entire bus can signal to passengers that the operator is present and aware of their surroundings, discouraging harassment and helping to create an environment where women and SGM passengers feel comfortable. (48) Similarly, transit operators should be aware of potential incidents of harassment targeted at women and SGMS and be prepared respond to passengers' requests for assistance. Transit agencies can also promote LGBTQ+ visibility through on-board advertisements and messaging which affirm LGBTQ+ passengers' right to ride safely and free from harassment. (48)

Agencies should also hire more women and sexual and gender minorities across the sector, including long-term project maintenance or monitoring and "highly visible jobs," such as drivers or security guards to promote safety, security, comfort, and access to riders. (63) Transport Scotland also speaks to the importance of women transit employees, as they were more likely to report incidents of unwanted physical contact or assault from men, providing more security for women transit users. (32)

## ***Safety and security***

Policies related to safety and security are more complex, especially when considering an intersectional lens. Research in the UK found that LGBTQ+ transit riders felt safer in the presence of security cameras, quality lighting, and transit staff. (9) However, interviews with transgender and gender nonconforming transit riders in Portland found that many did not believe increased police presence would contribute to feelings of safety and security. Rather, it would cause increased fear and hypervigilance, especially among riders of color. (47) LGBTQ+ people, especially trans people, may fear encounters with authorities or law enforcement which could result in the “publicizing” one’s “othered” gender or sexual orientation. (9) In addition, Transport Scotland found that there were mixed perceptions of usefulness of closed-circuit television, or CCTV.

This complexity with security and police is supported by the results of the San Francisco Bay Area LGBTQ Community Survey, which found that 24 percent of lesbian respondents felt unsafe “all of the time” or “more often than safe” when interacting with law enforcement officials. (13) This number was 22 percent for gay respondents, 42 percent for bisexual respondents, 41 percent for transgender women, 58 percent for transgender men, and 55 percent for genderqueer and non-binary respondents. (13) These findings indicate that increased police presence may not always be an effective strategy to increase feelings of safety and security among women and SGMs.

In 2021, Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) combined multiple of these recommendations, launching an LGBTQIA+phobia awareness campaign on their metro and bus network, increasing staff training on prevention and detection of harassment aimed at LGBTQ+ passengers, developing a specific channel for LGBTQ+ customer complaints and support, installing more security cameras in stations and trains, and upgrading lighting at platforms, corridors, and bus stops. (59) In 2022, TMB also deployed trained employees at select metro stations who can serve as an initial point of contact and provide support for passengers who have experienced harassment or gender violence. (65)

In the United States, BART’s [“Not One More Girl”](#) Campaign serves as a model for implementing a community-driven effort to address harassment on public transit. The project is led by young people of color and developed by BART and area partners. (66) The campaign is based on strategies for intervention centering young people and community care that does not involve the police. The campaign includes posters and videos about bystander intervention, changes to the customer code of conduct to explicitly prohibit sexual harassment, a new fleet of trains that are shorter in size with higher quality cameras, and cards to encourage bystander intervention. (67)

## ***Operations***

In addition to specific policies addressing workforce and safety or security, the literature indicates that there are recommendations for transit operations that increase the comfort and accessibility of women and SGMs while using transit.

Transit Scotland (32) makes several recommendations based on their report on the experiences of women and girls. This includes increased staffing at points of boarding and interchange, as staff provides a sense of security to women and girl transit users. The report indicates a perception that visible staff presence helps “reduce the likelihood of situations escalating, and that there would be someone there to step-in and help if and when situations did arise.” The report also calls for regular and adequate guidance and training on “how to respond to the needs of vulnerable colleagues and passengers.” In addition, there is a need for improving follow-up communications from authorities after reporting to ensure women are confident that they can report when issues arise.

World Bank’s Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design (63) also makes transportation-specific recommendations. They argue that the exclusion of women, girls, and SGMs in planning and design decisions has led to assumption around these people’s needs and reinforced traditional gender roles into the built environment. Their recommendations address the points made in previous sections of this literature review about travel patterns and mobility of women and SGMs. This handbook includes suggestions such as:

- Provide flexible, affordable, convenient, accessible, safe, multi-modal transportation options that respond to gendered behaviors, such as trip-chaining, reliance on walking or public transit, and making “non-wage-earning” trips for leisure and reproductive work.”
- Increase frequency and reliability of transit services, especially at night and on weekends, to provide convenient service with less wait times.
- Have real-time signage that shows expected transit arrival times.
- Provide adequate lighting especially around bus stops to create safer public spaces.
- Clean, secure, and accessible restrooms, including space for changing diapers, within a 250-meter walking distance of terminals.

These recommendations, although aimed at women, girls, and SGMs increase safety and mobility for people of all identities. Importantly, women and SGMs should be involved in the process to ensure their experiences and needs are represented without assumptions.

See Appendix A for a complete bibliography of the works cited above.

## PEER AGENCY OUTREACH

Based on the literature review, the research team identified several peer agencies and academic institutions that have conducted research related to the travel experiences of women and SGMs using transit. The organizations identified for peer agency interviews and the reasons for their selection were:

- **LA Metro**, for the 2019 [Understanding How Women Travel](#) report
- **Researchers from Portland State University**, for the 2017 [Transmobilities](#) study

- **Researchers from the University of Alberta and Leading Mobility**, for the 2022 [\*Understanding and Responding to the Transit Needs of Women in Canada\*](#) study

The research team contacted and conducted structured interviews with each of these agencies. The sections that follow summarize key findings from the interviews. Interview guides and individual interview summaries are attached as Appendix B. In addition to the above, it should be noted that Transport for London (TfL) has also conducted research on this topic and published a report in 2014 entitled *Understanding the Travel Needs of London's Diverse Communities*. This report is referenced in the literature review section. After repeated attempts, the research team was unable to establish contact with anyone from TfL in order to conduct a peer agency interview.

### **Project initiation and reception**

The genesis of each project and its reception varied by agency/institution.

- In LA Metro's case, the study was proposed by the agency's Women and Girls Governing Council, which is tasked with applying a gender lens to Metro's policy and decision making. The Council is an integral part of the decision structure at Metro and enjoys support within the agency, meaning the research was well-received.
- The Portland State University (PSU) study was initiated by Dr. Amy Lubitow based on her interest in feminist geography and work in active transportation in Portland. The study, which interviewed 25 transgender and gender nonconforming individuals who use ride Portland's transit system (TriMet), did not involve the transit agency. According to Dr. Lubitow, TriMet turned down most of the study's policy recommendations and did not want to engage with the research.
- The University of Alberta/Leading Mobility (Canadian) study was spurred by the researchers' experience working for various transit agencies and inspired by LA Metro's study. The study was co-funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Infrastructure Canada with the goal of conducting a synthesis of current practice without primary research. The study looked at the 18 largest transit agencies in Canada and included desktop/internet research, engagement with representatives from each of the 18 agencies, and a webinar.

### **Data collection**

The three agencies/institutions employed a range of data collection methods to study gender-specific travel experiences. Some findings in this area include:

- Researchers used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection, including surveys, focus groups, pop-up engagement methods, community-based organization workshops, in-depth interviews, and desktop research.



- Qualitative methods were especially helpful in understanding the travel experiences of women and girls. LA Metro found a qualitative approach to be very impactful because it told the story of the challenges that women and girls face, helping to convince the public, Metro leadership, and other decision makers that action is needed and justified.
- There is a lack of data disaggregated by gender, which can hinder research efforts. For example, the Canadian researchers found that most smart card data does not include fields for gender or other important demographic data. The PSU study encountered a similar issue with transit police citation data.
- It was difficult to examine the intersectionality of race, income, sex, and gender identity, as data disaggregation reduced sample sizes and resulted in numbers too small to be significant.

## Implementation

Similar to project reception at the outset, the degree of successful implementation of each study's recommendations varied depending on the level of support.

- Given the high level of support throughout the study, LA Metro has been successful at developing a Gender Action Plan (GAP) and beginning to implement recommendations. Importantly, the GAP was envisioned as a necessary tool for implementation from the beginning of the project. In addition, LA Metro has found it important to have one or more people that remain focused on implementing the GAP. There need to be dedicated staff that can assist department personnel as they advance strategies.
- A number of Metro programs and policies have been influenced by the *Understanding How Women Travel* study, including the Transit Watch App, Transit Ambassador Program, NextGen mid-day service improvement, courtesy seating decals, fare policies for children, improved headways, and a transit ambassador program, and bystander training.
- The first recommendations to be implemented across agencies tend to be more detailed collection of gender data through surveys and smart cards. In Canada, Edmonton's BRT evaluation is applying a gender lens by collecting women's origin-destination data and considering crowding, service span, travel speed, and trip chaining.
- In Portland, without TriMet's support or buy-in, no gender-based recommendations have been implemented.

## **Other lessons learned**

The following other items were mentioned as lessons learned from peer agencies working on these topics.

- Commitment to gender equity from agency leadership is critical to implementation.
- Early and collaborative engagement with all agency departments and the public is important to a project's success.
- Agencies noted that strategies that improve the experiences of women improve the experiences of all customers, and that planning for the most vulnerable benefits everyone.
- Improved data collection and analysis is critical for identifying future barriers and assessing how trends change over time.
- Research into gender-based harassment or experiences can be a hard sell for transit agencies, so it is important to look for positive transit experiences that can inform solutions.

## SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

In an effort to better understand the travel patterns and needs of women and SGMs who use NJ TRANSIT services, the research team analyzed a variety of travel-related data by gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, and other intersectional characteristics including age, race, ethnicity, and ability. The analysis utilized data from the 2017 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS)<sup>2</sup> and the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the research team analyzed data from the 2022 NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction survey to investigate and understand better if there are gender differences related to how customers utilize NJ TRANSIT and/or whether gender impacts customer travel experiences and satisfaction. The following sections summarize the results of the analysis. Key findings from the analysis are summarized below.

### Trip purpose for any mode

- Nationally, across all modes, the most common trip ends are home-based or necessity-based, which include destinations related to school, medical appointments, shopping, errands, and meals. This is true for both women and men; however, women make more necessity-based trips than men.
- Nationally, men in same-sex couples are somewhat more likely to make home-based and social/recreation trips than men in opposite-sex couples, and less likely to make work-based trips.
- Nationally, women in same-sex couples are slightly more likely to make necessity-based and social/recreation trips than their opposite-sex counterparts and are less likely to make home- and work-based trips.
- For both men and women at the national level, the likelihood of making necessity-based trips is greatest among those ages 65+.
- Nationally, social/recreational trips are more common among younger and older age groups, while work-based trips are generally more common among those ages 35-54.
- Among both men and women at the national level, those who are Black and African American report the greatest share of necessity-based trips of any race.

### Rates of transit use

- At the national level and across all trip purposes, men report using transit (including bus, subway, commuter and long-distance rail, and light rail) at slightly higher rates than women.

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<sup>2</sup> 2022 NHTS data, which was not available at the time of analysis, has since been released.

<sup>3</sup> 2022 ACS 5-Year PUMS data, which was not available at the time of analysis, has since been released.

- More women ride NJ TRANSIT than men—53.6 percent vs. 45.4 percent. This is true across all modes except rail, where slightly more customers identify as male (49.9 percent) than female (49.1 percent).
- Nationally, both men and women in same-sex relationships make trips via transit at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships.
  - Among men, those in same-sex relationships are nearly three times as likely to travel via transit than those in opposite-sex relationships.
  - Women in same-sex relationships are about twice as likely to choose transit for any trip than women in opposite-sex relationships.
  - Among those making trips via transit, individuals in same-sex couples take longer trips than those in opposite-sex couples.
- Approximately one percent of NJ TRANSIT customers identify as non-binary/gender fluid. Of those that identify as non-binary/gender fluid, the vast majority (74 percent) are age 34 or younger. This pattern is consistent across all modes.
- Female NJ TRANSIT riders tend to be younger (34 years old or younger) than male riders across all modes except Access Link, which is NJ TRANSIT's paratransit service serving disabled and elderly customers. Male Access Link riders tend to be younger than female Access Link riders.
- Overall, 41 percent of female NJ TRANSIT riders and 74 percent of non-binary/gender fluid riders are 34 years old or younger, while only 32.6 percent of male riders are in this age cohort.
- NJ TRANSIT's customer base, including all modes, is well distributed between household income categories. About one third (29 percent) are low income, earning less than \$35,000 per year, while another third (34 percent) are middle income, earning between \$35,000 to \$99,999 per year. Approximately 38 percent of customers earn more than \$100,000 per year.
  - More women and non-binary/gender fluid customers live in middle- and lower-income households than high-income households. Non-binary/gender fluid customers make up the greatest share of riders from lower-income households.
  - When looking at ridership by mode, there are some notable differences. Rail and light rail riders are more likely to live in higher-income households, while bus and Access link riders live in lower-income households.
  - Rail riders, especially male rail riders, make up the largest proportion of customers living in higher-income households. Sixty-six percent of male rail riders are high-income.

- Access Link customers, especially female Access Link customers, make up the largest share of customers from lower-income households. Sixty-six percent of female Access Link riders are low-income.
- More than 80 percent of NJ TRANSIT's lower-income female and male customers use bus.

### **Transit use by race and ethnicity**

- Nationally, for both men and women, those who are Black or African American are more likely to use transit than those of other races. Among Black and African American men, those in same-sex couples are even more likely to use transit, especially compared to those in opposite-sex couples.
- Nationally, among both men and women, those who are white are least likely to use transit.
- Nationally, within almost every racial or ethnic group, those who are in same-sex couples are more likely to use transit than those who are not.
- NJ TRANSIT's customer base is diverse, with slightly more than half reporting their race to be White. Approximately 20 percent identify as Black or African American, 15 percent as Asian or Pacific Islander, and 13 percent mixed race. One quarter of NJ TRANSIT customers are Hispanic or Latino.
  - These patterns shift somewhat by mode. A larger proportion of rail and light rail riders identify as White (66.7 percent and 55.7 percent respectively) than minority races, while a larger proportion of bus riders identify as non-White, 56.1 percent vs. 43.9 percent. Nearly 60 percent of NJ TRANSIT bus riders identify as women of color.

### **Transit use and trip purpose**

- Overall, the percentage of people reporting trips to work via transit is higher among New Jerseyans than nationally.
- At the national level, women use transit for commuting to work at slightly higher rates than men.
- Both nationally and in New Jersey, those in same-sex relationships use transit for work trips at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships.
- Among NJ TRANSIT customers, a majority report traveling to work, as the primary reason for their trip. Work travel is the most common trip purpose among male, female, and non-binary/gender fluid NJ TRANSIT customers in the 2022 Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

- Men travel for work at higher rates than both female and non-binary/gender fluid customers, 60 percent compared to 55 percent and 42 percent, respectively.
- Rates of work travel are highest among NJ TRANSIT bus customers. Sixty-six percent of male bus customers report traveling for work compared to 62 percent of women and 49 percent of non-binary/gender-fluid bus customers.
- Women across all modes use NJ TRANSIT services for shopping at higher rates than men.
- More than three-quarters (78 percent) of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ TRANSIT services to travel for essential purposes including work, school, shopping, medical, and personal business.
- Essential travel rates are highest among NJ TRANSIT bus and Access Link users. This is true among men, women, and non-binary/gender fluid customers.
- NJ TRANSIT rail and light rail customers take more trips for entertainment, recreation, and social purposes than bus riders. In fact, rates of essential and non-essential trip making are almost evenly split among male rail riders.
- Among those who use NJ TRANSIT for non-work travel, a plurality of light rail (47 percent) and Access Link riders (47 percent) riders and a significant majority of bus riders (76 percent) do so on a daily/weekly basis.
- Among those who use NJ TRANSIT rail services for non-work trips, less than one quarter do so on a daily/weekly basis.
- Gender differences are mostly minor. For example, women use bus services for non-work travel at slightly higher rates than men, while men use rail and light rail more frequently than women for non-work travel.
- For all modes, except bus, non-binary/gender fluid riders use transit for non-work trips at a higher rate than male and female customers.

### **Work trips by transit mode**

- Nationally, men in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work via subway than by bus.
- Nationally, women in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work by bus than by subway.
- In New Jersey, men in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work by bus, followed by long-distance/commuter rail and subway. New Jersey men in same-sex

couples are most likely to travel by subway, followed by bus and long-distance/commuter rail.

- Female New Jerseyans in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work via bus, followed by commuter rail and subway. New Jersey women in same-sex couples are most likely to travel via commuter rail, followed by bus and subway.
- The vast majority of riders that use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work report using NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis to make work trips. More bus and light rail customers report being daily/weekly riders than rail and Access Link customers, who report slightly lower rates of daily/weekly work trips.
- Women are more likely than men to ride NJ TRANSIT five or more days per week for work purposes, 47 percent compared to 44 percent for all modes. These patterns are similar when looking at individual modes, however, a slightly greater share of male than female bus and rail riders use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.
- Regardless of mode, non-binary/gender fluid customers report the most frequent use of NJ TRANSIT services for work travel. A full 62 percent of non-binary/gender fluid bus, rail, light rail, and Access Link customers report using NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.

### **Peak vs. off-peak travel**

- Almost universally among men and women in both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships and at both the national and New Jersey levels, the morning peak hours between 6:00 and 9:00 am accounted for the highest percentage of work trips.
- Approximately two-thirds of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ TRANSIT service weekdays during peak periods (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM). This is true for both men and women (67.1 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively).
- A majority (58.6 percent) of customers that identify as non-binary/gender fluid use NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods.
- Approximately 20 percent of NJ TRANSIT customers travel during off-peak hours on weekdays, and 13 percent use services on weekends.
- The highest rates of weekday peak period usage are among bus riders. Nearly three quarters of women bus riders report using NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods.

## **NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction**

- Mean satisfaction scores for all modes generally fall toward the middle of the scale, between acceptable and excellent for most service attributes.
- When comparing satisfaction scores reported by male and female customers, overall, there are only small difference.
- Men report slightly lower satisfaction scores for on-time performance/trip time, handling of disruptions, customer service and overall satisfaction.
- Women report lower satisfaction scores for vehicle condition and cleanliness, schedules, safety, and security. The latter two attributes show the greatest gender differences.
- Nonbinary/gender fluid customers consistently report lower satisfaction scores for almost all attributes. The greatest differences in scores are associated information and communication, handling of service disruptions, on time performance/trip time, and employee performance/customer service. For these attributes, scores are a full 0.5-0.7 lower. Scores are also notably lower for station/stop/shelter condition and cleanliness, vehicle comfort, condition and cleanliness, safety and security, and overall satisfaction as well.
- In terms of modal differences, customers ratings show that Access Link customers are the most satisfied overall and most specific individual service attributes. The one notable exception is with on time performance and trip time, Access link customers score these attributes lower than customers using other modes.
- The lowest satisfaction scores for bus customers are for handling of service disruptions, scheduling, and the cleanliness and condition of stops and shelters.
- The lowest satisfaction scores for rail customers are for handling of service disruptions and scheduling.
- The lowest satisfaction scores for light rail customers are for information, communication, and security.

Additional information about these data, analysis methods, and detailed data tables can be found in Appendix D.



## FOCUS GROUPS

The research team conducted six focus groups to explore and document the experiences of women and SGMs while using NJ TRANSIT services. Two sessions, one in-person and one virtual, were conducted with cisgender women, cisgender individuals that self-identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and individuals that self-identified as transgender and gender non-conforming. Similar questions were asked of each group to identify where the groups have similar or different points of view about how they travel or don't travel using NJ TRANSIT.

Each focus group lasted for approximately 120 minutes and was staffed by a moderator and assistant moderator. The moderators were selected with intention to ensure the comfort and safety of participants. Moderators shared identifying characteristics, such as gender and sexual orientation with participants. In addition, in-person focus groups were conducted at different locations throughout the state to capture diverse participants based on geography. All sessions were recorded for notetaking purposes. All focus group participants consented to participating in the research study in accordance with Rutgers Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements and all participants consented to the audio recording.

The topic guide (Appendix A) used to facilitate the sessions included a brief description of the project, "ground rules" for the discussion and questions that addressed the following topic areas: familiarity with NJ TRANSIT, travel patterns and behavior, transit access and physical design, reliability and communications, comfort and convenience, safety and security, experiences with harassment and assault while using NJ TRANSIT, and improving travel experience. The focus group topic guide was approved by NJ TRANSIT and the Rutgers University IRB prior to administration. The dates, times, and locations of the focus groups is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Focus group dates, time, and locations

	Cisgender Women	Cisgender Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual	Transgender & Gender Non-forming
Dates	IP: 01/23/2024 V: 01/22/2024	IP: 01/25/2024 V: 01/24/2024	IP: 01/30/2024 V: 01/31/2024
Time	IP: 12:00-2:00 V: 6:00-8:00 p.m.	IP: 6:00-8:00 p.m. V: 6:00-8:00 p.m.	IP: 6:00-8:00 p.m. V: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Facilitation Team	Andrea Lubin Cate Heady Aleyah Lopez	Jon Carnegie Sam Rosenthal Cate Heady	Brielle Winslow-Majette Aleyah Lopez Cate Heady
Region	South Jersey	North Jersey	Central Jersey
In-Person Location	Walter Rand Transp. Center 100 South Broadway, Camden, NJ	NJ TRANSIT HQ 1 Penn Plaza Newark, NJ	The Pride Center of NJ 85 Raritan Avenue Highland Park NJ

Notes: IP=In-person, V=Virtual

## Participant Recruitment

The research team recruited potential focus group participants via email. The primary source of focus group volunteers obtained through:

- Participants of a statewide survey of NJ TRANSIT customers regarding women and SGM travel behavior who provided their name and contact information,
- Individuals that attended the June 4, 2023, NJ Pride event in Asbury Park, NJ who volunteered to participate in the focus groups and shared their contact information,
- A curated list of individuals obtained from NJ TRANSIT's customer satisfaction survey database, targeting female customers from the southern part of New Jersey, and
- Various email lists maintained by Garden State Equality and the Pride Center of New Jersey.

The email invitations asked individuals interested in participating in one of the six focus groups to complete a short online screener survey. The survey asked prospective participants to self-identify which discussion group they wanted to attend and to provide basic demographic information and information regarding how they use NJ TRANSIT. To encourage individuals to volunteer for one of the focus groups, the research team provided a cash incentive of \$125.00 for the in-person sessions and an electronic gift card incentive of \$75.00 for the virtual sessions. NJ TRANSIT provided funding for the incentives.

More than 1,200 individuals volunteered to participate on one of the focus groups. The research team used the screener survey data to curate final invitation lists for each session. Every effort was made to ensure that the participants selected for the focus groups provided a diverse representation of NJ TRANSIT's customer base, including diversity of age, race, ethnicity, income, spoken languages, nation of origin, use of NJ TRANSIT services (including mode), and diverse NJ TRANSIT travel markets. After screening, invitations were sent to approximately 90 individuals. In the end, 68 NJ TRANSIT customers participated in the six focus groups. Table 3 provides a summary of participant characteristics.

Table 3 – Focus group participant characteristics

	Cisgender Women		Cisgender Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual		Transgender & Gender Non-conforming	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Total</b>	30	--	21	--	17	--
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	28	0.93	10	0.48	2	0.12
Male	0	0.00	9	0.43	3	0.18
Non-binary/gender non-conforming	2	0.07	2	0.10	12	0.71
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>						
Gay or lesbian	3	0.10	13	0.62	3	0.18
Bisexual person	4	0.13	5	0.24	3	0.18
Pansexual	3	0.10	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asexual	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.12
Queer	0	0.00	2	0.10	6	0.35
Heterosexual or straight	18	0.60	0	0.00	3	0.18
Questioning or curious	0	0.00	1	0.05	0	0.00
Prefer not to say	2	0.07	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Age</b>						
18-24	4	0.13	4	0.19	5	0.29
25-34	6	0.20	9	0.43	7	0.41
35-44	7	0.23	4	0.19	2	0.12
45-54	2	0.07	1	0.05	1	0.06
55-64	4	0.13	3	0.14	0	0.00
65-74	6	0.20	0	0.00	2	0.12
75+	1	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Race</b>						
Asian	1	0.03	1	0.05	1	0.06
Black or African American	5	0.17	5	0.24	3	0.18
White	20	0.67	9	0.43	9	0.53
More than one race	2	0.07	2	0.10	2	0.12
Other	1	0.03	4	0.19	2	0.12
Prefer not to say	1	0.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Hispanic	5	0.17	6	0.29	1	0.06
Not Hispanic	24	0.80	15	0.71	15	0.88
Prefer not to say	1	0.03	0	0.00	1	0.06
<b>Income</b>						
Less than \$20,000	3	0.10	4	0.19	7	0.41
\$20,001-\$50,000	10	0.33	4	0.19	3	0.18
\$50,001-\$100,000	12	0.40	9	0.43	5	0.29
More than \$100,000	2	0.07	4	0.19	1	0.06
Prefer not to say	3	0.10	0	0.00	1	0.06
<b>Transit frequency</b>						
Every day	5	0.17	5	0.24	1	0.06
A few days per week	9	0.30	9	0.43	4	0.24
A few days per month	13	0.43	6	0.29	12	0.71
Less frequently	3	0.10	1	0.05	0	0.00

## Focus group findings

This section summarizes key themes and observations made from across all six focus groups. Notable differences in perspective between the groups are described where appropriate. The findings are presented by discussion topic. Appendix C includes perspective summaries for women, cisgender gay, lesbian, and bisexual participants, and transgender/gender non-conforming participants. In all three cases, the input received during both the in-person and virtual focus groups were combined into a single subgroup summary.

### *Current transit use and satisfaction*

- Participants in all six groups reported being familiar with and regularly using NJ TRANSIT train, bus, and light rail services. Many reported using more than one mode over the past year. Several were also familiar with and use Access Link.
- Participants use NJ TRANSIT services for most trip purposes, including commuting to work or school, shopping, recreation, entertainment and socializing with friends and families. Many reported using NJ TRANSIT services to travel to/from New York City.
- Participants travel at a variety of times and choose to use NJ TRANSIT for a variety of reasons. The most frequently cited reasons had to do with convenience, affordability, and a personal preference for using transit over available alternatives, especially driving. A few participants mentioned the environmental benefits of traveling by transit and a number of participants (particularly in the transgender/gender non-conforming discussion group) noted that they rely on transit because they have no choice, it is the only viable option for them.
- While opinions were mixed, overall, most participants reported being satisfied with the services they use. For those that are satisfied with NJ TRANSIT services, the reasons cited were:

Table 4 – Reasons for satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT among focus group participants

<b>Cisgender Women</b>	<b>Cisgender Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual</b>	<b>Transgender &amp; Gender Non-conforming</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliability and convenience</li><li>• The mobile app</li><li>• Senior discount</li><li>• Responsive customer service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliability, convenience, and variety of services available</li><li>• Time savings</li><li>• Cost effectiveness for older adults</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Affordability</li><li>• Reliability and convenience</li><li>• Possible to build relationships with bus operators and conductors</li><li>• Better than driving</li></ul>

- For those that are not satisfied with NJ TRANSIT services, the reasons cited were:

Table 5 – Reasons for dissatisfaction with NJ TRANSIT among focus group participants

<b>Cisgender Women</b>	<b>Cisgender Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual</b>	<b>Transgender &amp; Gender Non-conforming</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing some locations is difficult, especially at night</li> <li>• Availability, reliability, and timing of services</li> <li>• Crowding and behavior of others</li> <li>• Too little space on buses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service delays and cancellations</li> <li>• Unreliable service and information</li> <li>• Lack of communication during service disruptions</li> <li>• Limited off-peak service</li> <li>• Inconvenient transfers</li> <li>• Negative travel experiences with NJ TRANSIT employees</li> <li>• Too little employee/police presence at stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor customer service</li> <li>• Lack of communication during service disruptions</li> <li>• Availability, reliability, and timing of services</li> <li>• Safety and security concerns, not enough lighting</li> <li>• Negative travel experiences, transphobic experiences</li> <li>• Can't be true self, have to change dress and mannerisms when using transit</li> </ul>

### ***Accessibility and physical design***

- Several participants noted that bus stops are often located on busy/dangerous roadways with few safety precautions. Some noted that parking at stations/stops is limited and fill up quickly. Others noted that bathrooms seem isolated and feared no one would hear them if they needed help.
- Of particular concern to transgender customers, is that restrooms are “very binary,” and there is a “psychological burden involved when using the restroom.”
- Several participants reported having disabilities that make using NJ TRANSIT services difficult. They noted problems with long staircases, heavy doors, boarding and alighting trains and buses that require climbing up and down stairs, and inadequate bathrooms. Others observed problems with inoperable elevators and escalators in stations and that buses do not accommodate mobility assistance scooters. One participant that travels with a cane said she does not frequently experience problems.
- Some customers expressed frustration with the disparity of conditions between different NJ TRANSIT facilities, with some stations and stops lacking buildings or shelter from the elements. For those stations that do have infrastructure, some participants expressed frustration with waiting rooms that close at night.
- Participants generally agreed that light rail services and stations have better accessibility features and design than rail or bus.

- Participants that travel with children reported also needing to travel with related items such as strollers, diaper bags, etc. These customers found it difficult to step up to board buses and described the narrowness of bus doors and stairs as being problematic when assisting a child and traveling with a stroller. They also noted that crowding makes it difficult when traveling with children. Sometimes parents and children have to split up because there are no adjacent seats. A few participants noted that bus operators and conductors did not assist when boarding and alighting vehicles.
- One transgender/gender non-conforming participant reported being fearful of traveling with children. They worry that a situation could occur that puts their children in danger and therefore do not take transit when they travel with their kids. They instead pay the extra expense of using Uber or Lyft.
- A number of participants reported being dissatisfied with available space on vehicles, particularly buses, especially if they are crowded, when traveling with bags, luggage, etc. In particular, accessing safe places to store bags and luggage was mentioned a number of times. In addition, several participants noted that NJ TRANSIT employees do not aid customers when stowing bags.

### ***Reliability, access to information, and communications***

- More than half of the participants agreed that NJ TRANSIT services are overall reliable and usually on time. However, when there are service disruptions, communication is lacking. Sexual and gender minority customers were more likely to report concerns with reliability than cisgender women. Among all the participants that were dissatisfied with reliability, their concerns included:
  - Lack of train frequency
  - Train service delays, disruptions, and cancellations
  - Poor communication during disruptions
  - Buses passing stops without stopping because they are full
  - The timing of buses being inconsistent. Some buses don't arrive when they're supposed to, or multiple buses arrive at once followed by no buses for a period of time
  - Traffic delays
  - Unfriendly bus operators and conductors that do not answer questions
  - Lack of train frequency
- Interestingly, it was common for people to conflate issues related to service in general (e.g., poor communication, train frequency, accessibility of bus stops, etc.) with reliability concerns.

- Unreliable service impacts travel decisions in a variety of ways, including customers being late for work or class, or leaving very early (in excess of an hour) to account for disruptions or cancellations, and sometimes very long trips.
- Overall, participants agreed that information on train services was more available and easier to comprehend than information on buses. However, they noted that this was true only for general information such as stops and schedules. Information was not easily available during service disruptions, especially travel alternatives, cross-honoring fares, and substitute service.
- Many participants find information on bus services complicated and confusing. Bus stops signs also lack visibility. They are small and easily missed if there are no bus stop amenities, like a shelter or bench present.
- Some noted that the information found on NJ TRANSIT's app can be unreliable or inaccurate. Others found app difficult to use for information on bus service. They noted the app lacks the service status information the app has for trains. Participants also experienced issues with the app logging out, force closing, not activating tickets on time, and having an unattractive interface.
- Poor communication was a common point of dissatisfaction. Signs on trains and buses often shows inaccurate information and stop announcements on both trains and buses are inconsistent. Frequently they are not audible due to poor speaker quality.

### ***Comfort and condition of NJ TRANSIT vehicles and facilities***

- ***Cleanliness*** – Participants observed that the condition of stations varies widely, from very clean to very dirty, depending on the station you are using. Most participants find vehicles to be clean and comfortable; however, older vehicles tend to be less so, due to problems with wear and tear. Also, it is common to experience a vehicle that has not been cleaned properly. Elevators were a particular point of concern, with a number of participants reporting them smelling of urine. Urine odor was also cited as a problem on some buses. Many participants also complained about how difficult it is to see out of bus and train windows. They are either dirty or etched, which makes it hard to know where you are and to prepare for departing the vehicle. Those familiar with light rail vehicles deemed them mostly clean and comfortable.
- ***Lighting and signage*** – Many participants found lighting and signage inadequate. Common concerns about lighting included: inadequate lighting at bus stops in particular, on some platforms, in parking lots, in the bus waiting areas at some bus stations, and in tunnels. Regarding signage, participants were concerned about a lack of signs to help find your way around stations, vehicle signs being inaccurate, bus stop and track signs being too small, and lack of real time information on the status of services, especially bus.

- **Restrooms** – Participants recognized that the accessibility and physical design and condition of bathrooms varies widely from station to station. While participants characterized restrooms on trains as better maintained than those in stations, they still need more frequent cleaning than they currently receive. Most participants avoid using the bathrooms or feel uncomfortable or nervous using them.
- Women participants had mixed opinions about the availability of restrooms. Some think the number of restrooms is fine, especially at big stations. Others said there are not enough restrooms. Some also find restrooms to generally be clean, while others do not. Both women and transgender participants noted that some restrooms do not have enough supplies such as toilet paper and that stalls are often closed or inoperable. At some stations, if the station is closed, so is the restroom. Some participants will not use the restroom unless it's an emergency.
- Across all three focus groups, participants were unaware of or had not seen family or gender-neutral restrooms at NJ TRANSIT facilities. One participant connected this issue to NJ TRANSIT's presence at a Pride event and said, "NJ TRANSIT could show up for queer people expanding the number of gender-neutral restrooms."

#### ***Interactions with other customers and NJ TRANSIT employees***

- Overall, participants described their interactions with other NJ TRANSIT customers as neutral, as most customers keep to themselves. A few participants described positive interactions such as, when a customer was particularly helpful, and developing a sense of community or even friendships with those they regularly ride. A number of participants also recounted negative interactions, including experiences with harassment that are discussed later. Other examples include encounters with people asking for money, customers arguing with bus operators, customers having a loud homophobic conversation, or making "cruel comments about their size." One participant noted that negative experience "stand out" in their minds and shape their opinions of NJ TRANSIT. Others agreed.
- Interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees were similarly mixed. While most described their interactions as neutral, observing that employees are generally "nice," "courteous and helpful," others described negative interactions. For example, being treated rudely, not having questions answered, not receiving assistance with luggage when asked, and feeling "looked down upon." One participant even described being harassed by an NJ TRANSIT conductor based on their gender, race, and sexual orientation (lesbian, woman of color).
- Some participants suggested better training for customer-facing staff might help. Another observed that "most workers they see are white cis men" and opined that more diversity would be helpful.



## ***Safety and security***

- Across all three subgroups, participants felt safer traveling during daylight hours than at night. The reasons varied, but common responses including more travelers and employees being present and a greater likelihood that station buildings are open.
- Traveling at night was a concern for many participants. Reasons included stations and stops being not well lit, too few other customers and employees around, stations and stops being occupied by unhoused individuals, and having to wait alone for longer periods of time on platforms or at stops. Some women participants remarked that they are more fearful of men when traveling at night and either will not travel at night or will only travel with a male companion. Others avoid sitting near men both during the day and especially at night.
- Participants had mixed opinions related to crowds. Some felt safer when there is a crowd because people are less likely to “try something,” while others worried that crowding provide “cover for someone to get away with something.” Several participants being weary of crowds at certain times when people likely have been consuming alcohol (e.g., later at night or before and after events).
- Participants also had mixed opinions of police presence. Some feel safer when there is a visible police presence, while others felt less safe. Those that felt less safe observed that a strong police presence “reminds them how unsafe they are” or “makes them think something is wrong” which makes them more fearful. Others reported feeling less safe because they worried about how police might treat them. For example, one participant’s negative experiences with the NYPD in subway stations in New York City, including experiences where officers did not respond to reported harassment, has eroded their trust in police officers in general. More than one participant expressed the opinion that it feels like “police are there to protect NJ TRANSIT property, not customers.”
- Most participants agreed that increased presence of NJ TRANSIT employees would make them feel safer, especially compared to increased police presence. Participants stressed the importance of training employees in customer relations, including using appropriate language with customers and interacting with customers experiencing mental health issues.
- Participants were generally not aware of security cameras and not confident that they help improve safety and security. Participants felt that cameras are useful in providing proof of reported incidents and identifying perpetrators, but do not prevent harassment or assault from occurring in the first place.
- Presence of graffiti was not important to participant feelings of safety and security. However, some said the content of the graffiti could change their mind. For example, if the content included “hurtful or threatening” messages.
- A number of participants were aware of NJ TRANSIT’s “Ride Kind” campaign, but most were not. Some participants welcomed the campaign and thought it could be helpful. Others

questioned how effective it might be, commenting that “the language might not fit New Jersey,” and “people that need to hear it or read it will ignore it.” Another wondered how it could be enforced.

### ***Experiences with harassment and assault***

- Sixteen participants reported that they had experienced past harassment or assault while using NJ TRANSIT services. These included five cisgender women, one lesbian woman, one gay man, and nine individuals that identified as transgender or gender non-conforming. Only one participant reported the incident to authorities. Here are some of their stories:
  - Participant 1: While riding the bus, this participant noticed a man staring at her. When she looked, he turned his phone toward her and showed an explicit photo of himself. She moved from one part of the bus to another. She didn’t say anything to the bus driver and there were no bystanders. This incident is the primary reason she stopped using the bus.
  - Participant 2: While riding the train, this participant recounted that a man was coming down the aisle and wanted to converse with her. He intimidated and harassed her. It was at night. There were very few other people in the car and no staff around. She did not report the incident.
  - Participant 3: This participant regularly arrives at Secaucus station shortly after rush hour and walks to the parking lot. On three separate occasions, men have followed her as she walked to her car. She said no one is around until she arrives to the parking lot, and the parking lot attendant is not a NJ TRANSIT employee.
  - Participant 4: This participant was groped on a crowded train. She did not report the incident.
  - Participant 5: When preparing to exit the bus, a man grabbed this participant’s arm and acted like he was with her. The bus driver knew her and intervened by creating a diversion, acting like the participant was not supposed to get off the bus at that stop. He then made the male passenger exit the bus and made sure the woman arrived at her stop later and safely.
  - Participant 6: While in the Trenton Transit Center, the participant, who identified himself as a gay man, described walking through the Transit Center with friends on their way to a concert when they heard a man behind them begin using homophobic slurs toward them. They recognized the perpetrator as a person they knew through their work who has an intellectual disability. When the participant turned around to confront him, the perpetrator also recognized the participant and expressed shock. The participant noted that NJ TRANSIT police were present and witnessed the incident but did not attempt to intervene.

- Participant 7: The participant, who identified herself as a lesbian woman, was on board a PATH train during early morning hours (around 1:30 a.m.) at the World Trade Center station with her girlfriend waiting to depart the station when she noticed another passenger muttering homophobic slurs under his breath. The participant verbally confronted the other passenger and argued briefly before the participant and her girlfriend moved to another train car. The participant did not report the incident. While this incident did not occur while using a NJ TRANSIT service, the experience impacted the participant's feelings of safety and security when using NJ TRANSIT.
- Participant 8: This participant had a knife and gun pulled on them on two separate occasions while using NJ TRANSIT. They believe the incidents were related to their race as a person of color. They did not report and feel unsafe reporting and do not trust the police.
- Participant 9: This participant has been groped several times while going up an escalator in an NJ TRANSIT building. They did not report the incident and attributed this to shock and trauma of the experience. They also did not want to ruin the experience of their peers who they were traveling with at that time. They also believed that reporting the incident would garner a response of "you had it coming" based on the way they were dressed.
- Participant 10: This participant was harassed on the light rail for money. They were with their family, so they downplayed the incident. They did not report the incident.
- Participant 11: This participant was assaulted on the bus on the way to Pride in New York. They could not report the incident until the bus arrived at Port Authority, but they did report it to the bus driver and then the police. Bystanders did intervene after the physical assault.
- Participant 12: This participant has experienced several incidences of having men confront them and try to make them uncomfortable and invade their personal space. They have never reported any incidents. They have overheard people using slurs.
- Several transgender/gender non-conforming participants discussed experiences such as being told they're using the wrong restroom by women and being yelled at by passing drivers while waiting at bus stops. They identify harassers as mostly middle-aged people, mostly men, but sometimes women.
- Many participants in all three groups reporting taking precautions or using strategies to feel safer and to avoid harassment or assault while using NJ TRANSIT services:

Table 6 – Strategies to avoid harassment or assault among focus group participants

Cisgender Women	Cisgender Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual	Transgender & Gender Non-conforming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use ride share services instead of transit</li> <li>• Alert friends and family when using transit</li> <li>• Avoid traveling alone or travel with a male friend or family member</li> <li>• Detailed preplanning of trip</li> <li>• Wait with back against wall</li> <li>• Park near elevators at stations</li> <li>• Carry pepper spray</li> <li>• Change appearance of clothing or personal style</li> <li>• Let other people move first</li> <li>• Sit at the front of the bus near the driver</li> <li>• Keep to yourself, use headphones, look busy and unapproachable</li> <li>• Ignore other customers</li> <li>• Be aware of surroundings</li> <li>• Choose stops and travel times with safety and security in mind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep to yourself, use headphones, look busy and unapproachable</li> <li>• Choose stops and travel times with safety and security in mind</li> <li>• Be less affectionate when traveling with same gender partner/spouse</li> <li>• Change mannerisms, appearance of clothing or personal style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change mannerisms, appearance of clothing or personal style</li> <li>• Taking off accessories which are queer identifying, such as pins, or covering their shirts</li> <li>• Keep to yourself, use headphones, look busy and unapproachable</li> <li>• Choose stops and travel times with safety and security in mind</li> <li>• Keep phone charged at all times</li> </ul>

### ***Improving customer experiences***

- When asked what NJ TRANSIT could do to improve travel experiences, participants suggested the following:
  - Greater presence of NJ TRANSIT employees (not police) circulating through facilities, especially at night. For example, employees to assist customers, answer questions, help people navigate the system and respond to incidents of harassment or assault if and when they occur.
  - More and better lighting at stations, stops and parking lots
  - A higher level of amenities (shelters, benches) at bus stops
  - ADA accessibility improvements where needed and improvements to elevators.
  - More signage and better communication, especially during service disruptions, but also just stop announcements and conveying accurate and timely service information

- Additional training for NJ TRANSIT personnel, especially sensitivity training related to the needs and concerns of women and sexual and gender minorities.
- Actively recruiting more women and LGBTQ+ employees.
- Installation of gender-neutral or single-user family restrooms
- Symbolic improvements such as signs or pins with pride colors to show NJ TRANSIT is visibly supportive of LGBTQ+ customers.
- Participants were pleased with NJ TRANSIT's presence at NJ Pride in Asbury Park as a demonstration of the agency's support of LGBTQ+ people but would like to see greater presence at other pride events. Similarly, some participants suggested more prominent signage on transit indicating support for LGBTQ+ people and their right to be in public spaces. However, participants stressed that signage alone is not enough to make people feel safe.

In this same spirit, two participants made statements during the focus group session that indicate the importance of NJ TRANSIT showing up for their LGBTQ+ customers:

"Most of us use the train in months other than June."

"This is the first time I thought they cared about me, having this study."

Finally, participants mentioned experiences with facilities and services owned and operated by agencies other than NJ TRANSIT such as New York Penn Station, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, and PATH. While NJ TRANSIT does not have authority over these facilities and services, their experiences using these facilities still impacts their mobility and perceptions of NJ TRANSIT.

## **TRAVEL BEHAVIOR SURVEY**

The research team worked with NJ TRANSIT to design and administer a survey of NJ TRANSIT customers. The purpose of the survey was to gather data on customer experiences and opinions regarding various aspects of NJ TRANSIT service while collecting more detailed data than generally collected in terms of customer gender identity and sexual orientation.

## **SURVEY METHODS AND ANALYSIS**

### ***Survey preparation, administration, and recruitment***

The survey questionnaire was designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on customer travel experiences using NJ TRANSIT services, perceptions of physical safety and personal security, and past experiences with harassment and assault. The questionnaire collected basic demographic and travel data such as mode choices, days and times of travel, trip purpose, origin/destination, access modes to/from transit etc. and asked participants to recall

their travel experiences on NJ TRANSIT. Questions covered all aspects of customers' complete trip, including their experience traveling to/from NJ TRANSIT stations/stops, purchasing their ticket or pass, waiting at the station/stop for NJ TRANSIT to arrive, interactions with operators/conductors and other NJ TRANSIT employees, interactions with other customers, onboard comfort, whether they were traveling alone or with others, transferring to another transit vehicle or mode, traveling from their alighting stop/station to their final destination, and other trip characteristics and observations. The survey questionnaire also addressed customer perceptions of safety and security and any past experience with harassment or assault while using NJ TRANSIT services.

After the draft questionnaire was approved by NJ TRANSIT, it was programmed for online administration using Qualtrics survey software and pretested by a volunteer group of Rutgers students, faculty, staff, and NJ TRANSIT employee volunteers. The survey questionnaire was then modified based on pretest feedback. After finalizing the questionnaire, the research team had the survey translated into Spanish and entered the Spanish version into Qualtrics prior to launching the survey for public use. Survey recruitment relied on email invitations and word of mouth. Emails inviting people to complete the survey were sent to NJ TRANSIT's customer satisfaction survey database, as well as more women- and LGBTQ+-focused databases including individuals who volunteered to complete the survey as part of the NJ Pride event held in June 2023 and email lists maintained by partner organizations such as Garden State Equality. To encourage subjects to complete the survey, prospective participants were offered the opportunity to enter a lottery to receive a \$100 gift card.

The survey data collection period lasted approximately six months from 06/04/2024 to 11/30/2024. During this time two emails were sent to NJ TRANSIT's customer database and up to four email invitations and reminders were sent to the other women- and LGBTQ+-focused recruitment databases. A total of 13,482 responses were received. Of these, 5,720 responses (42 percent) were identified as potentially fraudulent based on the criteria described below, leaving 7,762 records to be analyzed. Prior to analyzing the data, the research team removed participant contact information and IP address data recorded by the Qualtrics software program.

### ***Data cleaning and analysis methods***

As noted above, this survey was conducted online using Qualtrics survey software. An increasingly common issue with online surveys is the potential fraudulent survey completion by humans and bots. To ensure the quality and integrity of the data collected, the research team took the following steps to protect against and detect fraud.

1. No social media recruitment – Based on past experience the research team has learned that social media marketing can increase the level of fraudulent survey submissions. For this reason, no social media marketing was undertaken as part of participant recruitment.

2. Qualtrics fraud protection – The research team utilized several fraud detection options offered by Qualtrics. The following detection options were enabled, and criteria were applied to flag potentially fraudulent responses:

Table 7 – Qualtrics fraud detection methods

Detection option	Criteria
<b>Prevent multiple submissions</b> – This option detects potentially duplicate responses from the same IP address by placing a cookie on the participants browser. If the respondent attempts to take the survey again using the same browser without clearing the cookies, they are flagged as a potential duplicate response.	If Q_BallotBoxStuffing was “true,” then the response was flagged as a likely duplicate response.
<b>Bot detection</b> – This option detects a pattern of question answers that, based on a probability model, is likely a response submitted by a bot.	If Q_RecaptchaScore was less than 0.5, the response was flagged as likely a bot response.
<b>Relevant ID</b> – This option improves fraud detection by assessing respondent metadata to determine the likelihood that the same respondent is answering over and over. This feature has four fields associated with it that you can report on: Q_RelevantIDDuplicate, Q_RelevantIDDuplicateScore, Q_RelevantIDFraudScore, and Q_RelevantIDLastStartDate. These fields are calculated using RelevantID technology. This technology checks if the respondent is cheating by taking the survey multiple times or whether a survey taker is fraudulent by analyzing a user’s browser, operating system, and location to provide a fraud score.	<p>If Q_RelevantIDDuplicate was “true,” then the response was flagged as likely a duplicate response.</p> <p>If Q_RelevantIDDuplicateScore was score greater than or equal to 75, the response was flagged as likely a duplicate.</p> <p>If Q_RelevantIDFraudScore was greater than or equal to 30, the response was flagged as likely fraudulent and a bot.</p>

Source: <https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-checker/fraud-detection/>

3. Embedded screening questions – In addition to Qualtrics fraud protection, the research team embedded two attention questions in the survey. These questions were asked at the beginning of the survey as well as near the end. The first question was the participants residence zip code and the second question asked subjects to select the number 200 from a randomized list of numeric response options. If the responses to these questions did not match, the record was flagged for further screening. The zip code question was also used to flag zip codes located outside the survey region which included New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Responses from these three states were retained because based on the nature of tristate transportation networks, it is plausible that individuals residing in these three states could be NJ TRANSIT customers.

The research team reviewed the survey response records that were flagged by Qualtrics and those that included inconsistent responses to the embedded screening questions to determine

if they should remain in the data for analysis or be removed based on the pattern and substance of responses to various questions. If question answers followed an expected and/or plausible pattern and verbatim text questions were appropriate given the context of the questions, they were retained. Of the 13,482 responses collected, 5,720 responses (42 percent) were identified as potentially fraudulent based on the criteria described above. After removing these responses, 7,762 records remained to be analyzed. Prior to analyzing the data, the research team removed participant contact information and IP address data recorded by the Qualtrics software program.

Data analysis was conducted in two phases. Phase one involved preparation and review of descriptive statistics, including various frequency tables and cross-tabulations that compare transit use patterns, opinions of transit service and infrastructure, perceptions of safety and security and experiences with past harassment in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation. Phase two of the data analysis utilized statistical modeling to explore the relationships between gender, safety, and harassment in more detail. The results of these analysis are presented in the sections that follow.

## **Analysis Results – Descriptive Statistics**

The analysis of survey data was divided into four broad sections: (a) respondent characteristics, (b) travel behavior and experiences, (c) perceptions of physical safety and personal security, and (d) experiences with harassment and assault. Respondent characteristics pertain to demographic and socioeconomic variables. Travel behavior and experiences include travel purpose and frequency, trip origins and destinations, and opinions related transit service, communications, access, and design as well as interactions with customers and NJ TRANSIT employees. Perceptions of safety and security documents how safe customers feel during all segments of the transit journey and the experiences with harassment section explores how frequently survey respondents have experienced past harassment, what types of harassment have occurred, whether these incidents are reported, why respondents believe the harassment occurred, and what customers do to avoid being the victim of harassment or assault.

### ***Respondent characteristics***

As shown in Table 8, the personal characteristics of the Gender survey (conducted for this study) respondent pool were broadly consistent with what are revealed to be the characteristics of NJ TRANSIT customer pool overall, based on weighted NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction survey data. There are a few differences worth noting:

- The number of women and gender minorities in the sample pool are slightly higher than the overall NJ TRANSIT customer base. This is likely due in part to the outreach and recruitment methods used for this survey, which were designed to oversample these populations.
- Minors were not eligible to participate in the survey, therefore the number of survey respondents in this age cohort is lower than in the customer base overall.



- The number of respondents from higher income categories is greater in the survey sample than in the overall customer base.
- The sample population includes more individuals that identified as White and fewer Black/African American and other races than NJ TRANSIT's customer base.
- As might be expected given the comparatively higher income profile of the survey sample, the sample includes fewer individuals from zero vehicle households.

These differences may be due to the comparatively high number of rail customers in the survey pool. Rail users tend to have higher incomes than bus users. Approximately 62 percent of survey responses were from rail customers and 32 percent were from bus customers. The remaining responses were received from light rail and Access link customers. This is the reverse of NJ TRANSIT's customer base overall, which includes more bus riders than rail.

In addition to the above differences, it should be noted that NJ TRANSIT does not regularly collect data on sexual orientation. Again, given the recruitment methods used for this survey, it is reasonable to assume that LGBTQ+ customers are somewhat overrepresented in the survey sample. Finally, data on the number of children in the household for the NJ TRANSIT customer base was not available at the time of the analysis.

Table 8 – Respondent profile

	Survey sample		NJ TRANSIT customer pool	
<b>Travel mode</b>				
Bus	2,866	31.9%	128,775	61.3%
Rail	5,561	61.9%	57,143	27.2%
Light Rail	489	5.4%	20,402	9.7%
Access Link	65	0.7%	3,702	1.8%
Total	8,981	100.0%	210,022	100.0%
<b>Personal characteristics</b>				
<b>Gender identification</b>				
Female	4,197	54.7%	110,859	53.6%
Male	3,251	42.4%	93,909	45.4%
Gender minority	220	2.9%	2,189	1.1%
Total	7,668	100%	206,957	100%
<b>Sexual orientation</b>				
LGBQ+	1,514	20.5%	---	---
Straight	5,865	79.5%	---	---
Total	7,379	100%	---	---
<b>Age</b>				
Under 18 years old	45	0.6%	2,410	1.2%
18-24	1,034	14.6%	29,983	14.5%
25-34	1,411	19.9%	45,496	22.0%
35-44	1,324	18.6%	39,879	19.3%
45-54	1,218	17.2%	36,025	17.4%
55-64	1,162	16.4%	35,222	17%
65 and over	907	12.8%	20,352	9.8%
Total	7,101	100%	209,367	100%

	Survey sample		NJ TRANSIT customer pool	
<b>Annual household income</b>				
Under \$15,000	541	8%	22,810	11.6%
\$15,000-24,999	386	5.7%	17,427	8.9%
\$25,000-34,999	345	5.1%	16,225	8.3%
\$35,000-49,999	410	6%	18,381	9.4%
\$50,000-74,999	819	12.1%	26,834	13.7%
\$75,000-99,999	906	13.4%	22,448	11.4%
\$100,000-149,999	1,186	17.5%	27,578	14.1%
\$150,000-\$199,999	819	12.1%	16,960	8.6%
\$200,000-249,999	521	7.7%	10,702	5.5%
\$250,000 and over	850	12.5%	16,866	8.6%
Total	6,783	100%	196,231	100%
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>				
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,094	15.6%	30,287	15%
Black or African American	783	11.2%	39,518	19.6%
Other	614	8.8%	28,210	14%
White	4,508	64.4%	103,853	51.4%
Total	6,999	1%	201,868	1%
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1,029	14.6%	50,534	25%
<b>No. of vehicles in household</b>				
Zero	1,457	20.7%	62,455	31%
One	2,277	32.4%	67,620	33.5%
Two	2,168	30.8%	48,016	23.8%
Three or more	1,133	16.1%	23,545	11.7%
Total	7,035	1%	201,636	100%
<b>No. of children in household</b>				
Zero	5,110	72.8%	---	---
One-two	1,668	23.8%	---	---
Three or more	239	3.4%	---	---
Total	7,017	1%	---	---

Sources: Sample statistics from Marginalized Gender Study customer survey, 2023, NJ TRANSIT Customer statistics based on data from NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring + Fall 2022.

Notes: Gender minorities include individuals that identified as non-binary, gender fluid, or transgender. LGBTQ+ includes individuals that identify as having a sexual orientation other than straight. Minors were not eligible to take the survey.

Table 9 – Travel frequency by mode, all trips

Travel frequency	Women											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
5 or more days/week	957	47%	316	12%	321	12%	71	2%	165	6%	189	7%
3-4 days/week	829	41%	163	6%	451	17%	49	2%	251	9%	230	8%
1-2 days/week	505	25%	115	4%	736	28%	118	4%	617	22%	605	21%
1-3 times per month	253	12%	60	2%	527	20%	582	20%	971	35%	1,036	36%
A few times per year	253	12%	85	3%	496	19%	984	34%	764	28%	973	34%
Never/ Not applicable	1,028	50%	2,421	90%	912	34%	1,229	42%	425	15%	246	9%
Total	2,039		2,681		2,671		2,913		2,777		2,860	
	Men											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
5 or more days/week	694	40%	171	8%	183	9%	41	2%	101	5%	126	6%
3-4 days/week	193	11%	111	6%	284	14%	27	1%	177	8%	197	9%
1-2 days/week	287	17%	69	3%	547	28%	75	3%	426	20%	483	22%
1-3 times per month	405	24%	56	3%	323	16%	348	16%	637	31%	690	32%
A few times per year	816	47%	51	3%	299	15%	704	32%	546	26%	758	35%
Never/ Not applicable	214	12%	1,837	91%	818	41%	1,040	48%	478	23%	225	10%
Total	1,722		2,013		1,987		2,167		2,087		2,156	
	SGMs											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
5 or more days/week	366	28%	128	10%	111	10%	28	2%	75	7%	82	6%
3-4 days/week	289	22%	87	7%	186	16%	23	2%	135	13%	121	9%
1-2 days/week	63	5%	72	5%	328	28%	63	5%	285	27%	308	22%
1-3 times per month	108	8%	45	3%	233	20%	244	19%	139	13%	460	33%
A few times per year	37	3%	39	3%	189	16%	452	35%	276	26%	347	25%
Never/ Not applicable	438	34%	958	72%	117	10%	494	38%	152	14%	68	5%
Total	1,301		1,329		1,164		1,304		1,062		1,386	

Source: Sample statistics from Marginalized Gender Study customer survey, 2023

Table 10 – Travel mode by purpose, all trips

Travel mode	Women											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
Drive my own vehicle	817	25%	244	26%	1,734	55%	1,532	59%	1,291	44%	1,181	39%
Carpool	26	1%	19	2%	76	2%	51	2%	73	2%	82	3%
Walk/Bike (including e-bikes & scooters)	195	6%	135	14%	384	12%	180	7%	187	6%	161	5%
NJ TRANSIT Bus	762	23%	258	27%	416	13%	346	13%	409	14%	441	15%
NJ TRANSIT Rail	895	28%	191	20%	194	6%	173	7%	569	19%	714	24%
NJ TRANSIT Light Rail	90	3%	23	2%	70	2%	36	1%	61	2%	71	2%
NJ TRANSIT Access Link	14	0%	8	1%	20	1%	20	1%	16	1%	17	1%
Uber/Lyft/Taxi	68	2%	18	2%	135	4%	164	6%	164	6%	173	6%
Other	385	12%	52	5%	104	3%	92	4%	158	5%	196	6%
Total	3,252		948		3,133		2,594		2,928		3,036	
	Men											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
Drive my own vehicle	574	22%	159	26%	1,305	59%	1,162	63%	1079	51%	1,000	43%
Carpool	7	0%	4	1%	22	1%	20	1%	27	1%	23	1%
Walk/Bike (including e-bikes & scooters)	176	7%	119	19%	293	13%	159	9%	156	7%	182	8%
NJ TRANSIT Bus	619	24%	147	24%	264	12%	222	12%	256	12%	308	13%
NJ TRANSIT Rail	865	34%	128	21%	156	7%	113	6%	372	17%	524	22%
NJ TRANSIT Light Rail	55	2%	20	3%	60	3%	23	1%	46	2%	62	3%
NJ TRANSIT Access Link	9	0%	4	1%	6	0%	5	0%	8	0%	6	0%
Uber/Lyft/Taxi	30	1%	6	1%	55	2%	81	4%	77	4%	77	3%
Other	228	9%	36	6%	57	3%	65	4%	109	5%	148	6%
Total	2,563		623		2,218		1,850		2130		2,330	
	SGMs											
	Work		School		Shop		Medical		Social		Rec/Ent	
Drive my own vehicle	344	29%	103	22%	606	46%	560	48%	446	34%	414	30%
Carpool	13	1%	11	2%	46	4%	48	4%	48	4%	45	3%
Walk/Bike (including e-bikes & scooters)	127	11%	95	20%	208	16%	104	9%	93	7%	86	6%
NJ TRANSIT Bus	254	21%	100	21%	171	13%	132	11%	179	14%	196	14%
NJ TRANSIT Rail	282	24%	104	22%	85	6%	85	7%	280	22%	340	25%
NJ TRANSIT Light Rail	36	3%	8	2%	37	3%	17	1%	32	2%	37	3%
NJ TRANSIT Access Link	5	0%	3	1%	4	0%	4	0%	6	0%	4	0%
Uber/Lyft/Taxi	30	3%	5	1%	56	4%	79	7%	66	5%	62	5%
Other	102	9%	40	9%	96	7%	128	11%	151	12%	182	13%
Total	1,193		469		1,309		1,157		1,301		1,366	

Source: Sample statistics from Marginalized Gender Study customer survey, 2023

### ***Travel and trip making behavior***

To understand overall travel and trip making patterns, respondents were asked how frequently they travel for different purposes and what travel mode they most frequently use for these trips. As shown in Table 9 and Table 10, among survey respondents,

- Women travel more days per week for all trip purposes than men.
- Men take transit more often for work trips and are more likely to take rail.
- Men and women are near evenly split in terms of transit use for other trip purposes.
- Women use Uber/Lyft/Taxi more often than men for various trip purposes.
- SGMs travel fewer days per week for work than either men or women overall.

As shown in Table 11, more than two-thirds of survey respondents reported being regular riders who used NJ TRANSIT services on a daily/weekly basis.

Table 11 – Transit use

	Women		Men		SGM	
Transit use						
Regular rider	2,750	66%	2,204	68%	1,009	64%
Occasional/infrequent rider	1,447	34%	1,047	32%	565	36%
	4,197		3,251		1,574	

Survey respondents were also asked to provide details about the most frequent trip they make using NJ TRANSIT. These data are summarized in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference**. As shown in the table, the most common trip purpose was to go to work. This was true for women, men and SGMs. Men reported work trips at a slightly higher rate than women and SGMs. The second most common trip was for recreation/entertainment purposes. The vast majority of survey respondents started their trip from home. This was also true for women, men and SGMs.

Table 12 – Most frequent trip by NJ TRANSIT

<b>Most frequent trip by NJ TRANSIT</b>	<b>Women</b>		<b>Men</b>		<b>SGM</b>	
<b>Mode</b>						
NJ TRANSIT Bus	1,374	33%	1,019	31%	473	30%
NJ TRANSIT Rail	2,547	61%	2,038	63%	976	62%
NJ TRANSIT Light Rail	220	5%	163	5%	106	7%
NJ TRANSIT Access Link	36	1%	17	1%	12	1%
Total	4,177		3,237		1,567	
<b>Trip purpose</b>						
Go to work	1,761	42%	1,652	51%	568	36%
Go to school	319	8%	210	6%	138	9%
Medical appointment	112	3%	83	3%	46	3%
Recreation/Entertainment	964	23%	684	21%	412	26%
Shopping/Errands	185	4%	91	3%	60	4%
Visit with friends/family	698	17%	419	13%	298	19%
Other	139	3%	99	3%	46	3%
Total	4,178		3,238		1,568	
<b>Begin Trip</b>						
Home	3,696	89%	2,875	89%	1,374	88%
Work	159	4%	176	5%	52	3%
School	142	3%	68	2%	87	6%
Other	177	4%	116	4%	55	4%
Total	4,174		3,235		1,568	

### ***Access and design – Traveling with children***

Survey respondents were asked if they normally travel with children. approximately 1,156 individuals or 15 percent of survey pool reported regularly traveling with children 17 years old or younger. Women were more likely to report caregiver responsibilities while using NJ TRANSIT than either men or SGMs. When asked how much they agree with various statements about traveling with children, respondents reported a mix of experiences. Less than half of women and SGMs agreed that it was “easy to get around,” or “easy to get on/off vehicles” when traveling with children. Fewer than 20 percent agreed that “there were enough family-friendly restrooms at stations/stops,” and only about one-third of women and SGMs agreed that “other riders are courteous to people traveling with children.”

Table 13 – Travel experiences for those traveling with children

Percent agreeing with the following statements	Women		Men		SGM	
I normally travel with children (infant to 17 years old)	659	16%	344	11%	153	10%
It is easy to get around traveling with children	226	46%	129	51%	44	37%
Getting on/off vehicles is easy when traveling with children	213	43%	141	56%	41	34%
There are enough family-friendly restrooms at stations/stops	95	19%	47	19%	23	19%
Ramps, escalators, and elevators make it easy to get around when traveling with children	294	60%	148	58%	60	51%
Ramps, escalators, and elevators are located where I need them	206	42%	117	46%	42	36%
Other riders are courteous to people traveling with children	166	34%	124	49%	41	35%
I use different routes/stops when traveling with children	153	31%	69	27%	43	36%
I travel at different times when traveling with children	268	55%	139	55%	76	63%
It would be good to have a place to park stroller	247	51%	106	42%	63	54%
<i>Total number of respondents</i>	506		282		126	

More than half of women and SGMs regularly travel with children reported altering their travel times and about one third said they used different stops when traveling with children. A slight majority of women and SGMs that travel with children agreed that it would be good to have designated place to park strollers.

The experiences of men differed from that of women and SGMs. Men were consistently more likely to report more positive experiences when traveling with children. Table 13 provides more detail.

### ***Comfort and condition***

Survey respondents were asked to offer their opinions and experiences related to the comfort and convenience of traveling on NJ TRANSIT. While a majority of respondents, 59 percent of women, 62 percent of men and 56 percent of SGMs, agreed that “NJ TRANSIT feels comfortable” while traveling an important minority of respondent did not or were neutral in response to this question. Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the cleanliness of facilities. Only 38 percent of women, 40 percent of men, and 35 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “waiting areas and public space at facilities are clean.” The vast majority for respondents had negative opinions regarding restrooms. Twenty percent of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed that “restrooms are clean.” Only 25 percent of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed that “restrooms feel safe.”

Table 14 – Opinions regarding the comfort and condition of NJ TRANSIT facilities

Percent agreeing with the following statements	Women		Men		SGM	
Signs at stops/stations help me find my way	2,626	63%	1,997	61%	1,022	65%
NJ TRANSIT feels comfortable to me	2,405	59%	1,947	62%	859	56%
Waiting areas and public space at facilities are clean	1,528	38%	1,257	40%	526	35%
Vehicles are clean	1,965	49%	1,646	53%	691	45%
There are enough restrooms	988	25%	794	25%	330	22%
Restrooms are clean	773	19%	612	20%	238	16%
Restrooms feel safe	926	23%	786	25%	334	22%
Total number of respondents	4,197		3,251		1,574	

### ***Interactions with others***

When asked about their interactions with customers, NJ TRANSIT employees and police, respondents had mixed opinions. For example, significant majorities of women, men, and SGMs agreed with the statements NJ TRANSIT employees “are courteous” and “treat me with respect,” while only 35 percent of women, 38 percent of men and 33 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “other riders are courteous.” Only about one-third of respondents, 31 percent of women, 37 percent of men, and 31 percent of SGMs, agreed that “NJ TRANSIT employees respond quickly to incidents.”

Table 15 – Opinions about interacting with others while using NJ TRANSIT

Percent agreeing with the following statements	Women		Men		SGM	
Other riders are courteous	1,416	35%	1,200	38%	505	33%
NJ TRANSIT employees are courteous	2,567	63%	2,059	65%	907	59%
NJ TRANSIT employees treat me with respect	2,774	68%	2,211	70%	991	65%
NJ TRANSIT employees respond quickly to incidents	1,267	31%	1,166	37%	470	31%

### ***Perceptions of safety and security***

One of the most important parts of customer’s travel experience is their feeling of safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT services. To investigate customer perceptions of safety and security, the research team included a detailed battery of questions about safety and security concerns during the customers complete trip, from accessing the origin station/stop to traveling to their final destination from their alighting station/stop. Questions also differentiated between times of travel and explored what conditions made customer’s feel more or less safe or secure. Table 16 summarizes survey responses to various safety-related questions.



Table 16 – Perceptions of safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT

	Women		Men		SGM	
<b>Have you ever felt concerned about safety while using NJ TRANSIT?</b>						
Yes	1,195	29%	632	20%	511	33%
No	2,874	71%	2,545	80%	1,015	67%
<b>Feel somewhat or very safe daytime</b>						
Traveling to stop/station before boarding	3,578	87%	2,816	89%	1,337	87%
Station/stop parking	2,341	79%	2,036	84%	850	78%
Waiting at stop/station	3,221	79%	2,620	83%	1,167	76%
On vehicle	3,407	84%	2,767	88%	1,281	83%
Traveling from stop/station after alighting	3,099	76%	2,541	81%	1,158	76%
<b>Feel somewhat or very safe at night</b>						
Traveling to stop/station before boarding	2,341	61%	2,208	73%	864	60%
Station/stop parking	1,417	51%	1,605	68%	502	47%
Waiting at stop/station	1,931	51%	2,016	67%	685	47%
On vehicle	2,621	68%	2,413	80%	989	68%
Traveling from stop/station after alighting	2,038	53%	2,042	68%	714	49%
<b>Percent agreeing with the following statements</b>						
Stops/stations have adequate lighting	1,781	42%	1,655	51%	628	40%
I feel safer when other customers are around	2,631	63%	1,768	54%	906	58%
I feel safer when customers of the same gender are around	1,950	46%	490	15%	723	46%
I feel safer when NJT police are around	2,387	57%	1,970	61%	736	47%
I feel safer when other NJT employees are around	2,376	57%	1,705	52%	947	60%
There are enough security cameras	788	19%	818	25%	333	21%
Security cameras make me feel safe	2,217	53%	1,677	52%	737	47%
I feel safer when transit spaces are free from graffiti	2,013	48%	1,834	56%	641	41%
There are about the right number of officers	1,423	34%	1,240	38%	605	38%
There are too few officers	2,220	53%	1,569	48%	684	43%
There are too many officers	122	3%	119	4%	154	10%

The vast majority of NJ TRANSIT customers surveyed were not concerned about safety or security. With that said, a significant number of customers, 29 percent of women, 20 percent of men and 33 percent of SGMs indicated that they have felt concerned about safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT services. Concerns about safety and security were more prevalent at night when it is dark outside. Women and SGMs were more likely to be concerned about safety and security both during the day and especially at night. This was true traveling to their boarding stop/station, while using station/stop parking, while waiting at a stop/station, on the vehicle, and traveling from their alighting stop to their final destination. Both women and SGMs felt least safe and secure using station/stop parking, waiting at their origin stop/station, and traveling from their

alighting station to their final destination. Only about half of women and SGMs said they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” in these situations.

When asked how much they agree with various statements about safety and security, a majority expressed concerns about the level of lighting at stops and stations. Only about half of men and even fewer women and SGMs agreed with the statement “Stops/stations have adequate lighting.” As might be expected, a majority of customers reported feeling safer when others are around. For example, 63 percent of women, 54 percent of men, and 58 percent of SGMs, reported feeling safer “when other customers are around.” Fifty seven percent of women, 61 percent of men and 47 percent of SGMs agreed with the statement “I feel safer when NJ TRANSIT police are around,” and 57 percent of women, 52 percent of men, and 60 percent of SGMs agreed that they “feel safer when other NJ TRANSIT employees are around.”

These results reveal some interesting gender differences. For example, while a majority of women and men agreed they felt safer when NJ TRANSIT police were around, less than half of SGMs said the same. Further, while men were more likely to feel safer when police are present, SGMs were more likely to feel safer when other NJ TRANSIT employees are present. When asked about the number of police officers present while using NJ TRANSIT services, very few respondents agreed with the statement “there are too many officers,” while 53 percent of women, 48 percent of men, and 43 percent of SGMs agreed “there are too few officers.” Women were more likely than men and SGMs to say that there are “too few” officers and SGMs are more likely to say there are “too many” officers. A majority of respondents agreed that security cameras make them feel safe and less than a quarter of respondents agreed with the statement “there are enough security cameras.”

### ***Experiences with harassment and assault***

Survey respondents were asked whether they have ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT services. Respondents who indicated having experienced harassment were further asked about the frequency and type of harassment, when the last incident occurred, and whether the incident was reported. As shown in Table 17, the vast majority of survey respondents use NJ TRANSIT services without experiencing harassment or assault. However, approximately 13 percent or nearly 1,000 survey respondents, reported having experienced harassment/assault in the past while using NJ TRANSIT services. Of those respondents that have experienced past harassment/assault, 32 percent reported the incident happened “only one time,” while 61 percent reported it happening, “but not often,” Six percent reported experiencing harassment/assault “a least half the time” they ride.” Several respondents reported being harassed “every time” they ride. Women and SGMs were more likely to report frequent incidents of harassment/assault, with harassment/assault among SGMs the most prevalent.

In terms of the types of harassment that occur, the most commonly reported type among women, men and SGMs was verbal comments, including slurs. Also common were invading personal space, blocking passage, and staring/leering. Less common but still frequently mentioned forms of harassment/assault were more serious in nature. These included verbal comments of a sexual nature, being followed and unwanted/unwelcome touching or brushing. Two thirds of

respondents with past experience with harassment/assault indicated that the incident(s) occurred within the past 12 months.

Table 17 – Experiences with harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT

<b>Have you ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT?</b>	<b>Women</b>		<b>Men</b>		<b>SGM</b>	
Yes	474	13%	268	9%	253	18%
No	3,250	87%	2,684	91%	1,146	82%
<b>How frequently do you experience harassment?</b>						
It happens every time I ride	3	1%	0	0%	2	1%
It happens at least half the time I ride	27	6%	14	6%	16	8%
It happens, but not often	278	60%	142	55%	140	73%
It has happened only one time	154	33%	104	40%	34	18%
	462		260		192	
<b>What types of harassment/assault have you experienced?</b>						
Verbal comments (including slurs)	300	63%	179	67%	168	66%
Personal space invaded or blocked from passing	224	47%	98	37%	95	38%
Staring/leering	246	52%	82	31%	149	59%
Verbal comments of a sexual nature	185	39%	28	10%	97	38%
Being followed	126	27%	38	14%	75	30%
Unwanted/unwelcome touching or brushing	122	26%	21	8%	75	30%
Misrecognition/misgendering	8	2%	3	1%	24	9%
Denied entry or service to a NJ TRANSIT facility or vehicle	12	3%	12	4%	5	2%
Shown sexual/pornographic images	16	3%	8	3%	12	5%
Reported to authorities for no reason	6	1%	5	2%	3	1%
Groping	26	5%	11	4%	17	7%
Kissing	4	1%	2	1%	4	2%
Penetration	1	0%	2	1%	1	0%
Other	46	10%	53	20%	28	11%
<b>How long ago did the most recent incident happen?</b>						
6 months or less	203	43%	121	45%	112	44%
7-12 months	88	19%	36	13%	41	16%
13-24 months	33	7%	38	14%	23	9%
More than 24 months	108	23%	50	19%	54	21%
Cannot recall or prefer not to answer	38	8%	20	7%	22	9%

Most incidents of harassment/assault go unreported. Only 15 percent of women and SGMs and 18 percent of men that have experienced harassment/assault reported the incident(s) to police. The reasons given for not reporting the incidents to police were varied, but the most common reasons given were that the victims felt reporting “would not have made a difference,” or they “did not think it was a big deal at the time.” Women and SGMs were more likely to cite these

reasons than men. Importantly, other common reasons for not reporting the incidents were because the victims “did not know who to report to” or “how to report it.” SGMs were more likely than women or men to say they “feared interacting with authorities” or were “uncomfortable sharing what happened.”

Table 18 – Reporting incidents of harassment/assault that occurred while using NJ TRANSIT

<b>Did you report the incident?</b>						
No	394	85%	215	82%	215	85%
Yes, reported but NOT NJ TRANSIT police	11	2%	9	3%	10	4%
Yes, reported to NJ TRANSIT police	60	13%	39	15%	27	11%
	465		263		252	
<b>If you did not report the incident, why not? (Multiple responses allowed)</b>						
It would not have made a difference	236	60%	119	55%	139	65%
I did not think it was a big deal at the time	128	32%	63	29%	75	35%
My immigration status	2	1%	3	1%	2	1%
I don't trust authorities	43	11%	25	12%	43	20%
I fear interacting with authorities	21	5%	10	5%	28	13%
I did not know who to report it to	112	28%	42	20%	63	29%
I did not know how to report it	98	25%	44	20%	57	27%
I did not think people would believe me	22	6%	10	5%	16	7%
I was uncomfortable sharing what happened	49	12%	27	13%	48	22%
Other	80	20%	47	22%	34	16%

Respondents that reported past experience with harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT were asked a series of questions about how the incident(s) impacted their well-being. A majority of respondents reported fear that they might be injured or harmed during the incident and more than 20 percent feared for their lives. This fear was more common among women and SGMs than men. Only about 5 percent of respondents reported that they were actually physically injured during the incident. As might be expected, it was common for victims to report that the incident cause them to “experience anxiety worse than before” then incident happened. Again, women and SGMs were more likely than men to report post-incident anxiety. Less common, was feeling “depressed more than before” the incident happened.

Sixty two percent of women and 67 percent of SGMs “believed that the harassment/assault happened because of their “gender identity or expression.” Men were far less likely to attribute the harassment/assault to this reason. Women and SGMs were also more likely to believe that the incidents occurred because of their “physical size or stature.” Men were more likely than women and SGMs to say the harassment/assault occurred because of their “race” or “economic status.” See Table 19 for more detail.

Table 19 – Effects of harassment/assault on individual well-being

<b>When the incident happened, I...</b>						
Was physically injured	12	3%	15	6%	16	6%
Feared I would be injured or harmed	267	58%	140	55%	161	64%
Feared for my life	86	19%	45	18%	56	22%
<b>Because this incident happened, I...</b>						
Experience anxiety worse than before it happened	313	68%	162	64%	189	75%
Feel depressed more than before it happened	62	13%	46	18%	66	26%
Have suicidal thoughts	2	0%	9	4%	12	5%
Experienced financial hardship	12	3%	12	5%	14	6%
Lost my job	0	0%	4	2%	2	1%
<b>I believe the harassment happened because of my...</b>						
Gender identity or expression	284	62%	48	19%	168	67%
Physical size/stature	191	42%	57	22%	112	44%
Race or ethnicity	140	30%	106	42%	77	31%
Sexual orientation	101	22%	46	18%	90	36%
Economic Status	69	15%	84	33%	39	15%
Disability	16	3%	15	6%	13	5%
Other	28	6%	23	9%	19	8%

Many survey respondents, whether or not they have experienced past harassment/assault, reported altering their behavior and taking actions to avoid being harassed or assaulted. The most common strategies mentioned were “avoid making eye contact,” “move to another seat or location,” “alert others about travel plans,” and “choose a seat away from other people.” Many also reported traveling at certain time of day and avoiding nighttime travel. Men were more likely than women or SGMs to report that they “do not take precautions or alter my behavior.” See Table 20 for more detail.

Table 20 – Strategies used to avoid harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT

<b>To avoid harassment, I take the following precautions...</b>						
Avoid making eye contact	1,836	44%	1,060	33%	801	51%
Move to another seat or location	1,734	41%	987	30%	666	42%
Alert others about my travel plans	1,620	39%	421	13%	597	38%
Choose a seat away from other people	1,514	36%	896	28%	714	45%
Travel at certain times of day	1,474	35%	585	18%	481	31%
Avoid traveling at night	1,454	35%	547	17%	460	29%
Use stations/stops that I believe are safe	1,439	34%	653	20%	483	31%
Choose to take only routes I believe are safe	1,163	28%	499	15%	371	24%
Travel with others	1,071	26%	432	13%	422	27%
Carry items I can use to protect myself	936	22%	271	8%	399	25%
Sit near/wait with someone with similar gender expression	890	21%	117	4%	398	25%
Get off the vehicle or abandon the trip if harassment occurs	654	16%	300	9%	260	17%
Travel other ways like driving, walking taxi, Uber, Lyft	562	13%	208	6%	214	14%
Change the way I dress when I ride NJ TRANSIT	535	13%	94	3%	248	16%
I do not take precautions or alter my behavior	467	11%	1,100	34%	240	15%
Change the way I speak	388	9%	274	8%	289	18%
Make fewer trips or limit my travel	371	9%	184	6%	164	10%
Other	96	2%	78	2%	38	2%

***Ways to improve travel experiences while using NJ TRANSIT***

Finally, all survey participants were presented with a list of six things NJ TRANSIT could do to improve customers' travel experiences when riding NJ TRANSIT. They were asked to select their top three choices. Table 21 shows the results. The top three selections for women, men, and SGMs were "Make it easier to alert someone when you feel unsafe or need help," "improve station/stop maintenance," and "improve lighting."

Table 21 – Top three things NJ TRANSIT can do to improve customer experience

<b>What are the top three things NJ TRANSIT can do to improve your experience when riding NJ TRANSIT?</b>	<b>Women</b>		<b>Men</b>		<b>SGM</b>	
Make it easier to alert someone when you feel unsafe or need help	2,418	58%	1,379	42%	901	57%
Improve station/stop maintenance	1,852	44%	1,650	51%	841	53%
Improve lighting	1,720	41%	1,251	38%	698	44%
Increase police presence	1,597	38%	1,251	38%	446	28%
Improve employee training	442	11%	259	8%	342	22%
Implement an open stroller section on buses and trains	285	7%	165	5%	110	7%

Survey respondents were also given the opportunity to share their own ideas for how to improve travel experiences when using NJ TRANSIT. Presented in no particular order, the following is a partial list of respondent suggestions:

- Better information and communication
- Fewer delays
- More frequent service
- Better scheduling
- Open more restrooms
- Improve signage
- Increase employee presence
- Address unhoused problem
- Clean/repair windows
- Clean vehicles more often, and
- More buses/less crowding.

## Analysis Results – Statistical modeling

In addition to analyzing cross-tabulations and various descriptive statistics, the research team conducted a series of statistical analyses to explore which factors appear to influence perception of safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT. Gender and sexual orientation were used as independent variables and safety measures as the dependent variables. The research team additionally controlled for various demographic and transportation variables, employing binary logistic regressions, an appropriate method for analyzing data from convenience samples.

Logistic regression estimates the probability of an outcome occurring—in this case, feelings of safety or occurrence of harassment/assault—based on a given set of independent variables. In a binary logistic regression, the outcome is either 0 or 1 (yes or no, true, or false). It is a common method for analyzing survey data and is particularly appropriate when the dependent variable is dichotomous (binary). We use the Variance Inflation Factor ( $VIF < 2$ ) to ensure that collinearity is minimized and not affecting the interpretation of the model. The odds ratio (OR) is a ratio of the odds of an event in one group to the odds of the event in another group. When the OR is greater than 1, the odds of the event are higher in the group compared to the reference group. The odds ratio is calculated as the exponentiated value of the regression coefficient.

Three key demographic questions are used throughout this analysis to categorize gender identification and sexual orientation:

1. How do you describe yourself? (Select only one)  
Answer options: Man, Woman, Non-binary, a Combination of Genders, Intersex, Other (Please specify), Prefer not to answer
2. Which of the following best represents your sexual orientation? (Select only one)  
Answer options: Straight, Bisexual, Gay or Lesbian, Pansexual, Asexual, or Something Else, or Prefer not to answer.

This variable was then converted to a binary variable with “straight” and “LGBQ+” as the options (excluding “prefer not to answer” responses).

3. Do you identify as transgender?  
Answer options: Yes, No, Prefer not to answer

A small number of participants identified as transgender (N=188) or gender minority/gender non-conforming (GNC) (N=217). Therefore, we combined the two variables as “Trans/Gender non-conforming” given that some transgender respondents were also gender non-conforming. This resulted in 308 Trans/Gender non-conforming respondents. Throughout the analysis, gender categories include Cisgender woman, cisgender man, and trans/gender non-conforming. Sexual orientation is categorized as straight versus LGBTQ+. Sexual and Gender Minorities (SGMs) represent 1564 respondents: 708 who are Cis-Women and LGBTQ+, 538 who are Cis-Men and LGBTQ+, 308 who are Trans or Gender-Non-Conforming, and 10 were not trans and who did not answer the Gender Question but specified that their sexual orientation was something other than “straight.”

### ***Perceptions of safety***

Respondents were asked if they had safety concerns while using NJ TRANSIT. Responses to the question “Have you ever felt concern about your safety on NJ TRANSIT?” are shown in Table 22. LGBTQ+ cis-women and trans/gender non-conforming populations display the highest rate of safety concerns, with 37 percent.

Table 22 – Gender influence on perceptions of safety, by gender and sexual orientation

Ever felt concerned about safety	Cis-Women (Straight) (N=3,144)	Cis-Women (LGBTQ+) (N=685)	Cis-Men (Straight) (N=2,480)	Cis-Men (LGBTQ+) (N=529)	Trans/GNC (N=296)	SGM (N=1,518)
Yes	27.2%	37.2%	18.1%	27.0%	36.8%	33.5%
No	72.8%	62.7%	81.9%	73.0%	63.2%	66.5%

To explore these findings further, the research team controlled for gender, sexual orientation, race, age, income, disability, transit mode, and transit ridership frequency. The dependent variable is a binary variable (yes/no) identifying whether respondents had a safety concern. Income was ultimately removed from the final model due to its insignificance once controlling for other factors. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 23. The following observations can be made from the analysis:

- Cisgender women were 1.6 times more likely to have a safety concern than cisgender men.
- Transgender and gender non-conforming persons were 1.7 times more likely to have a safety concern than cisgender men.
- LGBTQ+ persons were 1.5 times more likely to have a safety concern than straight persons.



- People who reported having a disability were two times as likely to have a safety concern than people who did not report doing so.
- People aged under 34 were more likely to have a safety concern than those aged 55 and older.
- People using NJ TRANSIT Light Rail to get to work were nearly 3 times (2.8) as likely to have a safety concern than those using NJ TRANSIT Bus, NJ TRANSIT Rail, Access Link, or other non-NJ TRANSIT modes.
- Frequency of riding transit was significant, as more frequent users were more likely to express safety concerns.
- Race and income were not statistically significant variables related to explaining safety concerns.

Table 23: Regression results for safety concerns when riding NJ TRANSIT

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Have you ever felt concerned for your safety when riding NJ TRANSIT? (Answered Yes)	
	Coefficient (standard error)	Odds Ratio
Gender: Cis-Woman (Reference: Cis-Man)	0.486*** (0.060)	1.6
Gender: Trans/Gender non-conforming (Reference: Cis-Man)	0.471*** (0.140)	1.6
Sexual Orientation: LGBTQ+ (Reference: Straight)	0.394*** (0.071)	1.5
Race: Asian (Reference: White)	-0.141 (0.087)	Not significant (n.s).
Race: Black or African American (Reference: White)	-0.181* (0.097)	0.83
Race: Other/Two or more races (Reference: White)	0.160 (0.105)	n.s.
Race not disclosed (Reference: White)	-0.210 (0.199)	n.s.
Age Group: 35-54 (Reference: < 35 years old)	-0.050 (0.070)	n.s.
Age Group: 55 and over (Reference: < 35 years old)	-0.253*** (0.081)	0.78
Age not disclosed (Reference: < 35 years old)	-0.367 (0.215)	n.s.
No Disability (Reference: Reported a Disability)	-0.640*** (0.091)	0.53
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Access Link (Reference: NJ TRANSIT Bus)	0.177 (0.458)	n.s.
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Light Rail (Reference: NJ TRANSIT Bus)	1.044*** (0.184)	2.8
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Rail (Reference: NJ TRANSIT Bus)	0.188** (0.086)	1.2

Mode to work: Not employed/not disclosed (Reference: NJ TRANSIT Bus)	-0.188* (0.098)	0.83
Mode to work: Other, not NJ TRANSIT (Reference: NJ TRANSIT Bus)	0.169* (0.088)	1.2
I regularly ride NJ TRANSIT (Reference: I rarely ride NJ TRANSIT)	0.359*** (0.070)	1.4
Constant	-1.154*** (0.147)	
Observations	7,257	
Log Likelihood	-3,907.262	
Log Likelihood at zero	-4,058.468	
Akaike Inf. Crit.	7,850.523	
Note:		*p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

### ***Harassment and assault***

Respondents were asked “Have you ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT?” Among those who answered the question (N = 7,174), 11.1% or 795 customers responded that they had experienced harassment/assault. The most common reported types of harassments/assault were verbal comments (including slurs), staring/leering, and invaded personal space. Respondents could optionally describe the incident(s) in which harassment/assault took place. They were advised to refrain from providing identifying information in the description. Descriptions often included distressing situations for respondents. Below are a few examples focusing on homophobic and transphobic themes.

*“I was riding to NYC and this man sitting across from me was acting weird, so I glanced at him. He yelled at me that he was going to (...) split my head open called me a [homophobic slur] and said to (...) move. I was really scared, and the train operators didn’t do anything for me. As a Bi man who acts and dresses very LGBTQ+ I didn’t feel safe on NJ transit for a while especially being called a [homophobic slur]. Unacceptable and I still get scared.” (Cis Man, LGBTQ+)*

*“Overheard another passenger use the t-slur and f-slur while looking at me from across the car. [I was] followed after leaving the train until I was able to blend into a large crowd and lose my pursuer. [I] have had passengers stare, glare and make hand gestures of a sexual nature while making eye contact with me.” (Trans Woman, LGBTQ+)*

*“I got on the train and a man followed my friends and I to the area where we were sitting, sat behind us and called us names like [homophobic slurs] almost our entire ride.” (Cis Man, LGBTQ+)*

*“A middle-aged man approached me and verbally berated me because I ‘was not a woman and should be arrested for public indecency.’ I was taking the train from NJ to Philadelphia, so there was really nowhere for me to go and no security present to defend me. I left the train at the next stop and did not continue my journey. I returned to my original station, got into my car, and left before the man returned.” (Trans Woman, LGBTQ+)*

In line with previous studies, women, LGBTQ+, and gender minorities were more likely to have experienced incidents of harassment/assault. See Table 24. While a higher share of women revealed being harassed than men, a higher share of LGBTQ+ cis-men (14.1 percent) report being harassed than straight women (10.9 percent). Trans/gender non-conforming persons (21 percent) and LGBTQ+ women (20.1 percent) had the highest rate of past experience with harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT.

Respondents were also asked *why* they thought they were harassed (Question: “I believe the harassment happened because of my ...”). Respondents could select multiple answers which were presented in a random order for each respondent. The reasons varied depending on the gender and sexual orientation. The majority (52 percent) of straight cis-men who responded they were harassed believed it was because of their race. In comparison, 37 percent of LGBTQ+ cis-men who responded that they were harassed said that they thought the harassment was racially motivated and 60 percent believed it was due to their sexual orientation. By comparison, 30 percent of LGBTQ+ cis-women who reported being harassed believed it was due to their sexual orientation. Among victims of past harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT, women and transgender/gender non-conforming persons more strongly believe that gender identity was the driving factor for the harassment/assault. Sixty-two percent of straight cis-women who were harassed, 82 percent of trans/gender non-conforming and 86 percent of LGBTQ+ cis-women who were harassed believed that it was due to their gender identity.

Table 24: Prevalence of harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT, by gender and sexual orientation

Have you ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT?	Cis-Women (Straight) (N=2,880)	Cis-Women (LGBTQ+) (N=631)	Cis-Men (Straight) (N=2,316)	Cis-Men (LGBTQ+) (N=483)	Trans / GNC (N=267)	SGM (N=1,390)
Yes	10.9%	20.1%	7.9%	14.1%	21.0%	18.1%
No	89.1%	79.9%	92.1%	86.9%	79.0%	81.9%

Moreover, SGMs had a higher prevalence of repeated harassment/assault while using NJ TRANSIT. Respondents were asked “How frequently do you experience harassment or assault when using NJ TRANSIT?” As shown in Table 25, overall, 35 percent said that it had happened only one time, while 58 percent said that it happens, but not often. Men who revealed being harassed/assaulted were more likely to say it was a single incident (41.1 percent overall) than women who revealed being harassed/assaulted (33.6 percent). Trans/gender non-conforming persons had the highest prevalence of both harassment/assault (21 percent) and repeated harassment/assault (73 percent) of those who were harassed/assaulted.

Table 25: Frequency of harassment or assault among respondents who reported being harassed or assaulted.

How frequently do you experience harassment or assault when using NJ TRANSIT?	<b>Cis-Women (Straight)</b> (N=306)	<b>Cis-Women (LGBQ+)</b> (N=124)	<b>Cis-Men (Straight)</b> (N=176)	<b>Cis-Men (LGBQ+)</b> (N=66)	<b>Trans / GNC</b> (N=55)	<b>SGM</b> (N=246)	<b>All</b> (N=772)
<b>It has happened only one time</b>	33.7%	33.9%	38.1%	48.5%	27.3%	36.2%	35.1%
<b>It happens, but not often</b>	59.5%	59.7%	56.3%	45.5%	61.8%	56.5%	58.3%
<b>It happens frequently</b>	6.9%	6.5%	5.7%	6.1%	10.9%	7.3%	6.6%

The research team ran a similar regression model as the one for safety concerns, in which the dependent variable is the binary response (yes/no) to whether respondents have been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT. See

Table 26. Again, the research team controlled for gender, sexual orientation, age group, disability, mode to work, and transit frequency. Race and income were removed from the final model as they were found to be not significant.

The following observations can be made from the modeling:

- Cisgender women were 1.5 times as likely to have been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared cisgender men.
- Trans/gender non-conforming were 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to men.
- LGBQ+ persons are 2.1 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to straight persons.
- Persons aged 35+ were more likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT compared to persons under 35 years old.
- Respondents using NJ TRANSIT Light Rail were nearly 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT than people who took NJ TRANSIT Buses to work.
- Respondents who rode NJ TRANSIT frequently were nearly 2 times as likely to have been harassed/assaulted compared to those who rode infrequently.

Table 26: Regression results for whether respondents have ever been harassed/assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Have you ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT? (Answered Yes)	
	Coef (s.e.)	Odds Ratio
Gender: Cis-Woman (Reference: Cis-Man)	0.420*** (0.086)	1.5
Gender: Trans/Gender non-conforming (Reference: Cis-Man)	0.650*** (0.180)	1.9
Sexual Orientation: LGBTQ+ (Reference: Straight)	0.739*** (0.094)	2.1
Age Group: 35-54 (Reference: < 35 years old)	0.291*** (0.100)	1.3
Age Group: 55 and over (Reference: < 35 years old)	0.321*** (0.112)	1.4
Age not disclosed (Reference: < 35 years old)	1.174*** (0.227)	3.2
No Disability (Reference: Reported a Disability)	-0.585*** (0.115)	0.56
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Access Link (Reference: NJT Bus)	-0.269 (0.646)	n.s.
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Light Rail (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.655*** (0.230)	1.9
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Rail (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.091 (0.116)	n.s.
Not employed/not disclosed (Reference: NJT Bus)	-0.540*** (0.142)	0.58

Mode to work: Other, not NJ Transit (Reference: NJT Bus)	-0.019 (0.122)	n.s.
I regularly ride NJ TRANSIT (Reference: I rarely ride NJ TRANSIT)	0.589*** (0.106)	1.8
Constant	-2.633*** (0.201)	
<hr/>		
Observations	6,774	
Log Likelihood	-2,217.338	
Log Likelihood at zero	-2,3470.02	
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,462.676	
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Note:		*p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

### ***Perceptions of safety and security – Presence of NJ TRANSIT Police***

One interesting finding from the analysis of descriptive statistics was apparent gender differences when asked if the presence of NJ TRANSIT police influences perceptions of safety and security. To investigate this finding in more detail, the research team conducted additional analysis. As shown in Table 27, women who identified as straight and men of any sexual orientation generally felt safer when NJ TRANSIT police were (62 percent). Women who identified as LGBQ+, and trans/gender non-conforming were less likely to agree with the statement, with just 33-41 percent agreeing that they feel safer with NJ TRANSIT police around. Further, when asked about feelings of safety and security when NJ TRANSIT employees (other than police), security cameras, and customers of the same gender were present, differences based on gender and sexual orientation were also observed. For instance, more LGBQ+ women felt safer when customers of the same gender are around compared to straight women. There were minimal differences in feelings of safety and security relative to security cameras among cis-gender respondents, with around half of the respondents expressing that they felt safe in their presence. Transgender respondents, on the other hand, were much less likely to report that security cameras made them feel safe (35 percent).

Table 27: Percent agreeing with statements concerning NJ TRANSIT safety, by gender and sexual orientation.

Percent agreeing with the following statement	Cis-Women (Straight)	Cis-Women (LGBQ+)	Cis-Men (Straight)	Cis-Men (LGBQ+)	Trans / GNC	SGM
I feel safer when NJT police are around	62.2%	41.0%	62.9%	62.0%	33.0%	46.8%
I feel safer when NJT employees are around	57.3%	64.7%	53.5%	54.8%	66.0%	56.6%
I feel safer when customers of the same gender are around	44.0%	67.8%	14.9%	15.6%	53.7%	45.9%
Security cameras make me feel safe	56.7%	50.0%	53.4%	54.4%	35.4%	46.8%

Regression analysis shed additional light on these findings. See Table 28. When controlling for other factors, the following observations can be made:

- Cisgender men are statistically more likely to feel safer in the presence of police than women and gender minorities. In particular, cisgender men are over two times (2.3) as likely to agree with the statement that they feel safer with NJ TRANSIT police than gender minorities.
- LGBQ+ respondents were 1.4 times less likely to report feeling safe with police presence, compared to straight respondents.
- As age increased, respondents tended to report feeling safer with police presence.
- Race was generally not found to be a significant variable in determining feelings of safety and security when police are present, although, Asians were slightly more likely to feel safer with police presence (1.4 times) than whites.
- Respondents who used NJ TRANSIT Light Rail were more likely to feel safer with police presence than those using other NJ TRANSIT modes.
- Having a disability, income, and being a frequent rider of transit were found to be insignificant factors.



Table 28: Logistic Regression Results for Feelings of Safety in the Presence of NJ TRANSIT Police

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	I feel safer when NJ TRANSIT police are present (Agreed)	
	Coef (s.e.)	Odds Ratio
Gender: Cis-Woman (Reference: Cis-Man)	-0.115** (0.052)	0.89
Gender: Trans / Gender Non-Conforming (Reference: Cis-Man)	-0.838*** (0.138)	0.43
Sexual Orientation: LGBTQ+ (Reference: Straight)	-0.383*** (0.065)	0.68
Race: Asian (Reference: White)	0.306*** (0.076)	1.4
Race: Black or African American (Reference: White)	-0.047 (0.084)	n.s.
Race: Other (Reference: White)	0.040 (0.096)	n.s.
Race not disclosed (Reference: White)	-0.109 (0.172)	n.s.
Age Group: 35-54 (Reference: < 35 years old)	0.263*** (0.062)	1.3
Age Group: 55 and over (Reference: < 35 years old)	0.608*** (0.070)	1.8
Age not disclosed (Reference: < 35 years old)	0.356* (0.191)	1.4
No Disability (Reference: Reported a Disability)	-0.051 (0.088)	n.s.
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Access Link (Reference: NJT Bus)	-0.809* (0.466)	0.45
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Light Rail (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.854*** (0.203)	2.3
Mode to work: NJ TRANSIT Rail (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.115 (0.077)	n.s.
Not employed/not disclosed (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.209** (0.085)	1.2
Mode to work: Other, not NJ Transit (Reference: NJT Bus)	0.254***	1.3

	(0.078)	
I regularly ride NJ TRANSIT (Reference: I rarely ride NJ TRANSIT)	-0.090	n.s.
	(0.061)	
Constant	0.186	
	(0.133)	
Observations	7,053	
Log Likelihood	-4,620.969	
Log Likelihood at zero	-4,763.565	
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,277.938	
<i>Note:</i>		*p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of this study was to investigate how women and SGMs travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. While women and SGMs may face common socio-economic and structural barriers regarding travel needs, each group faces their own unique challenges. This research collected and analyzed identity-specific data that documents how women and SGMs travel using NJ TRANSIT and how their experiences in some cases differ from men and cisgender individuals. Insights from the analysis can be incorporated into future planning and decision-making.

This research provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of the barriers and challenges faced by women and SGMs that use public transit. This can lead to solutions that improve the travel experiences, safety, and security of women and SGMs and, ultimately, for all customers that use NJ TRANSIT. Implementation of the strategies recommended below also has the potential to improve the standing of NJ TRANSIT in terms of customer experience as well as real and perceived safety and security, perhaps leading to increased ridership.



Figure 1. NJ TRANSIT's strategic goals

More specifically, the research shows that women and SGMs have different travel experiences while using NJ TRANSIT, feel less safe using NJ TRANSIT, and are likely more vulnerable to harassment than people who identify as cisgender and straight. It may be the case that current policies are not sufficient to make women and SGMs feel safe while using NJ TRANSIT services. Women and SGMs make up more than half of NJ TRANSIT's customer base. These groups are an important component of NJ TRANSIT's business and addressing their travel needs and challenges is important to achieving the goals outlined in NJT 2030, NJ TRANSIT's 10-year strategic plan (See Figure 1). Further, meeting the needs of women and SGMs will improve travel experiences for all NJ TRANSIT customers.

The following strategies were identified from the literature review, peer agency outreach, NJ TRANSIT customers as part of the focus groups and survey, and by NJ TRANSIT's internal stakeholder committee. The stakeholder committee was comprised of approximately 50 individuals from across NJ TRANSIT business departments and modal units. The role of the committee was to inform and guide the research and help to develop implementable recommendations. The committee:

- reviewed research results and assisted the research team to interpret and relate the results to agency workflows,
- identified ways to address the concerns, challenges, barriers, and needs of women and SGMs so changes can be incorporated into the design of NJ TRANSIT services and facilities, and
- identified ways to improve travel experiences, safety, and security for women, and SGM riders.

The committee met four times, on April 15, 2024, April 29, 2024, May 13, 2024, and June 10, 2024. The May meeting was conducted in the format of an ideation workshop. The workshop was held in-person, with both plenary presentations and small group table discussions. The primary purpose of the workshop was to discuss how to translate the research findings into practice by developing a list of actionable recommendations related to planning, operations, design, safety, security, training, communications, policy, or other types of improvements.

Based on the results of this research, NJ TRANSIT decision-makers should consider implementing these and potentially other strategies to improve the travel experiences of women and SGMs using NJ TRANSIT services. The following recommendations are made in the spirit of renewing NJ TRANSIT's commitment to customer service, valuing diversity in NJ TRANSIT's customer base, prioritizing real and perceived customer safety and security, and being open to experimenting with new approaches.

### **Policy, planning and human resources**

- **Develop and deploy a gender analysis tool/checklist to better integrate gender-inclusive perspectives into transportation projects and decision-making.** LA Metro

uses a “gender lens” checklist and the International Transport Forum (ITF) offers a [Gender Analysis Toolkit for Transport](#). The toolkit includes a gender checklist to help project managers to determine how well gender is incorporated into a project, a customizable list of gender indicators and metrics to measure gender equality in transport, and a gender questionnaire that can serve as an assessment tool for internal use when developing a project or policy. NJ TRANSIT can use resources like this to ensure a gender-inclusive approach in the development and implementation of transit projects and policies.

- **Enhance training for NJ TRANSIT front-line staff.** NJ TRANSIT should review existing training curricula to ensure the training adequately prepares vehicle operators, conductors, and employees to understand the needs of women and SGM customers. Areas for potential enhancement include sensitivity and awareness training that helps employees to see the transit experience from the perspective of women and SGMs, be aware of and look out for potential incidents of harassment targeted at women and SGMs and be prepared to respond to customer requests for assistance. Provide “ally” pins to employees that complete LGBTQ+ sensitivity training, provide
- **Continue to encourage the development of household-serving uses within and adjacent to transit stations and stops.** Women are often responsible for a disproportionate share of household-serving responsibilities, which results in them taking more trips for these purposes as well as trip chaining. The development of grocery markets, medical offices, pharmacies, childcare centers, health centers, community spaces, and social services at and near stations can ease the burdens of travel for travelers responsible for these duties. NJ TRANSIT’s ongoing work related to transit-oriented development and transit-friendly planning aligns with the findings of this study and supports women’s mobility.
- **Adjust transfer policy to accommodate trip chaining.** As just mentioned, women are more likely to trip chain in order to attend to household-serving responsibilities. Service connections and transfers sometimes come with a financial cost. NJ TRANSIT should review current policies related to transferring between routes and modes to determine whether changes are necessary to eliminate or reduce the financial burden customers experience when relying on transit to meet daily travel needs.

## Facilities

- **Conduct station/stop access, design, and safety assessment.** When asked about NJ TRANSIT facility, design, comfort and safety, many customers that responded to the study survey expressed concerns about the adequacy of lighting, wayfinding signs, elevators, escalators, restrooms, and other features of stations/stops. With regard to restrooms, Less than half of the women and SGMs that responded to the survey said they felt “somewhat or very safe” waiting at stations/stops or using station/stop parking at night.

In addition, more than half of respondents agreed that security cameras made them feel safer, however, cameras are only available in a limited number of locations.

Stakeholders that participated in May 13 ideation workshop suggested that the agency conduct a comprehensive access, design and safety audit of stations and other facilities to document current conditions and identify what improvements may be necessary to enhance customer experience while using NJ TRANSIT. The audit should specifically address the needs and concerns of potentially vulnerable populations such as women, SGMs, older adults, and people with disabilities. The audit should consider conditions during all days and hours of operations, in particular conditions at night.

- **Use the results of the assessment as the basis for a multiyear, systematic station improvement program.** Priority areas should include improving signage, upgrading lighting, and increasing the number of visible security cameras present in stations and at stops where needed.
- **Open more restrooms and update restroom design and maintenance standards.** Less than a quarter of women and SGMs that responded to the study survey agreed that there are enough restrooms at NJ TRANSIT stations and facilities. Even fewer agreed that restrooms were kept clean and felt safe. NJ TRANSIT should increase the number of restrooms available, update restroom design standards, and require that all new and remodeled restrooms include elements like changing stations, varied sink levels, and vending machines for toiletries, including diapers.
- **Consider creating “amenity zones” on rail platforms and in bus terminals.** Amenity zones are places where amenities such as seating, lighting, security personnel, and security technology (e.g., emergency call boxes and security cameras) are concentrated in one location. This can encourage customers to congregate in these locations and increase a sense of comfort and safety while waiting for their train or bus.
- **Explore creative ways to increase the level of amenities at bus stops and improve bus stop maintenance.** One way this might be achieved is to implement an adopt-a-stop program that encourages partnerships with community-based organizations, businesses, and other organizations to add lighting and other amenities and help maintain areas around bus stops while promoting a sense of community pride.
- **Increase employee and police presence in stations and on vehicles to promote safety and security.** Thirty percent of female and 34 percent of SGM NJ TRANSIT customers that responded to the study survey reported feeling concerned for their safety and security while using NJ TRANSIT, especially at night. One of the reasons why customers felt concerned was the lack of visible police presence. Further, more than half of survey respondents reported feeling safer when NJ TRANSIT and employees and police are around. Men preferred greater police presence more than women and SGMs while SGMs and women slightly preferred the presence of non-police personnel.

NJ TRANSIT should identify ways to increase visible police and employee presence at NJ TRANSIT facilities and on vehicles, especially light rail, where customers reported feeling least safe while using NJ TRANSIT. Some agencies have initiated transit ambassador programs that deploy customer service agents in strategic locations to answer questions, direct customers, and provide an “official” presence. NJ TRANSIT already deploys “ambassadors” for big events when ridership is expected to be high. This existing program could be a model for a more permanent program that creates a dedicated field customer service role

- **Address cell service/Wi-Fi gaps.** In the context of requesting help and reporting incidents stakeholders at the workshop noted that there are parts of NJ TRANSIT’s system that have gaps in cell and Wi-fi service. NJ TRANSIT should conduct an audit of their system to identify areas with no or unreliable service and take steps to address the identified gaps, prioritizing locations where there have been security/personal safety concerns and areas that currently lack police or employee presence.
- **Consider implementing emergency call boxes.** As noted above and earlier in the report, safety and security concerns are part of the travel experience for sizeable share of customers, especially women and SGMs. One of the solutions suggested during the stakeholder workshop was the implementation of emergency call boxes in stations and facilities, especially in places with known safety concerns or where cellular service and Wi-Fi are not available or unreliable. These are used in a variety of settings such as college campuses and even some transit facilities in other jurisdictions.
- **Do more to address loitering by non-customers and the unhoused.** Survey respondents and focus group participants noted that the presence of non-customers and unhoused persons in stations, at stops, on platforms, and in vehicles diminished their travel experience and made them feel less safe. While recognizing that the homelessness crisis is national in scope and complex to solve, customers and stakeholders thought NJ TRANSIT could do more to address the issue in their facilities. Some suggested expanding partnerships with social service agencies and organizations to address the needs of the unhoused that use the transit system as a refuge. Others noted that one of the solutions currently being used is to close station facilities at night. Unfortunately, this approach is a significant inconvenience for NJ TRANSIT customers that use the system at night, especially during inclement weather and when customers need to use restroom facilities.

## **Service and operations**

- **Encourage bus and train operators to assert respectful, positive authority.** During the focus groups some customers highlighted how the attitude and presence of the bus operator or train conductor can reinforce respect for the customer while at the same time projecting authority and presence. This sends the message that the employee cares about the customer experience and is watching the conduct of customers while they travel

on NJ TRANSIT. One way to do this is to make friendly announcement to an entire bus or train can signal to passengers that the operator and conductors are present and aware of their surroundings, which might discourage harassment and help to create an environment where women and SGM passengers feel comfortable.

- **Explore installation of silent alarm strip or button on new buses and trains.** Some customers noted that it might not be possible or safe to use their cell phone to alert authorities or request help when an incident is in progress. They suggested a more discrete method of alert might be beneficial. Similar to emergency call boxes, an emergency button or strip could also address the problem of cell service gaps and provide a solution for individuals that lack access to a cell phone.
- **Update vehicle design standards.** Some customers and stakeholders felt that vehicle designs needed improvement, especially to accommodate those traveling with luggage, or packages, bags, and strollers. The latter tend to be women more often than men. NJ TRANSIT should explore the feasibility and efficacy of implementing new vehicle interior configurations (e.g., seats, handles, straps, etc.) to better address customer needs and then update vehicle design standards to incorporate these features. NJ TRANSIT's Market Research staff can conduct focus groups to gain a better understanding of which specific features and designs would best accommodate customers' different needs.
- **Clean/repair vehicles more often.** Many customers expressed concerns regarding vehicle cleanliness and maintenance, especially windows that are difficult to see out. Dirty conditions diminish the overall travel experience and dirty or etched windows that are difficult to see out of make passengers feel less safe and anxious about their location relative to their alighting stop. NJ TRANSIT has developed a [plan to replace train windows](#) and should continue to take steps to address maintenance issues to ensure a comfortable and safe customer travel experience.
- **Allow flexible alighting of buses at night.** This research highlighted customer concerns while traveling at night, including more than half of women and SGMs that said they did not feel safe traveling from their alighting stop to their final destination when traveling at night. One way to address this concern is to permit flexible alighting during certain hours, where customers signal the driver that they would like to alight and the driver then stops the bus at the next spot is safe to do so. Some stakeholders expressed the belief that this strategy is already employed informally by drivers on some routes. NJ TRANSIT should review its current policies and procedures, consider modifying the policy as needed to allow flexible alighting at night, and then make customers aware that the option is available and provide clear guidelines to customers about where, when and how they can use this option.
- **Adopt a family-friendly stroller policy.** Under current policy, infant and toddler strollers are only permitted on board vehicles if they are collapsed. This requirement is inconvenient and burdensome to customers traveling with young children, which are disproportionately women. Some transit agencies like LA Metro are changing or



experimenting with alternative stroller policies that allow for unfolded strollers on board buses in designation areas. NJ TRANSIT should investigate the feasibility and efficacy of adopting a more flexible stroller policy and consider implementing a pilot program to test policy changes prior to full implementation.

- **Provide better scheduling, especially for transfers.** Waiting at stops and stations is a vulnerable time for many women and SGMs. NJ TRANSIT should review existing schedules to identify opportunities to reduce wait time at stops, especially at night and at locations where there are high transfer locations. Other operational changes suggested by customers to reduce wait times and ease transfers included providing more buses on busy routes so there is less crowding and providing more frequent service.

### **Marketing, communications, public and government affairs**

- **Add a visible “travel tips” section to NJ TRANSIT’s customer facing website.** Travel tips could address things like traveling with children and how to instructions for new and infrequent riders.
- **Improve the process of reporting incidents of harassment.** An important finding from this study is that the vast majority of harassment/assault incidents go unreported. Frequently cited reasons for not reporting harassment/assault were the belief that reporting the incident would not make a difference, not knowing how to report the incident, and not knowing who to report the incident to. NJ TRANSIT should review current procedures for reporting and how those procedures are communicated to customers, consider creating a more visible link on apps and websites, and/or explore developing a dedicated feature for reporting harassment, as needed. Reporting tools should also make it clear to customers and employees that they are not only available for reporting concerns related to security threats, but also issues related to harassment or assault. Further, as suggested under the marketing and communication recommendations, NJ TRANSIT should implement a campaign to make clear that harassment will not be tolerated and if reported, what the consequences might be.
- **Collect, report, and integrate inclusive data.** One way LA Metro began to lay the foundation for implementing its Gender Action Plan was to begin reporting disaggregated data that was broken out by gender. This helped to ingrain a gender lens in agency decision making. NJ TRANSIT should adopt a similar approach to data reporting. In addition, NJ TRANSIT should consider further expanding the inclusiveness of their data to allow the collection, analysis, and reporting of more detailed information about customers’ sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. As more inclusive data is collected, NJ TRANSIT should integrate these data in planning and policy activities, including transportation/travel behavior modeling to account for gender differences in how customers use NJ TRANSIT.
- **Identify opportunities to engage women and SGMs in service and project planning.** A key component of LA Metro’s efforts to address the needs of women and girls using their system is a proactive strategy to specifically engage female riders in their planning

and implementation efforts. NJ TRANSIT should undertake similar efforts to find opportunities to frequently engage with women and SGMs to understand service, safety, and security concerns and use the input to inform project and service planning activities. NJ TRANSIT's Market Research staff can conduct focus groups and/or surveys with a diverse group of customers to get feedback on design ideas, products, and signage.

- **Continue the agency's commitment to inclusive customer service.** Through its Ride with Pride initiative, NJ TRANSIT has demonstrated a commitment to inclusive customer service. The initiative is appreciated within the LGBTQ+ community. NJ TRANSIT should look for ways to build on the initiative and increase its visibility. For example, the agency should consider expanding service and deploying extra personnel to support LGBTQ+ events and venues, promoting LGBTQ+ visibility through on-board advertisements and messaging which affirm the rights of women and LGBTQ+ passengers to ride safely and to be free from harassment, and providing a specific channel for LGBTQ+ customer complaints and support.
- **Expand and build on the Ride Kind initiative.** Another important finding from this study, is that only one third of female and SGM customers agreed with the statement "other riders are courteous." This finding emphasizes an important deficit that shapes customer travel experiences. In 2023, NJ TRANSIT launched a "Ride Kind" informational campaign designed to "remind and encourage customers to treat all their fellow customers and NJ TRANSIT employees with kindness and respect." NJ TRANSIT should consider expanding the Ride Kind campaign to include anti-sexual and LGBTQ+ harassment messaging with new visuals and artistic collateral, increase distribution of Ride Kind posters and messaging, and consistently refresh the campaign based on community and rider feedback.

The following matrix categorizes recommended actions by topic area and identifies whether each action is short-, medium-, or long-term in nature.

Table 29 – Recommended actions for NJ TRANSIT

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Timeline	Justification
<b>Policy, Planning, and Human Resources</b>	Develop and deploy a gender analysis tool/checklist	Medium-term/moderate	Requires coordination with internal teams and training for staff
	Enhance training for NJ TRANSIT front-line staff	Short-to medium term/easy	Can be incorporated into existing training programs
	Encourage development of household-serving uses near transit	Ongoing TOD work	Requires partnerships with developers and local governments
	Adjust transfer policy to accommodate trip chaining	Medium-to long term/moderate	Policy review and fare structure adjustments required
<b>Facilities</b>	Conduct station/stop access, design, and safety assessment	Medium-term/moderate	Requires audit and funding allocation
	Use assessment results for systematic station improvements	Long-term/challenging	Large-scale capital investment required
	Open more restrooms and update restroom standards	Long-term/challenging	Requires funding and construction approvals
	Create "amenity zones" at stations	Medium-term/moderate	Design and implementation require funding and planning
	Increase amenities at bus stops	Medium-term/moderate	Partnerships and funding required
	Increase employee and police presence	Medium-term/moderate	Staffing and budget considerations needed
	Address cell service/Wi-Fi gaps	Long-term/challenging	Infrastructure upgrades and coordination with providers required
	Implement emergency call boxes	Medium-term/moderate	Requires installation at key locations
	Address loitering and homelessness issues	Long-term/challenging	Requires coordination with social services and policy changes

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Timeline	Justification
<b>Service and Operations</b>	Encourage bus/train operators to assert positive authority	Short-term/easy	Can be addressed with training and messaging
	Install silent alarm buttons on buses/trains	Long-term/challenging	Requires procurement and retrofitting of vehicles
	Update vehicle design standards	Long-term/challenging	Requires coordination with manufacturers and capital investment
	Increase cleaning and maintenance of vehicles	Medium-term/moderate	Needs funding and staffing increases
	Allow flexible alighting of buses at night	Short-term/easy	Policy change that can be implemented quickly
	Adopt a family-friendly stroller policy	Medium-term/moderate	Requires policy revision and driver training
	Improve scheduling for transfers and reduce wait times	Medium-term/moderate	Needs service analysis and potential resource allocation
<b>Marketing, Communications, Public &amp; Government Affairs</b>	Add a visible "travel tips" section to NJ TRANSIT website	Short-term/easy	Simple website update
	Improve process of reporting harassment incidents	Medium-term/moderate	Requires app/website enhancements and internal process changes
	Collect, report, and integrate inclusive data	Medium-term/moderate	Requires updates to data collection processes
	Engage women and SGMs in service planning	Medium-term/moderate	Requires targeted outreach and sustained engagement
	Expand NJ TRANSIT's "Ride with Pride" initiative	Short-term/easy	Can be integrated into existing outreach efforts
	Expand the "Ride Kind" campaign	Short-term/easy	Can be expanded with new messaging

It is important to note that NJ TRANSIT is just one operator of public transit services in the tristate region and the agency does not have authority over all the infrastructure on which it operates (i.e., tracks, roadways, some stations). Many customers do not understand or think about this

complex operational environment when formulating their opinions. Many also use services operated by multiple agencies when completing their journeys. Therefore, their experiences, opinions and feelings of safety and security are sometimes shaped by events and elements outside of NJ TRANSIT's direct control. Further some of the strategies discussed above will apply to shared facilities where NJ TRANSIT has limited or no authority (i.e., New York Penn Station or Port Authority bus terminal in New York City). In these shared facilities, NJ TRANSIT will need to coordinate implementation steps with various allied agencies.

## **Recommended next steps**

This study represents a first step in what will need to be a sustained process for addressing the needs of women and SGMs that use NJ TRANSIT services. The following recommended next steps were derived from input received at the June 10, 2024, NJ TRANSIT internal stakeholder committee meeting.

- **Share report with NJ TRANSIT's legal team.** As a first step, NJ TRANSIT's legal team should review the report and recommendations to verify the agency's ability to implement actions and identify any potential risks.
- **Cultivate buy-in from senior leaders.** Key to LA Metro's successful efforts is buy in from top agency leadership including the LA Metro board and senior managers. Like any other change initiatives, support from senior management can be crucial to sustaining efforts over time and ingraining new ways of thinking and doing business throughout the enterprise. Senior management can provide the necessary authority, resources and commitment needed across the organization and help to ensure the initiative has the support required to overcome resistance and achieve successful implementation. Study supporters such as those involved from the women's and LGBTQ+ employee resource groups should arrange to brief NJ TRANSIT's leadership and board about the results of the study and seek their support for institutionalizing the stakeholder group convened for the study and developing an implementation action plan.
- **Share study findings more broadly within NJ TRANSIT.** Sharing key report findings within the agency will help familiarize staff with the study and will help support future efforts to implement actions. This could be framed as a lunch and learn event sponsored by NJ TRANSIT affinity groups like empower and Ride with Pride.
- **Formalize the stakeholder group to support interdepartmental collaboration.** Successful implementation will require a network of internal champions that can advise senior leadership and advocate for and convince others to support change. The stakeholder committee convened for this study provides the foundation for cultivating such a network. The committee included representatives from departments and units throughout NJ TRANSIT that brought diverse perspectives and extensive knowledge and expertise to bear in support of the research. A similar group will be needed to support implementation. One option is to formalize the stakeholder committee into an ongoing

advisory body that advises senior leadership and supports the development of an implementation action plan.

- **Develop an implementation action plan.** Action planning will be an important next step. While this study provided needed data and inventoried strategies and ideas for improving customer experiences and addressing the unique needs of women and SGMs that use NJ TRANSIT services, more effort is needed to make the recommendations actionable. After publishing *Understanding How Women Travel*, LA Metro took several years (including delays caused by the COVID 19 pandemic) to prepare the agency's [Gender Action Plan](#). NJ TRANSIT can follow a similar process to lay the foundation for implementation. The action plan should layout implementation steps, assign responsibilities, set a schedule, establish a process to monitor progress and measure success and identify resources to support implementation, including grant funds that can be used to support implementation.
- **Identify easy wins and celebrate success.** The action planning process should be used to identify several easy wins that can help to build momentum for further implementation. Even small achievements can boost motivation and help to maintain a positive mindset toward achieving larger goals. Leaders should find ways to recognize progress and celebrate success both internally and externally throughout the implementation process, especially during the early stages of institutionalizing change.

## APPENDIX A - REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX B – PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

### PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARY – LA METRO

Prepared by: Sam Rosenthal, Jon Carnegie, and Cate Heady

Last revised: 09/13/2023

#### **Attendees**

- Jon Carnegie, Rutgers-VTC
- Sam Rosenthal, Rutgers-VTC
- Cate Heady, Rutgers-VTC
- Susan O'Donnell, NJ TRANSIT
- Elba Higueros, LA Metro
- Meghna Khanna, LA Metro

#### **Introductions and Project Overview**

The interview began with everyone on the call introducing themselves. VTC staff then provided an overview of the *Understanding How Marginalized Genders Travel Using NJ TRANSIT* project and explained that the purpose of the interview is to learn more about the process behind the 2019 [Understanding How Women Travel](#) report and whether any of the study's recommendations have been implemented in the last few years.

#### **Project Initiation and Reception**

- LA Metro was represented in this interview by Elba Higueros, Deputy Chief of Staff, who participates in LA Metro's Women and Girls Governing Council, and Meghna Khanna, who is implementing the strategies of LA Metro's Gender Action Plan.
- LA Metro established the Women and Girls Governing Council in 2017. The Council consists of 60 women and men with the mission of applying a gender lens to Metro's policy and decision making. The Council evaluates Metro as an employer, a service provider, and a catalyst for economic development. The Council meets monthly and works to identify gaps and barriers related to gender and recommend solutions to Metro's CEO.
- The Women and Girls Governing Council is part of the Department of DEI. It is an integral part of the decision structure at the agency and there is a consistently high level of interest in serving on the Council.
- One of the first recommendations was to conduct a study to better understand how women and girls were using Metro services and what their experiences were. The group reached out to data managers and quickly realized that gender was not the focus of data collection and data were not being disaggregated to understand gender differences.
- The study was well-received by members of the Council and was embraced by Metro's deputy CEO at the time. Support from leadership and the Metro policy board, which included mostly women, helped to convey the message that this study was a priority.

### **Data Collection as Part of the Study**

- The study was supported by a consultant that collected and analyzed the external data. The idea was to establish a baseline for how women travel, then examine how they travel on public transit, and finally how they travel on LA Metro services.
- Metro was the first agency to do this type of study, so they relied heavily on traditional methods, such as customer experience surveys, but also complemented the quantitative analysis with qualitative data collection.
- Metro conducted two focus groups with women and one with men. The same questions were asked at each focus group, but responses were very different. Metro also conducted pop-up engagement, asking transit users what makes their ride easy or difficult. Pop-ups were useful to gather info that was immediately in rider's minds, though information collected this way was not always very detailed.
- The consultant also conducted community-based organization workshops, engaging participants to create collages to depict the importance of Metro to their lives. These workshops helped reach women of different backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses, including women facing homelessness.
- The concerns of women and men were very different. When asked what improvements they would like, women focused on safety, especially at night, while men were more concerned about speed of services. Women were very appreciative for having the system and services available, with some noting Metro's ability to connect them with employment and others considering Metro a second home.
- The qualitative data was very impactful because it told the story of the challenges that women and girls face, helping to convince the public, Metro leadership, and other decision makers that action is needed and justified.
- During the pandemic, with ridership decreasing overall, male ridership declined while female ridership increased; 90 percent of women reported using the system three or more times per week.
- Metro did not have an opportunity to examine intersectionality of race, income, sex, and gender identity in this study, though they would have liked to. Data disaggregation reduced the sample size, resulting in numbers too small to be significant.

### **Gender Action Plan Development**

- The *Understanding How Women Travel* study was always imagined as a foundational study that could justify the need for a Gender Action Plan (GAP), which could provide the detail necessary to support implementation and prioritization. The original study was time-limited and could not be as detailed as needed to be actionable. For example, women expressed the desire for more space for strollers, but determining how to provide that space needed more investigation.
- The GAP was informed by Transport for London and an Ontario transit agency's work on women and girls. Their implementation strategies were adapted for the LA Metro context.

- While developing the GAP, additional outreach was conducted to help prioritize implementation strategies. This was facilitated by partnering with community-based organizations to obtain customer feedback on proposed strategies. The outreach was conducted mostly virtually because of the pandemic, though engagement also included comment cards which were dropped off at CBOs and retrieved later. The selection of CBOs was intended to capture the voices of a wide range of demographic groups.

## Implementation

- Four themes from the initial study were carried forward into the GAP: safety; station, stop, and vehicle design; fare policy; and services, frequency, and reliability. More specific actions have been prioritized under each of these themes.

### ► Safety

1. Camera Visibility & Lighting
2. Station/Stop Design & Safety Assessment
3. Metro Employee Travel Partner Program
4. Promote Transit Travel Partner Opportunities
5. Promote Courtesy Stop During Late-Night Hours (9 pm to 5 am)
6. Sexual Harassment Prevention Program
7. Gender-specific Operator Training
8. Explore Silent Alarm

### ► Station, stop, and vehicle design

9. Stroller Space on New Metro Vehicles
10. Adopt-a-Stop Program
11. Business Partnerships
12. Restroom Design Standards
13. Concentrated Amenities Zones at Platforms
14. Prioritize Household-serving Uses at Transit Stations
15. Interior space on Buses and Trains

### ► Fare policy

16. Explore 2-hour free transfer in any direction as part of the fare-capping implementation and overall fare policy
17. Partnership with Health Providers to Promote LIFE Program

### ► Services, frequency and reliability

18. Monitor Next-Gen Improvements

- While the initial study identified issues, the GAP matched specific strategies to those issues. For example, the Transit Ambassador Program responded to women's desire for more non-police safety. The program was inspired by a Bay Area Rapid Transit program and enlists over 300 unarmed ambassadors to provide a first point of contact for transit riders seeking assistance. Ambassadors are hired through community groups and are demographically representative of the LA Metro service areas and customer base. The program started as a pilot and will be in place 3-5 years. The initial response has been very positive.
- The GAP was more intentionally inclusive, using the definition "people who identify as women" to include a larger group of people.
- LA Metro has started the effort to revamp their sexual harassment campaign, which was one of the recommendations of the GAP.
- A number of Metro programs and policies have been influenced by the *Understanding How Women Travel* study, including the Transit Watch App, Transit Ambassador Program, NextGen mid-day service improvement, courtesy seating decals, fare policies for children, improved headways, and a transit ambassador program, and bystander training.

- Most of these programs and actions are currently being implemented or are in the planning stage. Some programs, such as the adopt-a-stop program, may need to be rethought because stops are under local authority. Implementing actions like this has been somewhat problematic because of the disconnect between what Metro controls and what municipalities control.
- Metro's Gender Analysis Tool is also part of the GAP implementation. The tool presents a series of questions related to gender and is designed to ensure that a gender lens is applied to Metro's projects, policies, and decision-making. The tool is being piloted now and will hopefully be institutionalized. Metro has found that the pilot approach has helped to build the foundation for successful broad-based implementation at such a large agency.
- Metro has also found it important to have one or more people that remain focused on implementing the GAP. There need to be dedicated staff that can assist department personnel as they advance strategies.
- Each strategy has key performance indicators to guide future evaluation of strategies. Many actions will be introduced as pilots, but all will ultimately be evaluated on whether or not they meet their performance indicators.
- Gender data is now part of every Metro survey, including customer satisfaction surveys, and data is disaggregated by gender. In 2022, Metro's gender identity question was broadened to include "non-binary" and open-ended "other" options.
- This has helped to integrate and ingrain gender considerations into decision-making processes, as well as the culture of the agency. Senior leadership presentations frequently include coverage of gender disaggregation. Metro's new CEO Stephanie Wiggins has integrated gender into everything the agency does and the GAP has been very well-received internally.

### **General Lessons Learned**

- The commitment to gender equity from Metro's leadership since 2017 has been critical to implementation.
- The engagement process with all of Metro's departments and the public was also important to the success, and early and collaborative engagement was critical. After the initial study was completed, there was about a year and a half of meetings that preceded the Gender Action Plan.
- Initial efforts focused on the barriers identified at the time of the original study, which were women. However, the agency realized that strategies that improve the experiences of women improve the experiences of all customers, and that planning for the most vulnerable benefits everyone.
- The process is one of continual improvement, so improved data collection and analysis will be critical for identifying future barriers and assessing how trends change over time. Metro would like future studies to disaggregate data even further to identify barriers for groups in addition to women.

## PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARY – PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Prepared by: Sam Rosenthal, Jon Carnegie, and Cate Heady

Last revised: 09/13/2023

### Attendees

- Jon Carnegie, Rutgers-VTC
- Sam Rosenthal, Rutgers-VTC
- Cate Heady, Rutgers-VTC
- Dr. Amy Lubitow, Portland State University

### Introductions and Project Overview

The interview began with everyone on the call introducing themselves. VTC staff then provided an overview of the *Understanding How Marginalized Genders Travel Using NJ TRANSIT* project and explained that the purpose of the interview is to learn more about the process behind the 2017 [Transmobilities](#) study, how the research team interacted with Portland's transit provider (TriMet), and whether any of the study's recommendations have been implemented in the last few years.

### Project Initiation and Tri-Met Involvement

- Dr. Lubitow is a faculty member at Portland State University (PSU). The notion of wanting to know about the experiences of transgender and gender nonconforming individuals using public transit grew out of Dr. Lubitow's general research interest in feminist geography and work in active transportation in Portland. She pursued this research using internal university seed funding and was granted a small amount of money to conduct research with several colleagues and a graduate student. The study interviewed 25 transgender and gender nonconforming individuals who use ride Portland's transit system (TriMet). The experiences of transgender and gender nonconforming individuals on transit was identified as an understudied area of research and the research team had a lot of freedom to shape the work. At the time (circa 2016), few researchers were engaging in this type of work.
- TriMet was not involved in the study at the time. The equity team at TriMet was not involved in work around gender equity.
- Dr. Lubitow sent the [Transmobilities](#) paper to TriMet, but the agency was not interested. She then created a two-page policy brief explaining the need for more agency training on pronouns and legal protections for people based on gender. Dr. Lubitow also engaged a representative from Basic Rights Oregon, a gender-focused advocacy organization, to assist with further contact with TriMet. The agency turned down most of the policy recommendations. There was also some tense interaction with the agency after the Portland State communications office reached out to TriMet. TriMet was antagonistic and they did not want to engage with the research.



### ***Data Collection as Part of the Study***

- Dr. Lubtow noted that an advantage to her qualitative approach to research is the collection of quality, detailed information. However, because the research was qualitative, TriMet did not value the findings and considered them illegitimate.
- Dr. Lubtow was surprised by the negative experiences of trans and gender nonconforming individuals, especially the level of verbal and physical assault, given the generally queer-friendly attitude of Portland.
- The research found that white trans men experienced male privilege on transit, though some reported different treatment once others realized they were trans.
- The research team did not specifically ask about policing, but the issue surfaced organically. Interviewees noted negative and sometimes hostile interactions with transit police, who are often dressed in tactical gear and appear intimidating. Some of the negative feelings related to police could be due to the role they play on the TriMet system, which is primarily fare evasion policing, a role that is inherently antagonistic. Some interviewees noted that transit police are deployed inconsistently. Dr. Lubtow also noted that the local police and transit police dress similarly, so some of those interviewed may have confused the two entities. Negative interactions with police were more often reported by people of color, but not exclusively. Ultimately, the solution identified was not to have more police.
- Dr. Lubtow remarked on the difficulty of accessing transit police citation data and the lack of gender and racial information included in that data. The project did not have the funding needed to collect and analyze data, but Dr. Lubtow expressed interest in future studies comparing Portland to Seattle and San Francisco, as well as ethnographic ride-along studies to observe the experiences of trans people.

### ***Implementation of Recommendations***

- Dr. Lubtow was not aware of any implementation of recommendations that has taken place at TriMet. However, a personal and professional acquaintance reported that the training they received to be a TriMet bus operator covered gender in a generally comprehensive way.
- During a meeting with TriMet, the agency rejected the recommendation to include gender identity as a protected class of riders at the agency level. The organization has a board that is appointed by the governor and tends to be conservative.
- To Dr. Lubtow's knowledge, some individuals at Oregon's Department of Transportation have engaged with the research to some degree.

### ***General Lessons Learned***

- Dr. Lubtow has historically struggled to get research published in transportation journals and relied primarily on geography journals. Transportation journals are generally reluctant to publish qualitative research, a sentiment which was reinforced by TriMet's unwillingness to engage with the research due to its qualitative nature.

- Research into gender-based harassment or experiences can be a hard sell for transit agencies, so it is important to look for positive transit experiences that can inform solutions.

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## PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARY – UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA; LEADING MOBILITY

Prepared by: Sam Rosenthal, Jon Carnegie, and Cate Heady

Last revised: 09/13/2023

### Attendees

- Jon Carnegie, Rutgers-VTC
- Sam Rosenthal, Rutgers-VTC
- Cate Heady, Rutgers-VTC
- David Cooper, Leading Mobility
- Dr. Emily Grise, University of Alberta

### Introductions and Project Overview

The interview began with everyone on the call introducing themselves. VTC staff then provided an overview of the *Understanding How Marginalized Genders Travel Using NJ TRANSIT* project and explained that the purpose of the interview is to learn more about the process behind the 2022 [\*Understanding and Responding to the Transit Needs of Women in Canada\*](#) study and how the study's recommendations have been implemented in the last few years.

### Project Initiation

- David was interested in the topic based on his experience working for various transit agencies. He was responsible for allocating services for transit agencies in Calgary and Vancouver and was struck by the fact that, while agencies usually consider ridership and land use, they never really consider gender and the needs of women in making allocation decisions.
- When dealing with the impact of the pandemic on transit services, it became possible to request grant funding to look at current practices for considering gender in a more comprehensive way. David noticed that during the pandemic, those who continued to use transit were primarily students and women. This trend, along with the seminal work done by LA Metro, inspired the [\*Understanding and Responding to the Transit Needs of Women in Canada\*](#) study.
- The study was co-funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Infrastructure Canada with the goal of conducting a synthesis of current practice without primary research. The study looked at the 18 largest transit agencies in Canada and included desktop/internet research, engagement with representatives from each of the 18 agencies, and a webinar. The report includes a list of the agencies that were consulted.

### ***Data Collection as Part of the Study***

- The team first conducted the desktop scan, before reaching out to transit agencies via email to request additional information, clarification, and more documents. All but one of the agencies were responsive. The research team's experience and relationships with transit agencies was helpful during this process.
- It became clear that consideration of gender was really in its infancy in terms of discussions and actions at the agencies. There seemed to be a "fear" of tackling the issue of gender and uncertainty regarding how to approach the challenge.
- The issue was largely being discussed in internal working groups. These conversations and attitudes varied by agency, with some focusing on service delivery in general and others responding to a push from public jurisdictions looking to better understand how agencies were serving different population segments and communities, including (but not exclusively) women.
- The leading practices that were identified were "gender-adjacent," such as practices related to safety, fare policies, and DEI. The "best practices" identified by the research team were more representative of agencies at least trying to address issues related to women's needs without necessarily being explicit. Many of the agencies studied have pressing needs that have been prioritized over addressing gender issues.
- There are some agencies that are trying to build the case for off-peak services. This study has provided some evidence for them to build the case.
- One of the most significant findings was the almost complete lack of data. For example, most smart card data does not include fields for gender or other important demographic data. However, Edmonton's Arc Card now includes an optional gender field.
- Some agencies engaged in basic consideration of results from customer satisfaction and household travel diary/survey data, though most did not seem to work much with the gender data collected. Canadian household travel surveys are conducted every 5 years and the next set is expected to be updated to include expanded options for gender identity and sexual orientation. Some transit agencies, such as Metrolinx in Toronto, may be expanding their definition of gender through their capital planning.
- Generally, low numbers of nonbinary respondents make data analysis difficult.

### ***Implementation and Reception***

- Change on the data side is slow. [Edmonton](#) has added several gender options to its smart card data collection. Some agencies are making changes to add gender data to travel survey questionnaires. Some agencies have also been refining equity-based evaluation tools.
- One example is the Edmonton BRT evaluation, which included prioritization of corridors based on literature-informed women travel patterns. The evaluation also looked at results from origin-destination surveys disaggregated by gender to determine how service changes would impact women. The study also considers crowding, service span, travel speed, and trip chaining.

### **Future Plans**

- In the fall of 2023, the research team plans to kick-off second follow-up study to the *Understanding and Responding to the Transit Needs of Women in Canada* study which will look at how to fill in data gaps that were identified in the initial project. The multi-year follow-up study will include more formal partnerships with multiple transit agencies and Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA). The purpose will be to identify what data is needed and how can it be standardized across agencies and used in future studies. This work will undergird a nationwide public transit census. Canada has no National Household Travel Survey analogue, so this type of travel diary data will fill in a major gap.

## APPENDIX C – FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

### APPENDIX C1 – FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY – CISGENDER WOMEN

Dates: January 22-23, 2024

Number of participants: 30

#### ***Transit familiarity***

Participants were familiar with and reported using NJ TRANSIT at least several times per year. The primary modes they used included: (Number of users)

- Bus (14)
- Train (16)
- Light Rail (3)

Participants commonly reported having used more than one NJ TRANSIT service in the past year.

#### **Reasons for using NJ TRANSIT**

Participants identified multiple reasons for choosing to use NJ TRANSIT.

- Convenience: Participants choose NJ TRANSIT because it is convenient for traveling in New Jersey and to New York City, especially to avoid driving in the city. For train riders, another reason is the predictability of transit schedules, knowing when a train is arriving/departing, instead of having to contend with unpredictable traffic conditions. In addition, one participant identified that it's easier to get from Newark to other places using NJ TRANSIT, than driving.
- Prefer not to drive: Participants use NJ TRANSIT to avoid having to drive a car. Participants had different reasons, such as specifically avoiding driving in New York City, or having anxiety while driving in general. Other reasons participants don't drive include not wanting to drink and drive, not wanting to own a car, not having a driver's license, and saving money by avoiding the costs of gas, tolls, and parking.
- Environmental: Two participants use NJ TRANSIT because of the environmental benefits, including reducing traffic and creating less pollution and waste.

#### **Satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT services**

About 70 percent of participants, 21 people, indicated that they were overall satisfied with NJ TRANSIT services. The reasons vary and are discussed in greater detail in the following sections, but include:

- Reliability and convenience,
- Senior discount,
- Bus service,
- Responsive customer service, and
- The NJ TRANSIT mobile app.

For those that are not satisfied, they identified several reasons, also discussed in greater detail in the sections below:

- Accessing some locations is difficult, especially at night,
- Crowding and behaviors of others,
- Not enough space on buses, and
- Availability, reliability, and timing of services.

### ***Travel patterns and behavior***

#### **Types of destinations**

Participants use NJ TRANSIT to reach a variety of destinations. The most popular among participants in these groups was leisure and recreation, with 25 participants indicating it as a destination type. This is followed by medical appointments (11), school or work (14), and shopping (7).

#### **Time of day**

Participants travel during many different times of the day, during peak and off-peak hours. Several said they choose to travel during off-peak times when there are less crowds. One person travels in the morning during the week for school. Another participant primarily uses NJ TRANSIT midday or early evenings to go to shows or events. Several participants travel early in the morning for work or to avoid traffic. One person discussed using the bus late at night during the week. One person said they will work their schedule around express buses or trains. Another said they will schedule their appointments based on who their bus driver will be.

### ***Access and physical design***

#### **NJ TRANSIT stops, stations, and vehicle design.**

When asked about access and physical design, participants discussed bathrooms and stations, which are discussed in greater detail in sections below. In addition, one participant discussed a bus stop that is on a ramp and is in an area that is not pedestrian friendly. This stop has no shelter, no bench, and no lights. One participant suggested and others agreed that mobile device chargers are needed on vehicles. Another participant discussed the difficulty they have with taking their bike on the bus: some busses do not have accommodations and she sometimes has difficulty loading her bike because of her height.

#### **Traveling with children or an adult requiring mobility assistance**

One participant discussed traveling with a disability as difficult. They said they have problems with stairs, bathrooms, and doorways. In addition, they have difficulty with elevators and escalators. They said that using multiple elevators to enter and exit platforms at night is difficult. Another participant discussed their experience of traveling with a physical disability. She uses a cane and says she usually does not have problems because of this.

Another participant discussed traveling with a one-year-old, diaper bag, and stroller. In their experience, they have trouble using NJ TRANSIT when traveling with their one-year-old. For example, the steps to get on the bus are narrow, she has to load child first or stroller first, and has had experiences where the bus driver did not help with loading or was being rushed by

driver. No participants reported having experience traveling with another adult requiring mobility assistance.

### **Traveling while carrying bags, or using a cart or stroller**

Some customers are dissatisfied with the available space on buses. They indicated that there is no place for bags, no overhead space. In addition, buses don't accommodate scooters and they have had trouble boarding the bus with a stroller.

Other participants discussed their experiences traveling with bags or luggage. Participants have experienced complications while doing this, such as accessing bus luggage or bag storage spaces. One participant had difficulty traveling with luggage while recovering from a bad injury. She said the driver opened the door but didn't help load luggage.

One participant said that when traveling with bags, a cart, or a stroller, it is helpful to have a shelter while waiting for the bus.

## ***Reliability and communications***

### **Reliability of NJ TRANSIT services**

Two-thirds of participants, 19 individuals, expressed the opinion that NJ TRANSIT services are reliable. Specifically, commuter trains are reliable and usually on time. One participant was satisfied with NJ TRANSIT because the bus stop is right in front of her home and runs frequently and consistently, so it is a convenient option.

### **Problems with reliability**

Participants that discussed problems with reliability, primarily reported issues with the bus. One participant specifically said there is an issue with local bus routes. The timing of buses can be inconsistent. Some buses don't arrive when they're supposed to, or multiple buses arrive at once followed by no buses for a period of time. The app does not show exactly when the bus will show up. One participant said you have to rely on other passengers for information, because bus drivers do not share information like if you're on the right bus or if the bus stops at a specific location.

Dissatisfied rail riders feel that there are not enough trains. They said it is sometimes unclear if a train is express or local. They also said that conductors do not always tell when a station requires the passenger to exit at a specific car. One participant does not like to ask conductors questions because they said conductors are not helpful and are unfriendly.

At some stations, train service is infrequent. Some trains don't run if there's a storm because there are frequently trees on the track (specifically mentioned the Gladstone line). Trains are delayed or don't show up, and the reason for the delay is not shared.

Participants said that sometimes it's hard to get to different places, including locations in the state that do not have the infrastructure that supports public transportation. Others identified accessing destinations like the airport from some starting points.

### **Impact on travel decisions**

When NJ TRANSIT is unreliable, this causes participants to be late for work, scheduled appointments, or reservations. One person noted that the unreliable service was especially a

problem for them when they were a student. Participants noted that buses are stuck in the same traffic as other vehicles, and the timing is less predictable than the train.

Travel decisions are impacted by problems with reliability. Participants using the bus travel earlier than needed to make sure they're on time, at times arriving an hour early to appointments or work. Participants will also sometimes choose to drive instead.

### **Accessibility of information on NJ TRANSIT services.**

Participants discussed issues with the accessibility of information when using NJ TRANSIT trains and buses.

- **Trains:** While riding the train, it can be difficult to understand announcements. In addition, announcements are usually only in English. As a rider, you must stay alert to know where you are on a route. One participant said it can be difficult to find a worker to ask questions, especially later at night. Participants said they cannot hear the announcements made over train speaker system, including announcements informing passengers to walk to specific cars to exit at some stations. The signs on trains don't always show the stop, and passengers can't see out windows to see where they are. Other participants agree that the cloudy windows on the train are difficult to see out of, especially at night. Some participants suggested it might be helpful to have signs with maps of service lines and lights that show the current and upcoming stops.
- **Buses:** Participants also had issues receiving information while using NJ TRANSIT buses. On some buses, announcements about stops are not made. On the bus at night, it is difficult to see outside because the lights on the bus are on. On the bus, the signs don't always show information and it can be difficult to hear announcements.

Participants also had comments about where and from who they can receive accurate information. They said that sometimes they receive information from the bus driver or conductor, but not always, and the MyBus app does not provide real-time information and/or it shows inaccurate information.

### **Communicating the status of NJ TRANSIT services**

Participants have had mixed experiences with NJ TRANSIT communicating the status of services. They had specific comments about the NJ TRANSIT mobile app.

- **Negative feedback:** The app, including the MyBus app, is not always updated and users do not always know if a bus is going to show up. It is also unclear if a bus is going to skip a stop. In addition, one participant said they signed up for text alerts for trains but has never received a message.
- **Positive feedback:** Others have had positive experiences using the app, including MyBus. These participants liked that they could tell when the bus is coming (especially when it's running late) and see how crowded the bus will be. Another positive feature of the app is the ability to purchase tickets. One participant noted that the text alerts for their bus are accurate and helpful. Another participant received helpful information by calling the



number listed on their bus stop sign, and one participant said that train delays are regularly announced at Newark Penn Station.

### **Comfort and convenience**

#### **Condition of NJ TRANSIT vehicles and facilities**

- **Cleanliness and comfort:** Participants observed that the cleanliness and comfort of facilities varies from station to station. Participants said that buses are comfortable and clean. At NY Penn Station, the NJ TRANSIT waiting area is only for ticketed customers – but one participant was waiting for someone who was traveling and was not able to use the space. In addition, some waiting rooms close at inconvenient times.
- **Signage:** Overall, participants said there is not enough signage. At bus stops, signs are small, and it is hard to see the bus signs unless you're close to the sign. For trains, there are signs that show departures but not arrivals. It is challenging for someone picking up a traveler to know what platform they would arrive. One participant said there needed to be better elevator signage in train stations.
- **Lighting:** Participants expressed concerns about lighting, especially the lighting at bus stops. One participant said lighting is non-existent at some stops. Parking lots at stations and some park and ride lots are also not well-lit. This impacts travel decisions, like a participant who said they will take Lyft or Uber at night to avoid a bus stop without lighting. When waiting rooms at stations are closed, riders must wait outside in the cold and without lighting.
- **Stations:** The accessibility and physical design of stations varies between locations. For example, the Hackensack bus station, Port Authority bus terminal, and Newark Penn Station were identified as places that seemed unsafe, or unsafe under some conditions like at night or when stores in the station are closed. One participant said they feel nervous when it's late and there aren't a lot of people around. Safety is discussed in more detail in sections below.
- **Restrooms:** The accessibility and physical design of bathrooms varies across stations and locations. For example, one participant said the GW Bridge bus station has very clean bathrooms, there are many employees, and it feels safe. Others generally avoid the bathrooms or feel nervous using them.

Participants had mixed opinions about the availability of restrooms. Some think the number of restrooms is fine, especially at big stations. Others said there are not enough restrooms. Some also find restrooms to generally be clean, while others do not. Some restrooms do not have enough supplies such as toilet paper. There is an issue with restrooms or stalls being closed or inaccessible. At some stations, if the station is closed, so is the restroom. Some participants will not use the restroom unless it's an emergency.

Participants were unaware of or not seen family or gender-neutral restrooms at NJ TRANSIT facilities, including at Atlantic City, Newark Penn Station, or Port Authority Bus Terminal.

## Interactions with other customers

Participants have had mixed experiences interacting with other NJ TRANSIT customers. For some riders, the experiences are more neutral as people don't interact with each other. Occasionally other customers will ask for directions about where to find trains or platforms. Some participants discussed other customers taking up multiple seats so other people can't sit down. Some participants commented on experiences with people asking for money, especially at stations such as Newark Penn Station and Port Authority Bus Terminal. Other participants discussed positive experiences with other customers. One person thought everyone they encounter is very nice. Another participant discussed being in small town, the bus feels like a community, everyone gets on the bus the same time every day.

## Interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees

Participants discussed neutral, negative, and positive experiences with NJ TRANSIT employees.

- Neutral: Participants said most bus drivers are neutral or nice. One participant said bus drivers are nice if you know where you are going, but not happy to answer questions.
- Negative: As noted previously, some participants reported having negative experiences and difficulty with loading bags or traveling with a child and bus drivers were not helpful. Other participants had issues with bus drivers and their knowledge of NJ TRANSIT policies, including bus drivers not recognizing the ticket on the app can be used for train or bus, or bus drivers not allowing underage kids travel for free when they're supposed to. Some participants noted that they have difficulty finding staff to answer their questions. One said that more seasoned staff is more receptive and provides better customer service than newer staff.
- Positive: Participants also discussed the positive experiences they've had with NJ TRANSIT employees. They said that train conductors usually tell people on the train when they have to move forward to deboard, some bus drivers are very friendly, and staff in the transportation center are "nice."

## Safety and security

### Using NJ TRANSIT to travel in the daylight

Participants generally feel safer traveling when it is light outside, remarking that there are usually more travelers and workers present, and this makes them feel safer. In addition, stations are more likely to be open and there's someone working there. One said people are less likely to "try something," and felt safer having others present who could step in. However, there was some disagreement, as one participant thinks that in a crowd, there is more cover for someone to get away with something. One person said they prefer to get home before it's too dark.

### Traveling when it is dark outside

Participants expressed mixed opinions about safety while traveling when it is dark outside. Some participants discussed feeling unsafe on the train. One person said that PATH trains are better lit and more populated than other forms of transit. To feel safer, one participant said they keep to themselves and try to never sit by a man. Another participant said they do not want to interact with men when it's dark. Another participant said they do not travel alone at night out of fear. They only travel at night with their boyfriend. One participant said they avoid Newark Penn Station at night; they do not feel safe even though there are police, and they see unhoused

people at the station for warmth who are harassed by police. One participant discussed a highway bus stop that is very unsafe at night because the area around the stop is isolated and unkept.

### **Safety during different parts of the trip**

Participants were asked during which parts of the trip they feel safe and unsafe.

- **Safe:** Some participants said they felt safer on the train, because they know there are conductors that will come and help quickly. A participant said to feel safer, they sit in single seats or near driver if possible. One person said they feel safe when there are open shops at stations. Participants agreed that the frequency of buses is important; a bus every half hour is good for safety because people can quickly move from one place to another without waiting as bus stops for a long time. One person described feeling safe on the bus, but unsafe after getting off the bus.
- **Unsafe:** Participants also discussed times when they feel unsafe. While using trains, participants felt more unsafe on platforms waiting for trains by themselves or getting off the trains. While using buses, participants felt unsafe at bus stops that have no lighting and at bus stops where they are waiting late at night by themselves. Another participant described feeling anxiety walking from bus stop to their destination. One participant described feeling unsafe while leaving a station and walking to the parking garage because there aren't employees around to aid if needed. One person described feeling unsafe on buses in Newark because the buses are close to hitting other vehicles and cyclists.

### **Safety around other customers**

Participants had mixed opinions about feeling safe around other customers. On trains, people have had experiences where other customers were aggressive, and more experiences of men being aggressive than women. One participant commented that trains are sometimes used to "pregame" before events, where people are drinking and partying on the train, which makes them feel unsafe.

As far as the gender of other customers, participants said both men and women can cause problems, but men are more likely to be aggressive than women. They disagreed about the type of men that make them feel safer, as some are afraid of groups of younger men, while others fear older men. Participants agreed that they like when there are more women present. Someone said, "I wish that men had to sit in the back so women can be safer in the front of the bus nearer the driver." Another doesn't like to sit next to men and will block the seat until a woman gets on. One person said they select a seat around other women or near a conductor.

### **Crowding**

Crowding is a concern for many participants and can make them feel unsafe. This was discussed as an issue on buses and trains as well as in New York Penn Station. When there is crowding on buses and trains, one participant dislikes when there is standing room only. Not being able to sit on the bus makes them feel unsafe, especially if the bus has to make a quick stop. One person described their difficulty with getting on and off the train when it's crowded. In addition to crowding, participants expressed concern about people being intoxicated on the train, specifically intoxicated men, and their behavior. At New York Penn Station, participants believe

that when there are crowds and the track is announced, it can be dangerous. There is also a danger of people sitting on stairs waiting for trains.

One participant said: “It makes me uncomfortable when people are standing over me, one time I was all the way in the back of the bus and people were standing the whole way back and I was afraid I was going to miss my stop.” They described both feeling uncomfortable as a passenger and worried about being able to complete their trip.

### **Police presence**

People had mixed opinions about police presence. Two participants discussed how police remind them of how unsafe they are. They said less people and more police feels more dangerous. One person said that police are better than having no one around. Others discussed preferring more NJ TRANSIT employees than police. One participant said they don’t see much police presence outside of New York Penn Station and Newark Penn Station. One participant said they believe “the police are there to protect NJ TRANSIT property, not people.”

### **Other NJ TRANSIT employees**

All participants agreed that they feel safe when there are NJ TRANSIT employees (other than transit police) present. One person observed that there are not enough staff at night and there aren’t as many people around at night if they need help. One person said bus drivers at night are helpful and make sure they’re safe.

### **Security cameras**

Based on participant feedback, it seems that security cameras do not have a significant impact on feelings of safety. One participant said they make her feel safer, but the cameras don’t look modern or look like they’re operating. Many participants do not notice them. One commented that “cameras don’t prevent crime; they just record it.” Others agreed with this idea.

### **Graffiti**

Presence of graffiti was not important to participants, unless it was inappropriate or hateful.

### **NJ TRANSIT’s “Ride Kind” Campaign**

Most participants were unaware of the Ride Kind campaign, although one said it sounded familiar and one person had heard of it. One participant said they welcome the campaign if it’s nice and has an element of humor and is not dogmatic. One person noted that humor could get people’s attention. One person thought the language might not fit New Jersey. One participant questioned how it can be enforced. Another opined that the “people that need to hear it or read it will ignore it.”

## ***Experiences of harassment and assault***

### **Being harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT**

Five participants shared their experiences of harassment while using NJ TRANSIT.

- Participant One: This participant said the incident is the primary reason she stopped using the bus. While riding the bus, she noticed a man staring at her. When she looked, he turned his phone toward her and showed an explicit photo of himself. She moved from one part of the bus to another. She didn’t say anything to the bus driver and there were no bystanders.

- *Participant Two:* This participant shared an experience she had using a NJ TRANSIT train. A man was coming down the aisle and wanted to converse with her. He intimidated and harassed her. It was at night. There were very few other people in the car and no staff around. She did not report the incident.
- *Participant Three:* This participant shared a recurring experience she's had after using NJ TRANSIT. She arrives in Secaucus shortly after rush hour and walks to the parking lot. On three separate occasions, men have followed her as she walked to her car. She said no one is around until she arrives to the parking lot, and the parking lot attendant is not an NJ TRANSIT employee.
- *Participant Four:* This participant shared that she was groped on a crowded train. She did not report the incident.
- *Participant Five:* This participant described an incident that occurred on a bus. When preparing to exit the bus, a man grabbed her arm and acted like he was with her. The bus driver knew her and intervened by creating a diversion, acting like the participant was not supposed to get off the bus at that stop. He then made the male passenger exit the bus and made sure the woman arrived at her stop later and safely.

### **Precautions or strategies used to feel safer and to avoid harassment or assault**

Participants described using a variety of precautions and strategies before and while traveling on NJ TRANSIT to feel safer and avoid being harassed or assaulted. The following are examples shared by participants:

- Use ride share services rather than transit to avoid feeling of unsafe.
- Tell a friend or family member where they are both when they board the bus and when they arrive at their destination. Others share their location on their phones.
- Avoid traveling alone or travel with a male friend or relative.
- Preplan their trip to feel safer, including using the MyBus app to plan trips.
- Avoid staying in one spot for too long or will avoid waiting for transit when station won't be crowded.
- Wait with their back against the wall so someone cannot come up to them from behind.
- Park near the elevator at stations.
- Travel carrying personal protection like pepper spray.
- Change their appearance or outfit and will make sure they're wearing comfortable shoes.
- Sit closer to the front of the bus.
- Get to bus station early so they can sit with other women or near the driver.
- Let other people move first to see where they are going before deciding whether it is safe to board or alight the bus or train.
- Use headphones, try to seem busy and look unapproachable. They will pretend to talk on phone or call someone to avoid negative interactions.

- Ignore people, but this doesn't always work. They will keep away from people that make them uncomfortable. If someone confronts them, they will let things go, and try not to provoke or engage with the individual.
- Always look around, see if there is a call button nearby, and keep their phone and keys in hand.
- Choose to wait at a well-lit bus stop at night rather than larger terminals because that's where groups congregate. This participant noted feeling safer on their own at the bus stop.

### **Concluding Question**

#### **Improving experience while using NJ TRANSIT?**

Participants identified several improvements that would help them feel safer and provide a more comfortable experience using NJ TRANSIT.

- Improvements to stations and bus stops: Participants specifically identified improvements at bus stops and train stations, especially better lighting. They also would like to see ADA accessibility improvements and improvements to elevators. They noted that proposed improvement plans take too long to implement.
- Communicating during service disruptions: Participants would like better communication during emergencies and service disruptions, including the installation of call buttons on buses, trains, and in stations that allow customers to get speedy and efficient answers to questions about what is going on. Some participants prefer to use an app in emergencies, others would rather not have to use an app.
- More NJ TRANSIT staff: Participants want to see more staff presence, especially when traveling at night. They want someone to be able to respond. They also suggested more women employees. When informed that customers can text the police, they were skeptical about texting while they have inconsistent cell service, especially in tunnels and at other times. One said that the website and campaign about texting the police "seems to be focused on terrorism and suspicious packages, so many people might not think to text it for other situations."
- Travel experiences outside of NJ TRANSIT: Participants mentioned experiences with facilities and services owned and operated by agencies other than NJ TRANSIT such as New York Penn Station and the Port Authority bus terminal. While NJ TRANSIT does not have authority over these facilities, their experiences using these facilities still impacts their mobility and perceptions of NJ TRANSIT.

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## APPENDIX C2 – FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY – CISGENDER LESBIAN, GAY, AND BISEXUAL INDIVIDUALS

Dates: January 24-25, 2023

Number of participants: 21

### ***Transit familiarity***

Participants were familiar with and reported using NJ TRANSIT at least several times per year. The primary modes they used included: (Number of users)

- Train (16)
- Bus (15)
- Light Rail (6)
- Access Link (1)

Some participants reporting using more than one mode over the past year.

### **Reasons for using NJ TRANSIT**

Reasons participants choose to use NJ TRANSIT include:

- Convenience: Participants choose NJ TRANSIT because it is convenient for traveling to their destinations. Several participants specifically mentioned the convenience of using NJ TRANSIT to travel to New York City. One participant lives in Rahway and finds it convenient to travel between Rahway and New York City. Another noted that NJ TRANSIT is a convenient option when traveling with a bicycle.
- Prefer not to drive: Participants use NJ TRANSIT to avoid having to drive a car, noting that driving requires more focus and that tolls can be costly. One participant was involved in a car crash several years ago and no longer feels comfortable driving. Several participants indicated that they do not drive at all. Participants also noted that they use NJ TRANSIT services to avoid drinking and driving after social events.

### **Satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT services**

Eighteen of the 21 participants indicated that they were overall satisfied with NJ TRANSIT services. The reasons vary and are discussed in greater detail in the following sections, but include:

- Reliability and convenience of service,
- Efficiency of trips by train, which in some cases take the same amount of time as driving,
- Cost-effective senior ticket discounts,
- Cleanliness on board trains,
- A variety of service options, including train, bus, and light rail.

Those that were not satisfied identified several reasons, also discussed in greater detail in the sections below:

- Service delays and cancelled trips,

- Lack of communication regarding rerouting or cancellations,
- Gaps in late night and early morning service,
- Poor weekend and holiday service at some locations,
- Inconvenient timing of transfers, especially at Secaucus, with either not enough time to make a transfer or too much layover time,
- Unreliable information on the NJ TRANSIT app,
- Unpleasant experiences with NJ TRANSIT employees, and
- Lack of police presence at stations.

### ***Travel patterns and behavior***

#### **Types of destinations**

Participants use NJ TRANSIT services for a variety of trip purposes, including commutation for work (10) or school (3), recreational or social events (8), shopping or local errands (2), and visits to family members (2). Several participants also use NJ TRANSIT to reach medical appointments, attend religious services, and travel to the beach.

#### **Time of day**

Most participants travel in the morning and evening peak periods for work purposes. Several participants travel in the evenings and on weekends for leisure. Some participants also noted traveling during midday hours to pick up children from school, get lunch, or attend matinee shows in New York City. A few participants travel late at night for entertainment/recreation purposes.

### ***Access and physical design***

#### **NJ TRANSIT stops, stations, and vehicle design**

When asked about access and physical design, about half of participants find using NJ TRANSIT services easy. Participants discussed accessibility challenges, particularly at Bloomfield, Newark Airport, Newark Penn, and New York Penn stations. Specific concerns regarding mobility included long staircases and disabled escalators that can make access difficult or even impossible for those with mobility challenges, luggage, or strollers. One participant noted that last-minute track changes at Newark Penn and New York Penn stations often do not leave enough time for those with mobility challenges to navigate to the correct platform. Another participant mentioned that accessing certain train cars can be physically challenging, especially in instances when they need to pull themselves up onto the train.

Participants also expressed concern with the disparity between conditions at different NJ TRANSIT facilities, with some stations and stops lacking buildings or shelter from the elements. For those stations that do have infrastructure, some participants expressed frustration with waiting rooms that close at night. One participant mentioned the Union station near Kean University, whose single unheated shelter provides little comfort in cold weather. Participants generally find Hudson-Bergen and Newark Light Rail stations to be accessible.

#### **Traveling with children or an adult requiring mobility assistance**

Participants with children or mobility challenges described crowding on NJ TRANSIT vehicles as a major concern. On buses in particular, space is limited, making it challenging for parents to



travel with their children. One participant described feeling uncomfortable around bus drivers and other passengers with unfriendly demeanors and therefore keeps her children close by when traveling with them. Another participant noted that parents often need to split up their children on board buses due to limited available seating. Participants suggested that bus drivers should ask passengers to make space for parents traveling with their children or with individuals requiring mobility assistance.

### **Traveling while carrying bags, or using a cart or stroller**

Similarly, participants noted that crowded vehicles can make traveling with packages or luggage difficult. Participants identified Newark Airport station as a particularly challenging facility to navigate when traveling with luggage, as is often the case when using the station. One participant suggested adding more NJ TRANSIT staff at the station to assist those traveling with luggage. Some participants indicated that they worry they're being rude when traveling on board vehicles with large backpacks. Several participants noted that they have seen other passengers traveling with excessive amount of luggage, such as large trunks, which they find discourteous. Participants suggested implementing early boarding schemes or adding more designated space in train cars for people with luggage or disabilities.

### **Reliability and communications**

#### **Reliability of NJ TRANSIT services**

Out of the eighteen participants, 13 said that NJ TRANSIT services are reliable. Participants noted that during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic many trains were cancelled, however, since returning to work in the summer of 2021 service has been more reliable.

#### **Problems with reliability**

Reliability concerns were related primarily to train breakdowns and cancellations. One participant recalled many train breakdowns in the summer of 2023, including breakdowns which left passengers stuck on trains without air conditioning. Another participant recalled experiencing multiple train breakdowns on the New Jersey Coast Line several years ago. Several participants recalled being stranded by train breakdowns or cancellations and being forced to call a rideshare service. Participants indicated they have not experienced problems related to breakdowns recently.

#### **Impact on travel decisions**

In response to reliability concerns, participants indicated they try to leave for trips earlier than usually necessary in case their planned buses do not arrive on time. Several participants described the unpredictability of buses in particular. Participants pointed out that the vehicle traffic in the Lincoln Tunnel is especially unpredictable and can lengthen the duration of a bus trip significantly.

#### **Communicating the status of NJ TRANSIT services**

Participants described concerns regarding the communication of announcements both on board vehicles and at stations. Both on board trains and at stations, communication is often poor. Audible announcements are difficult to hear due to the condition of PA system equipment. Announcements are also often not made in a timely manner. Often, train announcements regarding destination and stop information are made only after the doors are closed and the train has left the station. Several participants described boarding the wrong train because

announcements were not made, which led to highly inconvenient travel situations involving back tracking and delays. In addition, when trains are cancelled, alternative travel options are generally not well communicated.

More than half of the participants use the NJ TRANSIT mobile app to access for schedules and transit status, though some indicated that status information on the app can sometimes be unreliable. Several participants also use the texting feature at bus stops to check bus status. While most participants use the app to check schedules, one participant downloads timetable PDFs from the NJ TRANSIT website and another relies on paper schedules. One participant uses Twitter to check transit statuses, screenshot receipts, and lodge complaints.

One participant noted that buses will sometimes use alternate routes at certain times of day to avoid traffic. However, these changes are not always clear, and it would be helpful if the app could communicate this better.

### **Comfort and convenience**

#### **Condition of NJ TRANSIT vehicles and facilities**

- **Cleanliness and comfort:** Participants observed that NJ TRANSIT vehicles are not always clean. Urine is sometimes present on vehicles and customers often place dirty shoes on vehicle seats. With respect to trains, the newer double-decker railcars are generally clean and comfortable, while older rolling stock are not as comfortable. Many train windows are fogged over, making it difficult to see outside. With respect to buses, participants also noted that windows are often difficult to see out of, sometimes resulting in missed stops. Older buses rattle when riding over bumps in the road and participants noted that bus doors do not feel secure. Some buses have ripped seats with exposed foam. One participant described riding a bus with water leaking through the roof and onto the seats. Another participant raised concerns about the lack of communication about pesticides being used to control vermin on board buses, as well as potentially tracking pesticides in their apartment. Participants believed that the overnight cleaning of buses seems inadequate, as buses arrive in the morning dirty and malodorous. One participant noted feeling dirty after riding buses and trains. Participants generally felt that light rail trains are clean.
- **Signage:** Participants noted that bus drivers sometimes forget to change the front signage on the buses, indicating the wrong direction or destination. Signage at certain stations is also lacking, particularly at Secaucus, Newark Penn, and Newark Airport stations, which is concerning given that these are important stations for making transfers and connecting to other transit services. All three stations also see a lot of tourists and customers who may be less familiar with the NJ TRANSIT system, so clear signage is especially important at these locations. Participants also noted that, at Newark Penn, it can be unclear which trains stop at the Newark Airport station and which do not, as many people do not understand the airplane icon displayed on the real-time arrival video boards.
- **Lighting:** Participants felt that stations are generally well lit and did not elaborate.
- **Restrooms:** Participants described restrooms on board trains and at stations as “less than adequate.” While participants characterized restrooms on trains as better maintained than those in stations, they still need more frequent cleaning than they currently receive. Participants noted that customers will often hide in train restrooms to avoid paying a fare,

which prevents other customers from using those facilities. One participant described fearing that train restroom doors will not work as intended, either swinging open inadvertently or locking the participant inside. Most participants described avoiding using NJ TRANSIT restrooms, if possible, with one participant describing feeling unsafe when using station restrooms, especially at night. News stories about harassment and assault in public restrooms in general make some participants cautious about using restrooms in stations.

### **Interactions with other customers**

Participants described several negative experiences with other customers, including witnessing customers arguing with bus drivers when boarding buses and slowing everyone's trip down. One participant described a negative experience with other customers making cruel comments about her size on a crowded train. One participant described being harassed with slurs at a train station based on their sexual orientation (gay). The participant said that NJ TRANSIT police were present and witnessed the event but did not attempt to intervene.

### **Interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees**

Participants likewise described several negative experiences with NJ TRANSIT employees. One participant described a negative experience with a bus driver who refused to honor their ticket. Another participant described a negative experience with a train conductor being rude when the participant accidentally activated the wrong ticket. Another participant described being harassed by an NJ TRANSIT conductor based on their gender, race, and sexual orientation (lesbian, woman of color).

## ***Safety and security***

### **General feelings of safety and security**

Participants generally feel slightly safer traveling during the daytime compared to nighttime. One participant indicated feeling safer on trains than on buses. The participant indicated feeling unsafe when waiting for long periods of time for buses, especially when standing on the street late at night. Other participants reported feeling unsafe when waiting for buses during early morning hours. One participant described boarding and immediately alighting the bus due to fear of being harassed.

Participants also felt that underground Newark Light Rail stations are less safe than above-ground stations, since there are fewer people present in underground stations.

### **Safety around other customers**

Generally, participants feel safer when there are more people present. However, participants also noted that also means there are more people who could potentially harass or assault them. Large or rowdy crowds in particular create feelings of unsafety, with participants feeling an increased risk of being targeted and harassed. In addition, some indicated that other customers on board transit who talk or play music loudly can make them feel uncomfortable.

In contrast, one participant described taking the bus in Jersey City Heights as a positive experience because of the presence of the Latino community and the opportunity to see the same people on the bus every day.

### **Feelings of safety based on identity**

One participant described feeling unsafe because she is a small woman. Another participant added that she also felt uncomfortable using public transit as a woman, as she experiences catcalling and is often approached by scammers. Another participant who identified as a woman noted intentionally selecting a seat next to another woman when riding the bus.

One participant recounted past feelings of fear of being targeted on transit for being a small gay man. Another participant noted that he and his friends carry pepper spray when riding the bus out of fear of homophobic harassment. A participant who is a gay man reports changing the way he dresses or presents himself to avoid harassment. Another participant who is a gay man reported being called a slur for carrying a tote bag.

### **Police presence**

Participants' opinions on police presence were mixed. One participant felt that the police presence in Newark Penn station is lacking. Some indicated that they would feel safer if there were more NJ TRANSIT employees present at all times, walking along platforms and through trains. Several participants indicated feeling they were capable of handling situations of harassment themselves, but that it should not be their responsibility and that transit employees should intervene.

Several participants of color indicated fear regarding increased police presence. There is a feeling that police are there to protect NJ TRANSIT's property rather than the people who are using their services. One participant's negative experience with the NYPD in subway stations in New York City, including experiences where officers did not respond to reported harassment, has eroded their trust in police officers in general.

### **Other NJ TRANSIT employees**

Participants generally agreed that increased presence of NJ TRANSIT employees would make them feel safer, especially compared to increased police presence. Participants stressed the importance of training employees in customer relations, including using appropriate language with customers and interacting customers experiencing mental health concerns. Participants were receptive to a "transit ambassador" approach wherein NJ TRANSIT would deploy clearly marked transit employees that are not police but are trained to assist customers with navigating the transit system and respond to incidents of harassment or assault. One participant described himself as an "unpaid ambassador," helping other customers navigate the system, since paid NJ TRANSIT employees in booths can be unhelpful and leave at a certain time.

### **Security cameras**

Participants were generally not aware of security cameras and not confident that they help improve safety. Participants felt that cameras are useful in providing proof of reported incidents and identifying perpetrators, but do not prevent harassment or assault from occurring in the first place.

### **Graffiti**

Presence of graffiti was not important to participants.

### **NJ TRANSIT's "Ride Kind" Campaign**

Of the 24 participants, only one was aware of NJ TRANSIT's "Ride Kind" campaign.

## **Experiences of harassment and assault**

### **Being harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT**

Several participants indicated that they have been harassed while using NJ TRANSIT. One participant shared a specific incident of harassment that occurred on PATH, but no participants shared specific incidents that occurred while using NJ TRANSIT.

### **Precautions or strategies used to feel safer and to avoid harassment or assault**

Participants described using a variety of precautions and strategies before and while traveling on NJ TRANSIT to feel safer and avoid being harassed or assaulted:

- Mind your business and avoid making eye contact with strangers.
- Alighting the bus, a stop early to avoid walking past a liquor store where people congregate.
- Being less affectionate with their partner while in public to avoid being harassed.
- Changing the way you dress, for example a participant in the medical field wears scrubs while riding transit, even if they were not going to work that day.

## **Concluding Question**

### **Improving experience while using NJ TRANSIT?**

Participants identified several improvements that would allow safer and more comfortable experiences using NJ TRANSIT.

- Continued demonstration of LGBT community support: Participants were pleased with NJ TRANSIT's presence at NJ Pride in Asbury Park as a demonstration of the agency's support of LGBT people but would like to see greater presence at other pride events such as Newark Pride. Similarly, some participants suggested more prominent signage on transit indicating support for LGBT people and their right to be in public spaces. However, participants stressed that signage alone is not enough to make people feel safe.
- More NJ TRANSIT personnel: While opinions on police presence were mixed, participants generally viewed increased presence of other NJ TRANSIT employees favorably. Participants were receptive to a "transit ambassador" approach wherein trained NJ TRANSIT employees are deployed to assist customers with navigating the transit system and respond to incidents of harassment or assault.
- Training for NJ TRANSIT staff: Similarly, participants supported more LGBT-friendly training for NJ TRANSIT staff that teaches employees how to appropriately intervene in situations involving harassment or assault. Trainings should also address customer relations and religious and cultural sensitivity. One participant suggested providing employees with pins to demonstrate that they have completed the training.
- Active recruitment of LGBT staff: Participants suggested that NJ TRANSIT more actively recruit LGBT employees to catalyze a cultural shift at the agency.
- General service and communication improvements: Participants indicated that service and communication improvements more generally would make their experiences with NJ TRANSIT more comfortable. This included increased frequency of transit service,

improved customer relations, and better communication (including multilingual communication).

- *Travel experiences outside of NJ TRANSIT*: Participants mentioned experiences with facilities and services owned and operated by agencies other than NJ TRANSIT such as New York Penn Station, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, and PATH. While NJ TRANSIT does not have authority over these facilities and services, their experiences using these facilities still impacts their mobility and perceptions of NJ TRANSIT.

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## APPENDIX C3 – FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY – TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING INDIVIDUALS

Dates: January 30-31, 2024

Number of participants: 17

### ***Transit familiarity***

Participants were familiar with and reported using NJ TRANSIT at least several times per year. The primary modes they used included: (Number of users)

- Train (14)
- Bus (9)
- Light Rail (4)

Some participants reported using more than one NJ TRANSIT service in the past year.

### **Reasons for using NJ TRANSIT**

Participants identified multiple reasons they choose to use NJ TRANSIT. Five participants use NJ TRANSIT out of necessity because they do not own cars or find their cars and parking to be unreliable. Others said it's more affordable than other options like Uber or paying for gas. Participants also use NJ TRANSIT because of the senior discount, for environmental reasons (not adding pollution), not having to park, and the ability to multitask while using NJ TRANSIT. One participant only uses it to get in and out of New York City.

### **Satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT services**

Of the seventeen participants, 8 people indicated that they were satisfied with NJT services. The reasons vary and are discussed in greater detail in the following sections, but include:

- Bus is affordable
- It's a good service compared to public transit in other states
- It's usually on time compared to Amtrak
- It's possible to build a relationship with the bus drivers and conductors
- It connects places that would be otherwise difficult to access
- It eliminates the emotional cost of driving.

For those participants that are not satisfied, they identified several reasons, also discussed in greater detail in the sections below:

- Poor customer service
- Lack of communication about service and cancellations
- Not enough disability accommodations
- Transphobic experiences
- Not cost effective when traveling in a group
- Not available everywhere they need to go
- Safety, such as lack of lighting at stops
- Not comfortable dressing androgynously on the train

Participants were also asked what they liked the most and least about NJ TRANSIT. In discussing what participants like the most, participants agreed that having the service available at all, especially comparing other public transportation systems around the country, is a positive. In addition, they mentioned the comfort of the seats, the existence in many locations especially in north and central New Jersey (not as accessible in the south), affordability compared to Metro North, and the staff, specifically bus drivers, are generally nice and well-meaning. They also mentioned the availability of the app.

In discussing what they liked least about NJ TRANSIT, participants mentioned several reasons. Participants said it is sometimes unreliable and there is a lack of customer service and communications during service disruptions. Participants also mentioned lack of comfortable and accessible seating at bus stops and train stations, lack of accessible restrooms (including gender-neutral restrooms), too little off-peak service, stations without staff, and long transfer times at some stops.

One participant mentioned issues with bus drivers causing delays and calling police for small fare shortages. One participant mentioned an incident where they fell getting onto the bus and the bus driver did not assist them in any way. They also mentioned issues with behaviors of other passengers and dealing with harassment. Another participant described NJ TRANSIT “not holding up their end of the bargain” of being the primary mode of transportation for many communities in New Jersey by ensuring that transportation is safe and reliable.

### ***Travel patterns and behavior***

#### **Types of destinations**

Participants use NJT to reach a variety of destinations. Many participants use NJ TRANSIT for going to NYC, going to work, medical appointments, shopping, and social trips including drag shows, dates, clubs, community organization events and other queer community gatherings.

#### **Time of day**

Participants travel during many different times of the day, during peak and off-peak hours. One participant discussed avoiding rush hours if possible. One participant discussed their work requiring late hours, late at night or early in the morning, and needing reliable transportation during those times. One participant discussed avoiding coming home late because they believe



the buses are safe, but bus stops are not safe. Another person discussed leaving hours before in order to get to work on time. Another person lives by a train station that does not always receive service and has to plan their commute times around the available service.

### ***Access and physical design***

#### **NJ TRANSIT stops, stations, and vehicle design.**

When asked about access and physical design, participants discussed locations of stops, the design of stations, and NJ TRANSIT restrooms. One participant said that the location of bus stops is not always accessible and requires crossing dangerous highways or roads and can feel unsafe, and other participants agreed. Another noted difficulty biking to the station. In addition, participants discussed the accessibility of stations, including difficulty accessing platforms, difficulty using stairs (including stairs on the train), elevators being unclean, and heated areas being locked at certain times of the day. The participants also discussed the presence of hostile architecture (the use of design to deter certain behaviors; for example, discouraging sleeping in public spaces by making benches intentionally uncomfortable) in stations. One participant discussed the parking lot availability near train stations, specifically that parking lots fill up quickly and are not free. Another person described their experience as both a trans person and having a physical disability, using a cane, and experiencing fear while waiting on platforms.

One participant discussed concerns about being queer and using transit. They said they would not wear a non-confirming outfit unless in a group. Another participant said that when traveling with a group of gay men, they would look at the times of sports games and not travel during those times, and they find those groups less accepting. Participants also think there are not a lot of workers around who can help if they need it.

Participants also discussed restrooms. One participant said, “using a bathroom as a trans person is always scary,” and many participants indicated that they only use NJ TRANSIT restrooms if it is an emergency. Participants expressed concerns about their safety as trans people and fears of harassment while using restrooms. One participant said that bathrooms seem isolated and feared no one would hear them if they needed help. One participant noted how the restrooms are very binary, and there is a psychological burden involved when using the restroom, and others agreed.

#### **Traveling with children or an adult that has mobility challenges**

Five participants indicated that they regularly travel with children or an adult with mobility challenges. One participant discussed their experience traveling with a child, and said they try to avoid bringing their child on transit because of fears that a situation could occur that would put their child in danger. They will instead spend more money to travel in an Uber. One person discussed that children are not guaranteed a seat, so it is not convenient to use NJ TRANSIT. Another said they would not travel on NJ TRANSIT if they were traveling with someone with mobility issues.

#### **Traveling while carrying bags, or using a cart or stroller**

Seven participants indicated that they regularly travel carrying bags. They said that the overhead storage on the trains is generally okay, but not on buses. Another person said that the top racks of the trains are too small to hold bags. Another participant said the newer trains are better for



bags, but people with bikes, people with luggage, and people with disabilities are all competing for that space. One participant asked if there could be space for people to store extra bags or other items. One participant discussed problems they have feeling their items are secure; they discussed an incident where they fell asleep on the train and had been robbed. Another participant expressed concerns about not being able to lock their luggage.

## **Reliability and communications**

### **Reliability of NJ TRANSIT services**

Out of the 17 participants, nine said that NJT services are generally reliable.

Those that felt services were unreliable discussed problems including interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees, poor communication, and delays or lack of service. Multiple participants discussed interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees where employees were rude or unhelpful. One participant described an incident where a bus driver drove past her stop and argued with her about when she pressed the button to exit. She then had to walk an extra block at night in a location she was unfamiliar with. In addition, she said she worried about standing up for herself, for fear the bus driver could be the same one she encounters in the future and must depend on during a later trip.

Other participants described train conductors not answering questions about where the train will stop and others making off-handed comments while collecting tickets. As far as communication outside of employees, participants mentioned the app as unreliable and not always showing delays. They also said it can be difficult to figure out the status and routes of buses. Participants described issues with trains leaving before they're scheduled and buses passing because they're too full.

Others mentioned trains not running 24 hours and unexplained delays. They said that sending a complaint to NJ TRANSIT does not make a difference. One participant identified NJ TRANSIT as the only service in many places and people are dependent on it; they said NJ TRANSIT's lack of reliability and communication reflects a low level of concern for customers.

### **Impact on travel decisions**

The prospect of unreliable service impacts travel decisions. Nine participants said they travel earlier than needed to be on time for their appointments or events. However, one participant noted that the choice of travel is to use NJ TRANSIT or buy a car, which is not always an option. They opined that asking a question about travel choices is disrespectful to transit-reliant riders, because they really have no choices.

### **Accessibility of information on NJ TRANSIT services.**

Participants discussed issues with the accessibility of information while using NJT trains and buses.

- ***Trains:*** Participants remarked that information about trains is more accessible than information about buses. Participants indicated that "Departure Vision" is usually accurate but noted that information is lacking when there are service disruptions. They said that they are not given reasons for trains not showing up, and they said information about alternative service is unclear. They also noted that the speakers on the train are difficult to hear, the boards showing trains and stops are not always clear, and they are unsure what stops are

on what line. They also do not always receive information about when to move cars to exit the train.

- **Buses:** Participants reported more issues accessing information about buses. Participants suggested the bus system is confusing and rerouting of buses is not communicated well. They also noted that planning a trip on the bus can be difficult for those that cannot walk long distances, Accommodations should be made with the bus service for people with disabilities, or if there are accommodations that need to be communicated.

Participants also discussed their experiences with receiving information through the NJ TRANSIT app. They said the app is difficult to use for information about bus service and lacked the features that train services have. Participants also experienced issues with the app logging out, force closing, not activating tickets on time, and having an unattractive interface.

Regarding information, one participant said:

“NJ TRANSIT is the most prominent mode of public transport in NJ, [or the] only [mode of public transportation], yet customer service is lacking.... As much as things happen, the lack of communication really frustrates [me]. Yes, there is MyBusNow, but even those services have issues, and it doesn't seem like NJ TRANSIT is concerned with improving this.”

### **Comfort and convenience**

#### **Condition of NJ TRANSIT vehicles and facilities**

- **Cleanliness and Comfort** – Participants were asked about the cleanliness and comfort of stations and facilities. One participant said the buses are sometimes dirty and dusty. Another said that older trains and buses have older seats which can be uncomfortable and in poor condition. Concerning stations, participants said that the condition varies from station to station. They mentioned issues including elevators being unclean and smelling of urine, and ticket machines not working.
- **Restrooms** – Regarding the availability and condition of restrooms, participants said there are not enough restrooms and have never seen a gender-neutral restroom at NJ TRANSIT. One participant suggested that lack of restrooms contributes to a hostile architecture approach that discourages people, including those experiencing homelessness, from spending time in facilities. Creating spaces that are unfriendly to those experiencing homelessness is prioritized over providing accommodations, such as restrooms, to paying users.

One participant, identifying as nonbinary, did not know which restroom to use. Another participant said they would love to see gender neutral restrooms, especially at transportation hubs and places with large queer communities. They said these spaces would also be helpful to families and other people who could use these spaces. They connected this issue to NJ TRANSIT's presence at a Pride event and said NJ TRANSIT could show up for queer people through an initiative for gender neutral restrooms.

Other participants avoid using NJ TRANSIT restrooms, especially identifying as trans. This includes restrooms on trains, which one participant noted are gender neutral, but would still rather not use them. They said restrooms are not well kept. Men's bathrooms are extremely unclean, have a lot of out of order stalls, and often have no toilet paper or the dispenser does not work. Participants said public bathrooms have an unsafe atmosphere. Another participant

said restrooms are difficult to use with their mobility aids. They also were physically removed from the restroom by another passenger, who grabbed them by the backpack and pulled them out of the restrooms.

- **Lighting and Signage** – With regard to lighting, one participant said they thought five out of fifty bus stops have lights or shelters. One participant said that inside the trains, everything is very bright and would love the quiet car to be less bright to create calmness. Another participant said lighting could be improved in outside areas for waiting for buses. Some expressed concern about the tunnels that lead to parking lots and the parking lots not being well lit.

About signage, participants said that signs that say the names of tracks are not large or visible. They expressed interest in seeing more signs, signs that show the stops while inside the train, countdown clocks that show times, and more frequent audio announcements that are easier to hear.

### **Interactions with other customers**

Of the participants, fifteen said their interactions with other customers are generally neutral. One person said their experiences are generally neutral, but the negative experiences stand out. One person heard other customers having a homophobic conversation.

### **Interactions with NJ TRANSIT employees**

Participants discussed neutral, negative, and positive experiences with NJT employees.

- **Positive**: Fifteen participants said NJ TRANSIT employees are generally courteous and helpful. One noted that a decent conductor will relay messages.
- **Neutral**: One participant said their experience with employees is 50/50 but did not offer any further details.
- **Negative**: One participant discussed their experiences as a person with cognitive and physical disabilities and feelings of being looked down upon or that people do not want to help them. When asking for help and letting people know about their disability, there's not an accommodation. They said most of the time people explain with words, which when that isn't enough, but employees won't do more to accommodate, such as providing visual aids.

Previous sections note additional issues with employees that were mentioned in earlier in this document. Finally, a participant observed that most workers are white cis men and believes more diversity would be helpful.

### ***Safety and security***

#### **Traveling at different times of the day**

When traveling during the daytime when it is light outside, fifteen participants reported feel safe. They said it was because they don't feel they are at harm and can see the other people around them. One person said the other customers and the environment of the station can make them feel unsafe. One person feels unsafe during this time because of their disability and feels anxious when traveling on the trains.

When traveling when it's dark outside, eight participants indicated that they feel safe. One participant feels safe because there are generally a lot of people around when they travel, and

because they are white it adds a feeling of safety. One person feels safe because they carry a weapon.

Those that said they feel unsafe at traveling at night identified reasons such as the potential for dangerous situations, less staff on trains and buses, and fear of falling asleep on the train and being exposed to people. One person also discussed feeling uneasy when other passengers sit next to them even when there are other seats available. Others said they do not like sitting by men and will move if there is only a man on the train with them. Another participant expressed concern about unhoused people and being unsure if they're safe if something goes wrong.

### **Crowding**

Participants feel less safe when there is crowding. One discussed crowding at NY Penn Station and how it is chaotic. Another discussed problems when there is construction on platforms and narrow pathways.

### **Police presence**

Of the participants, only two said they feel safer around police. One participant believed that police would protect them. Other participants said transit police are not going to listen to queer and trans people, and that police are not on the platforms at Penn Station. Other participants said police make them feel anxious, especially when they are carrying large guns, and that police presence means there is trouble on the train.

### **Other NJ TRANSIT employees**

Most participants said they feel safer around NJ TRANSIT employees.

### **Security cameras**

In terms of the presence of security cameras, four participants have seen them while using NJ TRANSIT. Two participants said there are enough, and the rest feel there are not enough. Some participants indicated that cameras do not make them feel safe and that they are only used after an incident has occurred.

### **Graffiti**

Presence of graffiti is not important to participants. One participant feels neutral about it, and two other participants feel positively about it. One participant said it made them feel a little less safe, but it depends on the content.

### **NJ TRANSIT's Ride Kind Campaign**

Five participants have seen signs or are aware of the Ride Kind campaign.

### ***Experiences of harassment and assault***

#### **Being harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT**

Of the seventeen participants, nine experienced being harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT. These participants indicated that although they do not experience harassment or assault frequently, it impacted their experiences going forward. Five participants shared their experiences of harassment using NJ TRANSIT.

- *Participant 1:* This participant had a knife and gun pulled on them on two separate occasions. They believe the incident was related to their race as a person of color. They did not report and feel unsafe reporting and do not trust the police.
- *Participant 2:* This participant has been groped several times while going up an escalator in an NJ TRANSIT building. They did not report the incident and attributed this to shock and trauma of the experience. They also did not want to ruin the experience of their peers who they were traveling with at that time. They also believed that reporting the incident would garner a response of “you had it coming” based on the way they were dressed.
- *Participant 3:* This participant was harassed on the light rail for money. They were with their family, so they downplayed the incident. They did not report.
- *Participant 4:* This participant was assaulted on the bus on the way to Pride in New York. They could not report the incident until the bus arrived at Port Authority, but they did report it to the bus driver and then the police. Bystanders did intervene after the physical assault.
- *Participant 5:* This participant has experienced several incidences of having men confront them and try to make them uncomfortable and invade their personal space. They have never reported any incidents. They have overheard people using slurs.

Other participants discussed experiences such as being told they’re using the wrong restroom by women and being yelled at by passing drivers while waiting at bus stops. They identify harassers as mostly middle-aged people, mostly men, but sometimes women.

### **Precautions or strategies used to feel safer and to avoid harassment or assault**

Participants described using the following precautions and strategies before and while traveling on NJT:

- Changing the way, they dress. Some try to dress more masculine and feel like they are more likely to be approached when dressed fem. Others try to dress less androgynous or not wear certain outfits on the train.
- Taking off accessories which are queer identifying, such as pins, or covering their shirts.
- Try to look occupied, stay on their phone.
- Stay away from platform edge for fear of being pushed.
- Keeping phone charged, stay on phone and wear headphones.

### **Concluding Question**

#### **Improving experience while using NJ TRANSIT?**

Participants identified several improvements that would allow safer and more comfortable experiences using NJ TRANSIT.

- More presence of NJ TRANSIT employees who are walking around more often.
- Fewer police.
- More lighting outside the stations and in parking lots
- More signage and better communication.

- Additional training for employees. One participant said, “why would I report to someone who doesn’t know what a pronoun is?”
- Gender-neutral restrooms or single use restrooms.
- Symbolic improvements such as signs or pins with pride colors to show NJ TRANSIT is visibly supportive of LGBTQ+ customers.

Two participants made statements during the focus group session that indicate the importance of NJ TRANSIT showing up for their LGBTQ+ customers:

“Most of us use the train in months other than June.”

“This is the first time I thought they cared about me, having this study.”

## APPENDIX D – SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

Prepared by: Jon Carnegie, June Greeman, Cate Heady, and Sam Rosenthal  
Date: 11/27/2024

### INTRODUCTION

Through this project, NJ TRANSIT seeks to understand how women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer plus community, sometimes referred to as sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) travel on NJ TRANSIT so the agency can provide better accommodations for all customers, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. While women and SGMs may face common socio-economic and structural barriers regarding travel needs, each demographic may have their own mobility needs and they may face their own unique challenges when traveling. Ultimately, meeting the needs of each group may demand different solutions.

The goal for this research is to gather and analyze identity-specific data that reflects how women and SGMs travel that can be incorporated into future planning and decision-making. The objectives of this research are to:

- Identify and understand the mobility needs, barriers, challenges, and concerns that women, girls, and SGMs face when using NJ TRANSIT.
- Develop recommendations on what can be done to address the concerns, challenges, and needs of women, girls, and SGM riders so changes can be incorporated into the design of both public transportation infrastructure, such as bus stops, train, and light rail stations, as well as rolling stock.
- Identify ways to improve safety for women, girls, and SGMs; and
- Improve customer-facing employee training to better understand how to serve these populations without bias or discrimination and with an understanding of the unique needs of these populations.

In an effort to better understand the travel patterns and needs of women and SGMs who use NJ TRANSIT services, the research team analyzed a variety of travel-related data by gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, and other intersectional characteristics including age, race, ethnicity, and ability. The analysis utilized data from the 2017 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS)<sup>4</sup>, 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)<sup>5</sup>, and NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction surveys.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following is a summary of key findings from the analysis of secondary data.

#### Trip purpose for any mode

- Across all modes, the most common trip ends are home-based or necessity-based, which include destinations related to school, medical appointments, shopping, errands, and

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<sup>4</sup> 2022 NHTS data, which was not available at the time of analysis, has since been released.

<sup>5</sup> 2022 ACS 5-Year PUMS data, which was not available at the time of analysis, has since been released.

meals. This is true for both women and men; however, women make more necessity-based trips than men.

- Men in same-sex couples are somewhat more likely to make home-based and social/recreation trips than men in opposite-sex couples, and less likely to make work-based trips.
- Women in same-sex couples are slightly more likely to make necessity-based and social/recreation trips than their opposite-sex counterparts and are less likely to make home- and work-based trips.
- For both men and women, the likelihood of making necessity-based trips is greatest among those ages 65+.
- Social/recreational trips are more common among younger and older age groups, while work-based trips are generally more common among those ages 35-54.
- Among both men and women, those who are Black and African American report the greatest share of necessity-based trips of any race.

#### Rates of transit use

- At the national level and across all trip purposes, men report using transit (including bus, subway, commuter and long-distance rail, and light rail) at slightly higher rates than women.
- Both men and women in same-sex relationships make trips via transit at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships.
- Among men, those in same-sex relationships are nearly three times as likely to travel via transit than those in opposite-sex relationships.
- Women in same-sex relationships are about twice as likely to choose transit for any trip than women in opposite-sex relationships.
- Among those making trips via transit, individuals in same-sex couples take longer trips than those in opposite-sex couples.
- More women ride NJ TRANSIT than men—53.6 percent vs. 45.4 percent. This is true across all modes except rail, where slightly more customers identify as male (49.9 percent) than female (49.1 percent).
- Approximately one percent of NJ TRANSIT customers identify as non-binary/gender fluid. Of those that identify as non-binary/gender fluid, the vast majority (74 percent) are age 34 or younger. This pattern is consistent across all modes.
- Female NJ TRANSIT riders tend to be younger (34 years old or younger) than male riders across all modes except Access Link. Male access link riders tend to be younger than female Access link riders.



- Overall, 41 percent of female NJ TRANSIT riders and 74 percent of non-binary/gender fluid riders are 34 years old or younger, while only 32.6 percent of male riders are in this age cohort.
- NJ TRANSIT's customer base, including all modes, is well distributed between household income categories. About one third (29 percent) are low income, earning less than \$35,000 per year, while another third (34 percent) are middle income, earning between \$35,000 to \$99,999 per year. Approximately 38 percent of customers earn more than \$100,000 per year.
  - More women and non-binary/gender fluid customers live in middle- and lower-income households than high-income households. Non-binary/gender fluid customers make up the greatest share of riders from lower-income households.
  - When looking at ridership by mode, there are some notable differences. Rail and light rail riders are more likely to live in higher-income households, while bus and Access link riders live in lower-income households.
  - Rail riders, especially male rail riders, make up the largest proportion of customers living in higher-income households. Sixty-six percent of male rail riders are high-income.
  - Access Link customers, especially female Access Link customers, make up the largest share of customers from lower-income households. Sixty-six percent of female Access Link riders are low-income.
  - More than 80 percent of NJ TRANSIT's lower-income female and male customers use bus.

#### Transit use by race and ethnicity

- For both men and women, those who are Black or African American are more likely to use transit than those of other races. Among Black and African American men, those in same-sex couples are even more likely to use transit, especially compared to those in opposite-sex couples.
- Among both men and women, those who are white are least likely to use transit.
- Within almost every racial or ethnic group, those who are in same-sex couples are more likely to use transit than those who are not.
- NJ TRANSIT's customer base is diverse, with slightly more than half reporting their race to be White. Approximately 20 percent identify as Black or African American, 15 percent as Asian or Pacific Islander, and 13 percent mixed race. One quarter of NJ TRANSIT customers are Hispanic or Latino.
  - These patterns shift somewhat by mode. A larger proportion of rail and light rail riders identify as White (66.7 percent and 55.7 percent respectively) than minority races, while a larger proportion of bus riders identify as non-White, 56.1 percent

vs. 43.9 percent. Nearly 60 percent of NJ TRANSIT bus riders identify as women of color.

#### Transit use and trip purpose

- Overall, the percentage of people reporting trips to work via transit is higher among New Jerseyans than nationally.
- At the national level, women use transit for commuting to work at slightly higher rates than men.
- Both nationally and in New Jersey, those in same-sex relationships use transit for work trips at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships.
- Among NJ TRANSIT customers, a majority report traveling to work, as the primary reason for their trip. Work travel is the most common trip purpose among male, female, and non-binary/gender fluid NJ TRANSIT customers.
  - Men travel for work at higher rates than both female and non-binary/gender fluid customers, 60 percent compared to 55 percent and 42 percent, respectively.
  - Rates of work travel are highest among NJ TRANSIT bus customers. Sixty-six percent of male bus customers report traveling for work compared to 62 percent of women and 49 percent of non-binary/gender-fluid bus customers.
  - Women across all modes use NJ TRANSIT services for shopping at higher rates than men.
  - More than three-quarters (78 percent) of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ TRANSIT services to travel for essential purposes including work, school, shopping, medical, and personal business.
  - Essential travel rates are highest among NJ TRANSIT bus and Access Link users. This is true among men, women, and non-binary/gender fluid customers.
  - NJ TRANSIT rail and light rail customers take more trips for entertainment, recreation, and social purposes than bus riders. In fact, rates of essential and non-essential trip making are almost evenly split among male rail riders.
- A plurality of light rail (47 percent) and Access Link riders (47 percent) riders and a significant majority of bus riders (76 percent) use NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis for non-work travel.
- Less than one quarter of rail riders use the service on a daily/weekly basis for non-work trips.
- Gender differences are mostly minor. For example, women use bus services for non-work travel at slightly higher rates than men, while men use rail and light rail more frequently than women for non-work travel.

- For all modes, except bus, non-binary/gender fluid riders use transit for non-work trips at a higher rate than male and female customers.

#### Work trips by transit mode

- Nationally, men in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work via subway than by bus.
- Women in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work by bus than by subway.
- In New Jersey, men in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work by bus, followed by long-distance/commuter rail and subway. New Jersey men in same-sex couples are most likely to travel by subway, followed by bus and long-distance/commuter rail.
- Female New Jerseyans in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work via bus, followed by commuter rail and subway. New Jersey women in same-sex couples are most likely to travel via commuter rail, followed by bus and subway.
- The vast majority of riders that use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work report using NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis to make work trips. More bus and light rail customers report being daily/weekly riders than rail and Access Link customers, who report slightly lower rates of daily/weekly work trips.
- Women are more likely than men to ride NJ TRANSIT five or more days per week for work purposes, 47 percent compared to 44 percent for all modes. These patterns are similar when looking at individual modes, however, a slightly greater share of male than female bus and rail riders use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.
- Regardless of mode, non-binary/gender fluid customers report the most frequent use of NJ TRANSIT services for work travel. A full 62 percent of non-binary/gender fluid bus, rail, light rail, and Access Link customers report using NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.

#### Peak vs. off-peak travel

- Almost universally among men and women in both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships and at both the national and New Jersey levels, the morning peak hours between 6:00 and 9:00 am accounted for the highest percentage of work trips.
- Approximately two-thirds of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ TRANSIT service weekdays during peak periods (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM). This is true for both men and women (67.1 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively).
- A majority (58.6 percent) of customers that identify as non-binary/gender fluid use NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods.

- Approximately 20 percent of NJ TRANSIT customers travel during off-peak hours on weekdays, and 13 percent use services on weekends.
- The highest rates of weekday peak period usage are among bus riders. Nearly three quarters of women bus riders report using NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods.

#### Work trips by transit mode

- Nationally, men in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work via subway than by bus.
- Women in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work by bus than by subway.
- In New Jersey, men in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work by bus, followed by long-distance/commuter rail and subway. New Jersey men in same-sex couples are most likely to travel by subway, followed by bus and long-distance/commuter rail.
- Female New Jerseyans in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work via bus, followed by commuter rail and subway. New Jersey women in same-sex couples are most likely to travel via commuter rail, followed by bus and subway.
- The vast majority of riders that use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work report using NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis to make work trips. More bus and light rail customers report being daily/weekly riders than rail and Access Link customers, who report slightly lower rates of daily/weekly work trips.
- Women are more likely than men to ride NJ TRANSIT five or more days per week for work purposes, 47 percent compared to 44 percent for all modes. These patterns are similar when looking at individual modes, however, a slightly greater share of male than female bus and rail riders use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.
- Regardless of mode, non-binary/gender fluid customers report the most frequent use of NJ TRANSIT services for work travel. A full 62 percent of non-binary/gender fluid bus, rail, light rail, and Access Link customers report using NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week.

#### NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction

- Mean satisfaction scores for all modes generally fall toward the middle of the scale, between acceptable and excellent for most service attributes.
- When comparing satisfaction scores reported by male and female customers, overall, there are only small difference.

- Men report slightly lower satisfaction scores for on-time performance/trip time, handling of disruptions, customer service and overall satisfaction.
- Women report lower satisfaction scores for vehicle condition and cleanliness, schedules, safety, and security. The latter two attributes show the greatest gender differences.
- Nonbinary/gender fluid customers consistently report lower satisfaction scores for almost all attributes. The greatest differences in scores are associated information and communication, handling of service disruptions, on time performance/trip time, and employee performance/customer service. For these attributes, scores are a full 0.5-0.7 lower. Scores are also notably lower for station/stop/shelter condition and cleanliness, vehicle comfort, condition and cleanliness, safety and security, and overall satisfaction as well.
- In terms of modal differences, customers ratings show that Access Link customers are the most satisfied overall and most specific individual service attributes. The one notable exception is with on time performance and trip time, Access link customers score these attributes lower than customers using other modes.
- Bus customers are the least satisfied overall with in most cases, consistently lower scores for all service attributes.
- Overall, rail customers are more satisfied than bus and light rail customers for most service attributes. The handling of service disruptions is one exception. This is the area of lowest satisfaction for rail customers.
- The lowest satisfaction scores for light rail customers are for information, communication, and security.

## **DATA AND METHODS**

### **National Household Travel Survey**

The research team analyzed data from the 2017 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS). The NHTS is a national survey conducted periodically by the US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration that provides transportation planners and policymakers with comprehensive travel data. (68) The NHTS collects data on daily travel performed by households and individuals, including trip purpose, transportation mode, trip duration, and trip time of day/day of week.

NHTS data was used to answer questions about women and SGMs' travel patterns, specifically frequency of travel, trip purpose, mode choice, and times of travel. Data analysis required the use of two datasets within the NHTS: trip data and person data. In order to conduct an effective analysis, the research team cleaned the data and checked for completeness across essential demographics and trip characteristics including mode, trip purpose, trip duration, sex, and relationship status.

Trip data was then summarized and appended to respective person files within the person dataset, linking data on travel behavior with data on demographic characteristics. In addition, mode information was reclassified and consolidated to better match the categories used in NJ TRANSIT surveys. The initial round of data analysis yielded scarce results when disaggregated by demographic characteristics and across modes and trip purposes. As a result, further consolidation was required, resulting in the following trip mode and trip purpose categories:

Trip mode:

- Active mode (including walk and bicycle)
- Personal vehicle and TNC (including car, SUV, van, pickup truck, rental car, RV, motorcycle, and taxi/TNC service)
- Transit (including Amtrak/commuter rail, subway/light rail, private shuttle bus, school bus, public or commuter bus, and paratransit)
- Other (including golf cart/Segway, boat, and airplane)

Trip purpose (destination):

- Home
- Work
- Necessity-based (including school, medical, shopping/errands, and meals)
- Social/recreational
- Other (including transporting someone or something else)

To determine whether an individual is in a same-sex relationship, the research team developed a script that assigned a code to each person within the person dataset that corresponds to their relationship status. The analysis resulted in six possible categories for each person:

- Male, Same-Sex Couple
- Female, Same-Sex Couple
- Male, Opposite Sex Couple
- Female, Opposite Sex Couple
- Male, Non-Partnered<sup>6</sup>
- Female, Non-Partnered

Once the data was prepared, the research team performed an analysis to understand summary statistics of travel behavior by different demographics, including intersectionally among same-sex couples. The determined summary statistics, to be compared across different types of travelers, included:

- Total trips by trip purpose
- Average travel time by trip purpose
- Total trips by mode
- Average travel time by mode
- Work trips by mode
- Work trips by departure time of day

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<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, non-partnered male and female respondents were included only in comparisons of all male respondents versus all female respondents.

## **American Community Survey PUMS data**

The research team supplemented the analysis of NHTS data with American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data. PUMS data is provided by the US Census Bureau and allows users to create custom tables summarizing Census data for specific variables and geographies. (69) PUMS files include records from individual people or housing units with disclosure protection that prevents them from being identified.

The research team queried 2021 ACS 5-Year PUMS data using the following variables:

- Respondent sex
- Respondent couple type
- Mode choice to work
- Time of departure to work
- Average time to work

## **Notes on comparisons across NHTS and PUMS data**

As noted above, mode data was aggregated into discrete categories. Across NHTS and PUMS data, classifications of Active Mode, Personal Vehicle and TNC, and Transit were able to be matched. However, it is important to note that the "Other" category across NHTS and PUMS data are not equivalent. For this reason, the "Other" cannot be compared across data sources. Additionally, due to limitations with the NHTS dataset, which does not include a variable for orientation but instead was coded based on householder sex and householder's spouse sex, "Same-Sex Partners" within the NHTS dataset are only counted for those partners who live together, and for whom one is the householder. Due to this limitation, the comparison between NHTS and PUMS datasets relies on the PUMS Couple Type classification "Same-Sex Couple - Married" which follows similar limitations as those within the NHTS classification. Unmarried partners in same-sex and opposite sex relationships as the responding householder within the PUMS dataset were not included in comparisons across NHTS and PUMS datasets as there is far less confidence in their living together compared to analogous married couples.

Finally, because the NHTS dataset was not large enough to adequately analyze New Jersey state-level data, travel patterns at the state level were determined using PUMS data. This includes work trips by orientation by mode, average time of work trip, and work trip time of day.

## **NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction surveys**

Finally, the research team analyzed data NJ TRANSIT's Spring 2022 and Fall 2022 customer satisfaction surveys. The customer satisfaction survey covers all modes, including NJ TRANSIT bus, rail, light rail, and Access Link services. The survey is conducted twice per year, once in the Spring and once each Fall. As part of the survey, customers are asked to rate their satisfaction with service traits on a scale of 0-10 and to identify the most important service traits. In addition, the survey includes questions designed to document how customers are using NJ TRANSIT services and questions related to personal and household characteristics. The surveys are administered online with an extensive marketing campaign to increase participation and boost response rates in target markets. To encourage participation, NJ TRANSIT offered 250 NJ TRANSIT Reward Points to all customers that completed the survey and were a member or signed up for NJ TRANSIT Rewards.

Data from the surveys were used to explore how customers with different gender identities use NJ TRANSIT services and how satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT services differs by gender identity. Responses from 40,693 NJ TRANSIT customers were used for the analysis. Data were weighted up to represent ridership based on NJ TRANSIT's Fall 2022 passenger counts. See Table 30 and Table 31 for more detail.

Table 30 – Number of survey responses by mode and gender

	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Bus	9,429	54.0	7,857	45.0	182	1.0	17,468	100.0
Rail	10,274	49.0	10,474	49.9	221	1.1	20,969	100.0
Light Rail	680	53.5	573	45.0	19	1.5	1,272	100.0
Access Link	641	65.1	331	33.6	12	1.2	984	100.0
All modes	21,024	51.7	19,235	47.3	434	1.1	40,693	100.0

Note: The answer options for the gender question included "prefer not to answer" or "prefer to self-describe." Data for these response categories are not reported.

Table 31 – Estimated riders by mode and gender

	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
Bus	71,232	55.3	56,211	43.7	1,333	1.0	128,775	100.0
Rail	28,039	49.1	28,497	49.9	607	1.1	57,142	100.0
Light Rail	7,789	53.3	6,687	45.8	136	0.9	14,612	100.0
Access Link	2,420	65.4	1,240	33.5	41	1.1	3,702	100.0
All modes	109,480	53.6	92,635	45.4	2,116	1.0	204,231	100.0

Data weighted based on Fall 2022 passenger counts.

To support the data analysis, NJ TRANSIT employees prepared and shared an extensive set of cross-tabulations using SPSS statistical analysis software and the weighted data from the survey. The following cross-tabulations were included:

***Personal characteristics***

1. Gender by age and mode
2. Gender by race/ethnicity by mode
3. Gender by English proficiency by mode
4. Gender by disability by mode
5. Gender by household size by mode
6. Gender by licensed driver by mode
7. Gender by vehicles at home by mode
8. Gender by household income by mode
9. Gender by job/industry by mode



## ***Travel Characteristics***

### **10. Days of travel by gender and mode**

- a. Weekdays (peak and off-peak)
- b. Weekends

### **11. Times of travel by gender and mode**

### **12. Trip Origin by gender and mode**

### **13. Destination place by gender and mode**

### **14. Access/egress means by gender and mode**

### **15. Trip purpose by gender and mode**

### **16. Work trip frequency by gender and mode**

### **17. Non-work Trip frequency by gender and mode**

### **18. Payment method and place by gender and mode**

## ***Customer opinions and satisfaction***

### **19. Opinions of facility/vehicle safety and condition by gender and mode:**

- a. Boarding station parking availability
- b. Boarding station parking fee
- c. Safety of parking lot
- d. Security of parking lot
- e. Boarding station/stop/shelter condition
- f. Boarding station/stop/shelter cleanliness
- g. Arrival station/stop/shelter condition
- h. Arrival station/stop/shelter cleanliness
- i. Seating availability
- j. Comfort on-board
- k. Vehicle interior conditions other than cleanliness
- l. Cleanliness onboard

### **20. Customer satisfaction by gender and mode:**

- a. Availability of Information about Accessible Services
- b. Service Disruption Announcements/Info
- c. On Time Performance - Boarding Station/Stop
- d. On Time Performance - Arrival Station/Stop
- e. Trip Time
- f. Quality of Transfer
- g. Handling of Service Disruptions
- h. Employee Performance
- i. Customer Service
- j. Payment Options
- k. Safety
- l. Security
- m. Reliability of Accessible Features
- n. Overall Value for your Money
- o. Overall satisfaction with NJ TRANSIT

The bolded items were analyzed in detail as part of this study. The results of the analyses are presented in the NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey Data Analysis section below.

## NHTS AND ACS-PUMS DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

### Overall transit use by gender and orientation

According to 2017 NHTS data, at the national level and across all trip purposes, men report using transit (including bus, subway, commuter and long-distance rail, and light rail) at slightly higher rates (5.0%) than women (4.6%). (That is, 5.0% of all reported trips among men and 4.6% of all reported trips among women are made via transit.) Additionally, both men and women in same-sex relationships make trips via transit at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships. Among men, those in same-sex relationships are nearly three times as likely to travel via transit (5.9%) than those in opposite-sex relationships (2.1%). Similarly, women in same-sex relationships are about twice as likely to choose transit for any trip (2.9%) than women in opposite-sex relationships (1.7%).

In addition, among those making trips via transit, individuals in same-sex couples take longer trips than those in opposite-sex couples. Average trip times for those using transit were higher for both men (64 minutes) and women (69 minutes) in same-sex couples compared to men (56 minutes) and women (53 minutes) in opposite-sex couples.

Table 32 – Percentage of trips by transit by gender and orientation, nationally

Gender/Orientation	Percent
<b>All Males</b>	5.0%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	2.1%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	5.9%
<b>All Females</b>	4.6%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.7%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	2.9%

Source: 2017 NHTS

Table 33 – Average transit trip duration by gender and orientation, nationally

Gender/Orientation	Minutes
<b>All Males</b>	45
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	56
Males in Same-Sex Couple	64
<b>All Females</b>	44
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	53
Females in Same-Sex Couple	69

Source: 2017 NHTS

### Work trips on transit by gender and orientation

At the national level, women use transit for commuting to work at slightly higher rates than men, with 4.9-5.9% of women reporting traveling to work via transit compared to 4.3-4.8% of men.<sup>7</sup> Both men and women in same-sex couples commute to work via transit at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships. Men in same-sex couples use transit for work trips at about twice the rate of men in opposite-sex couples (8.0-10.3% compared to 3.2-3.9%). This difference is slightly less pronounced for women in same-sex (3.3-4.1%) and opposite-sex (5.1-6.3%) relationships.

At the state level, male New Jerseyans are more likely to travel to work via transit (11.0%) than women (10.1%), which differs from the national trend. Among men, those in same-sex couples are more likely to use transit to travel to work (11.6%) than those in opposite-sex couples (10.3%). Among women, the difference is more substantial, with those in same-sex couples reporting travel to work via transit 14.9% of the time compared to 8.3% for women in opposite-sex couples. Notably, at both the national and statewide levels, those in same-sex relationships use transit for work trips at higher rates than their counterparts in opposite-sex relationships. Overall, the percentage of people reporting trips to work via transit is higher among New Jerseyans than nationally.

Table 34 – Percentage of work trips on transit

Gender/Orientation	National (NHTS)	National (PUMS)	New Jersey (PUMS)
<b>All Males</b>	4.8%	4.3%	11.0%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	3.9%	3.2%	10.3%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	10.3%	8.0%	11.6%
<b>All Females</b>	5.9%	4.9%	10.1%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	4.1%	3.3%	8.3%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	5.1%	6.3%	14.9%

Source: 2017 NHTS; 2021 PUMS

<sup>7</sup> The range of percentages accounts for differences between the NHTS and PUMS datasets.

When disaggregating by transit mode nationally, men in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples are somewhat more likely to travel to work via subway than by bus.<sup>8</sup> Among women, the opposite is the case, with women in both same-sex and opposite-sex couples being somewhat more likely to travel to work by bus than by subway.

At the New Jersey level, men in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work by bus (4.7%), followed by long-distance or commuter rail (3.4%) and subway (1.9%). New Jersey men in same-sex couples are most likely to travel by subway (4.6%), followed by bus (4.0%) and long-distance and commuter rail (2.9%). Female New Jerseyans in opposite-sex couples are most likely to travel to work via bus (4.2%), followed by commuter rail (2.3%) and subway (1.6%). New Jersey women in same-sex couples are most likely to travel via commuter rail (6.6%), followed by bus (4.2%) and subway (3.9%).

While the overall percentage of New Jerseyans reporting trips to work via transit is higher than national rates, this is not evenly distributed across transit modes. Light rail, streetcar, trolley, and subway use in New Jersey is only slightly higher than nationally. Meanwhile, the use of buses, long-distance trains, and commuter rail in New Jersey is notably higher than nationwide rates. The greatest difference is among women in same-sex relationships who commute to work by long-distance or commuter rail, where the New Jersey rate of 6.6% is more than eight times the nationwide rate of 0.8%.

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<sup>8</sup> As stated in the Methodology, same- and opposite-sex couples noted here only include married couples. Unmarried individuals reporting as partners and non-coupled individuals are omitted from these categories but are included in “all males”.

Table 35 – Percentage of work trips by transit mode

	Gender/Orientation	Bus	Subway or elevated rail	Long-distance train or commuter rail	Light rail, streetcar, or trolley
<b>National</b>	<b>All Males</b>	1.9%	1.7%	0.6%	0.1%
	Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.2%	1.3%	0.7%	0.1%
	Males in Same-Sex Couple	3.0%	3.9%	1.0%	0.2%
	<b>All Females</b>	2.5%	1.9%	0.5%	0.1%
	Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.4%	1.3%	0.5%	0.1%
	Females in Same-Sex Couple	2.8%	2.6%	0.8%	0.1%
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>All Males</b>	5.4%	2.3%	2.9%	0.4%
	Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	4.7%	1.9%	3.4%	0.4%
	Males in Same-Sex Couple	4.0%	4.6%	2.9%	0.2%
	<b>All Females</b>	5.7%	2.0%	2.2%	0.3%
	Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	4.2%	1.6%	2.3%	0.3%
	Females in Same-Sex Couple	4.2%	3.9%	6.6%	0.2%

Source: 2021 PUMS

## Work trip duration

Nationally and across all modes, men spend more time commuting to work one-way (28 minutes) than women (23-25 minutes). While men in same-sex couples spend about the same time commuting to work as men in opposite-sex couples, women in same-sex couples spend on average about 2 minutes more than women in opposite-sex couples.

Table 36 – Average duration of one-way work trips (minutes)

Gender/Orientation	National (NHTS)	National (PUMS)	New Jersey (PUMS)
<b>All Males</b>	28	28	34
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	27	29	35
Males in Same-Sex Couple	28	29	32
<b>All Females</b>	23	25	29
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	23	25	29
Females in Same-Sex Couple	25	27	33

Source: 2017 NHTS, 2021 PUMS

In New Jersey, men's work trips take an average of 5 minutes more than women's work trips (34 minutes compared to 29 minutes). While work trips for men in same-sex couples average 3 minutes less than those for men in opposite-sex couples, the reverse is true for women, with work commutes for women in same-sex couples averaging 4 minutes longer.

## **Work trip time of day**

Almost universally among men and women in both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships and at both the national and state levels, the morning peak hours between 6:00 and 9:00 am accounted for the highest percentage of work trips. The one exception to this is the NHTS data for men in same-sex couples, where the midday hours of 9:00 am to 4:00 pm represented the greatest percentage of work trips (42.6%). This could indicate that men in same-sex relationships are more likely to commute outside of morning peak hours than other demographics. Across the board, NHTS data showed more even distribution of work trips across morning peak and midday hours compared to PUMS data, which showed a higher percentage of work trips in the morning peak hours.

Table 37 – Percentage of work trips by time of day

Gender/Orientation	Time of travel	National (NHTS)	National (PUMS)	New Jersey (PUMS)
<b>Male</b>	Midnight - 5:59AM	9.7%	18.2%	14.4%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	42.4%	59.0%	63.3%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	39.3%	16.4%	17.0%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	6.1%	3.9%	3.1%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	2.3%	2.6%	2.2%
Opposite-Sex Couples	Midnight - 5:59AM	9.8%	18.7%	14.4%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	44.7%	61.2%	64.4%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	38.0%	14.5%	16.3%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	5.4%	3.4%	2.9%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%
Same-Sex Couples	Midnight - 5:59AM	7.7%	12.2%	8.3%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	41.5%	64.2%	69.4%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	42.6%	18.3%	20.2%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	6.6%	3.3%	0.7%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	1.6%	2.0%	1.4%
<b>Female</b>	Midnight - 5:59AM	5.0%	9.4%	6.4%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	49.1%	64.9%	68.6%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	37.9%	19.3%	19.7%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	6.1%	4.4%	3.5%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	2.0%	2.0%	1.8%
Opposite-Sex Couples	Midnight - 5:59AM	4.7%	8.9%	5.8%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	53.2%	67.9%	70.3%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	34.7%	17.7%	19.1%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	5.4%	4.0%	3.4%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	2.0%	1.5%	1.5%
Same-Sex Couples	Midnight - 5:59AM	5.1%	12.2%	8.6%
	6:00AM - 8:59AM (Morning Peak)	46.8%	62.9%	64.7%
	9:00AM - 3:59PM	41.5%	18.6%	18.7%
	4:00PM - 6:59PM (Afternoon Peak)	4.4%	4.2%	3.5%
	7:00PM - 11:59PM	2.2%	2.1%	4.4%

Source: 2017 NHTS, 2021 PUMS

### Transit use by age

For both men and women, those who are younger are more likely to travel via transit, with 5.1% of those ages 18 to 24 among both groups reporting trips by transit. Generally, those in same-sex couples are more likely to travel via transit than those in opposite-sex couples. The two exceptions to this are men ages 18 to 24 and women ages 65+ in opposite-sex couples, both of whom are more likely to travel via transit than their same-sex counterparts. Additionally, those

in same-sex couples using transit reported longer average trip durations than those in opposite-sex couples, with the exception of same-sex male couples ages 45 to 64, whose average transit trips were shorter than their opposite-sex counterparts.<sup>9</sup>

Table 38 – Percentage of trips by transit by age, gender, and orientation, nationally

<b>Gender/Orientation</b>	<b>Age 18-24</b>	<b>Age 25-34</b>	<b>Age 35-44</b>	<b>Age 45-54</b>	<b>Age 55-64</b>	<b>Age 65+</b>
<b>All Males</b>	5.1%	4.3%	2.8%	3.2%	2.9%	2.4%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.4%	3.2%	2.1%	2.3%	1.5%	1.6%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	0.5%	9.7%	7.5%	4.6%	6.1%	4.3%
<b>All Females</b>	5.1%	3.8%	2.9%	2.5%	3.1%	2.7%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	2.3%	2.6%	1.8%	1.3%	1.6%	2.7%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	2.9%	3.4%	2.5%	2.0%	2.2%	1.6%

Source: 2017 NHTS

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<sup>9</sup> For 18- to 24-year-old men and women in same-sex couples and women ages 65+ in same-sex couples, data on average transit trip duration was not available due to low survey response rates for these groups.



Table 39 – Average transit trip duration by age, gender, and orientation (minutes), nationally

Gender/Orientation	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65+
<b>All Males</b>	52	54	61	56	55	52
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	38	50	60	56	64	55
Males in Same-Sex Couple	-	71	78	40	35	119
<b>All Females</b>	49	51	50	58	54	43
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	52	54	61	56	55	52
Females in Same-Sex Couple	-	87	68	69	75	-

Source: 2017 NHTS

### Transit use by race and ethnicity

For both men and women, those who are Black or African American are more likely to use transit than those of other races, with 11.4% of Black or African American men and 9.5% of Black or African American women reporting trips on transit. Among Black and African American men, those in same-sex couples are even more likely to use transit (14.0%), especially compared to those in opposite-sex couples (3.9%). Additionally, a large share (27.9%) of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander men in same-sex couples reported trips via transit, which far surpasses the respective share of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander men in opposite-sex couples (3.3%). Among both men and women, those who are white are least likely to use transit, with 3.8% of white men and 3.3% of white women reporting trips via transit.

Table 40 – Percentage of trips by transit by race, gender, and orientation, nationally

Gender/Orientation	White	Black or African American	Asian	Native American or Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Multiple Races	Some Other Race
<b>All Males</b>	3.8%	11.4%	8.9%	6.8%	5.0%	7.5%	5.3%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.7%	3.9%	6.5%	1.7%	3.3%	2.3%	1.9%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	5.0%	14.0%	12.9%	9.4%	27.9%	14.4%	1.3%
<b>All Females</b>	3.3%	9.5%	6.9%	7.6%	3.9%	6.1%	6.2%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.4%	3.7%	4.0%	3.5%	3.2%	1.2%	2.5%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	1.6%	6.2%	9.6%	7.8%	-	11.6%	11.1%

Source: 2017 NHTS

For all racial groups (with the exception of men of “some other race” and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women<sup>10</sup>) those in same-sex couples are more likely to use transit than those in opposite sex couples. Among both men and women, those of Hispanic descent are slightly more

<sup>10</sup> For Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women in same-sex couples, data on transit trips was not available due to low survey response rates for this groups.

likely to use transit than those who are not of Hispanic descent. Further, those of Hispanic descent in same-sex couples reported more transit use when compared those in opposite-sex couples, as well when compared to those who are not of Hispanic descent, for both men and women.

Table 41 – Percentage of trips by transit by ethnicity, gender, and orientation, nationally

<b>Gender/Orientation</b>	<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>
<b>All Males</b>	5.7%	4.9%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	2.3%	2.1%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	8.0%	5.6%
<b>All Females</b>	5.4%	4.4%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	1.9%	1.7%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	4.0%	2.8%

Source: 2017 NHTS

These data indicate that those who are not white, as well as those of Hispanic or Latino descent, are more likely to use transit than those who are white. Further, within almost every racial or ethnic group, those who are in same-sex couples are more likely to use transit than those who are not. These findings highlight the importance of applying an intersectional framework to understanding travel patterns and transit use among different groups.

### **Trip purpose by orientation and gender**

The NHTS categorizes trip purpose based on destination (i.e., home, work, etc.). According to 2017 NHTS data across all modes the most common trip ends are home-based or necessity-based, which include destinations related to school, medical appointments, shopping, errands, and meals. This is true for both women and men; however, women make more necessity-based trips than men. Among men, home-based (35.9%) are the most common, while trips among women are more evenly split between home-based trips (34.6%) and necessity-based trips (34.4%). When disaggregating data by orientation, these trends remain largely the same. Men in same-sex couples are somewhat more likely to make home-based and social/recreation trips than men in opposite-sex couples, and less likely to make work-based trips. Women in same-sex couples are slightly more likely to make necessity-based and social/recreation trips than their opposite-sex counterparts and are less likely to make home- and work-based trips.

Table 42 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose, gender, and orientation, nationally

<b>Gender/Orientation</b>	<b>Home-Based</b>	<b>Necessity-Based</b>	<b>Social-Recreational</b>	<b>Work-Based</b>	<b>Something Else</b>
<b>All Males</b>	35.9%	30.8%	10.8%	7.7%	14.8%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	34.7%	29.3%	9.7%	8.5%	17.8%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	37.0%	29.5%	12.4%	4.6%	16.4%
<b>All Females</b>	34.6%	34.4%	10.7%	9.9%	10.3%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	34.2%	32.5%	10.5%	11.3%	11.6%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	31.9%	32.7%	12.0%	9.0%	14.4%

Source: 2017 NHTS

### Trip purpose by age

When disaggregating trip purpose by age, gender, and orientation, several trends appear. For both men and women, the likelihood of making necessity-based trips is greatest among those ages 65+. 40.5% of men and 44.2% of women ages 65+ reported necessity-based trips, which includes trips for medical appointments. Social/recreational trips are more common among younger and older age groups, while work-based trips are generally more common among those ages 35-54.

Table 43 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose, by age, gender, and orientation, nationally

Gender/Orientation	Age Cohort	Home-Based	Necessity-Based	Social-Recreational	Work-Based	Something Else
<b>All Males</b>	18-24	38.7%	27.1%	12.0%	5.4%	16.8%
	25-34	34.8%	25.1%	11.1%	7.2%	21.8%
	35-44	34.6%	25.1%	9.3%	9.8%	21.2%
	45-54	34.4%	26.7%	8.8%	9.1%	21.0%
	55-64	34.6%	32.3%	9.6%	6.3%	17.1%
	65+	35.9%	40.5%	10.9%	6.8%	5.9%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	18-24	36.3%	28.1%	7.9%	4.8%	22.8%
	25-34	34.2%	24.9%	10.8%	8.1%	22.0%
	35-44	34.4%	24.7%	9.1%	10.9%	21.0%
	45-54	34.5%	25.5%	8.8%	9.9%	21.3%
	55-64	34.5%	31.6%	9.3%	6.6%	18.1%
	65+	35.7%	40.2%	10.9%	6.9%	6.2%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	18-24	40.1%	24.7%	14.1%	8.2%	12.9%
	25-34	37.9%	24.8%	11.6%	3.6%	22.1%
	35-44	35.1%	31.6%	11.2%	5.0%	17.2%
	45-54	36.2%	30.7%	9.8%	5.1%	18.3%
	55-64	37.1%	30.8%	13.9%	2.7%	15.5%
	65+	37.4%	34.8%	18.7%	4.3%	4.8%
<b>All Females</b>	18-24	36.4%	30.3%	11.6%	6.4%	15.3%
	25-34	33.5%	29.5%	10.6%	11.5%	14.9%
	35-44	33.3%	28.3%	9.4%	15.4%	13.5%
	45-54	34.2%	31.3%	9.8%	11.0%	13.7%
	55-64	33.0%	37.3%	10.4%	7.2%	12.1%
	65+	34.5%	44.2%	11.0%	6.9%	3.4%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	18-24	33.9%	28.3%	11.4%	8.4%	18.1%
	25-34	33.8%	29.4%	11.0%	11.9%	13.8%
	35-44	34.1%	27.1%	9.3%	16.8%	12.7%
	45-54	34.8%	29.7%	10.0%	12.1%	13.5%
	55-64	33.7%	36.9%	10.8%	7.2%	11.5%
	65+	34.7%	43.9%	11.6%	6.6%	3.2%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	18-24	38.4%	42.1%	4.1%	1.2%	14.2%
	25-34	32.5%	25.9%	10.7%	12.0%	18.9%
	35-44	26.6%	37.5%	13.0%	11.5%	11.4%
	45-54	35.3%	31.2%	10.0%	5.4%	18.1%
	55-64	31.3%	32.6%	17.1%	7.8%	11.4%
	65+	34.4%	38.1%	16.0%	6.7%	4.8%

Source: 2017 NHTS

## Trip purpose by race and ethnicity

Among both men and women, those who are Black and African American report the greatest share of necessity-based trips of any race. 34.1% of Black and African American men and 37.5% of Black and African American women report necessity-based trips. For Black and African American women, this exceeds the share of home-based trips. When disaggregated by race and ethnicity, trip purpose trends across gender and orientation are largely similar. Most reported trips are home-based, followed by necessity-based (with the exception of non-Hispanic women who reported both types of trips at equal rates).

Table 44 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose by race, gender, and orientation, nationally

Gender/ Orientation	Race	Home- Based	Necessity- Based	Social- Recreational	Work- Based	Something Else
<b>All Males</b>	White	35.7%	30.5%	11.0%	15.2%	7.5%
	Black or African American	35.9%	34.1%	9.0%	12.7%	8.3%
	Asian	36.2%	28.3%	10.5%	15.9%	9.1%
	Native American or Alaska Native	39.9%	31.2%	11.0%	10.8%	7.2%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	40.7%	28.2%	11.7%	11.9%	7.5%
	Multiple Responses	35.6%	31.5%	11.7%	12.0%	9.1%
	Some other race	37.9%	29.1%	9.8%	15.7%	7.4%
<b>Males in Opposite-Sex Couple</b>	White	34.7%	29.5%	9.9%	17.7%	8.1%
	Black or African American	35.6%	30.1%	7.9%	16.5%	9.9%
	Asian	33.8%	25.9%	9.8%	18.7%	11.8%
	Native American or Alaska Native	35.3%	33.7%	8.8%	15.0%	7.3%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	40.5%	28.1%	11.2%	14.1%	6.2%
	Multiple Responses	32.4%	28.2%	8.8%	20.8%	9.8%
	Some other race	35.8%	27.8%	9.3%	18.8%	8.3%
<b>Males in Same-Sex Couple</b>	White	37.5%	28.6%	11.8%	16.8%	5.2%
	Black or African American	33.0%	19.4%	16.6%	28.7%	2.3%
	Asian	33.6%	36.8%	9.7%	18.0%	2.0%
	Native American or Alaska Native	38.3%	43.1%	3.3%	15.4%	0.0%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	28.5%	31.5%	28.0%	10.1%	1.9%
	Multiple Responses	36.1%	20.4%	22.6%	16.5%	4.4%
	Some other race	37.0%	38.9%	14.8%	7.2%	2.1%

<b>Gender/ Orientation</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Home- Based</b>	<b>Necessity- Based</b>	<b>Social- Recreational</b>	<b>Work- Based</b>	<b>Something Else</b>
<b>All Females</b>	White	34.6%	34.1%	11.3%	10.3%	9.7%
	Black or African American	33.5%	37.5%	8.0%	10.6%	10.4%
	Asian	37.2%	31.3%	10.5%	10.3%	10.7%
	Native American or Alaska Native	34.7%	31.5%	8.6%	10.9%	14.3%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	34.0%	28.3%	9.1%	10.6%	10.1%
	Multiple Responses	33.7%	34.6%	10.7%	10.1%	10.9%
	Some other race	3.0%	2.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
<b>Females in Opposite-Sex Couple</b>	White	34.1%	32.7%	10.8%	11.4%	11.0%
	Black or African American	33.4%	34.6%	7.5%	12.5%	11.8%
	Asian	36.8%	28.1%	9.9%	11.8%	13.4%
	Native American or Alaska Native	33.1%	32.9%	8.5%	10.9%	14.6%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	36.9%	29.8%	10.3%	9.4%	13.5%
	Multiple Responses	32.1%	30.2%	9.5%	16.6%	11.6%
	Some other race	35.5%	31.7%	10.8%	10.9%	11.1%
<b>Females in Same-Sex Couple</b>	White	31.5%	33.5%	12.2%	13.7%	9.0%
	Black or African American	31.8%	31.7%	11.8%	13.8%	10.9%
	Asian	33.6%	32.1%	10.2%	17.3%	6.8%
	Native American or Alaska Native	34.2%	26.8%	5.8%	23.5%	9.6%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
	Multiple Responses	34.7%	24.7%	17.6%	19.5%	3.6%
	Some other race	35.0%	26.4%	5.9%	24.0%	8.7%

Source: 2017 NHTS

Table 45 – Percentage of trips by trip purpose by ethnicity, gender, and orientation, nationally

Gender/ Orientation	Ethnicity	Home- Based	Necessity- Based	Social- Recreational	Work- Based	Something Else
<b>All Males</b>	Hispanic or Latino	36.7%	30.0%	10.5%	8.3%	14.6%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	35.7%	31.0%	10.8%	7.6%	14.9%
Males in Opposite-Sex Couple	Hispanic or Latino	34.8%	28.1%	8.8%	9.3%	19.0%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	34.7%	29.5%	9.8%	8.4%	17.6%
Males in Same-Sex Couple	Hispanic or Latino	38.9%	32.0%	13.3%	2.0%	13.7%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	36.7%	29.0%	12.3%	5.1%	16.9%
<b>All Females</b>	Hispanic or Latino	35.1%	32.9%	10.1%	11.4%	10.5%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	34.5%	34.7%	10.8%	9.6%	10.3%
Females in Opposite-Sex Couple	Hispanic or Latino	33.9%	30.7%	9.6%	13.7%	12.2%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	34.3%	32.8%	10.6%	10.8%	11.5%
Females in Same-Sex Couple	Hispanic or Latino	30.3%	33.0%	8.8%	12.1%	15.8%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	32.0%	32.7%	12.4%	8.6%	14.2%

Source: 2017 NHTS

## NJ TRANSIT CUSTOMER SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

The research team analyzed 2022 NJ TRANSIT customer satisfaction survey data to investigate and understand better if there are gender differences related to how customers utilize NJ TRANSIT and/or whether gender impacts customer travel experiences and satisfaction. The following sections summarize the results of the analysis.

### Personal characteristics

As shown in Table 46, more women ride NJ TRANSIT than men—53.6 percent vs. 45.4 percent. This is true across all modes except rail, where slightly more customers identify as male (49.9 percent) than female (49.1 percent). Approximately one percent of NJ TRANSIT customers identify as non-binary/gender fluid. Of those that identify as non-binary/gender fluid, the vast majority (74 percent) are age 34 or younger. This pattern is consistent across all modes.

Female riders tend to be younger (34 years old or younger) than male riders across all modes except Access Link. Male access link riders tend to be younger than female Access link riders. Overall, 41 percent of female NJ TRANSIT riders and 74 percent of non-binary/gender fluid riders are 34 years old or younger, while only 32.6 percent of male riders are in this age cohort. See Table 46 for more detail regarding customer age and gender by mode.

Table 46 – NJ TRANSIT customer age by mode and gender

Mode/Age cohort	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/ gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
Under 18 years	1,258	1.8	793	1.4	61	4.6	2,112	1.6
18 - 24 years	11,799	16.6	7,471	13.3	516	39.1	19,786	15.4
25 - 34 years	16,674	23.5	11,380	20.3	352	26.7	28,406	22.1
35 - 44 years	14,118	19.9	11,432	20.4	161	12.2	25,711	20.0
45 - 54 years	11,996	16.9	10,078	18.0	100	7.6	22,174	17.3
55 - 64 years	10,327	14.5	9,753	17.4	114	8.6	20,194	15.7
65 years and over	4,822	6.8	5,141	9.2	16	1.2	9,979	7.8
Subtotal	70,994	100.0	56,048	100.0	1,320	100.0	128,362	100.0
<b>Rail</b>								
Under 18 years	78	0.3	144	0.5	10	1.7	232	0.4
18 - 24 years	4,868	17.5	2,393	8.5	225	37.7	7,486	13.2
25 - 34 years	6,391	23.0	4,692	16.6	194	32.5	11,277	19.9
35 - 44 years	4,253	15.3	4,795	17.0	85	14.2	9,133	16.1
45 - 54 years	4,180	15.0	5,702	20.2	31	5.2	9,913	17.5
55 - 64 years	4,819	17.3	6,028	21.3	39	6.5	10,886	19.2
65 years and over	3,328	12.0	4,634	16.4	23	3.9	7,985	14.1
Subtotal	27,839	100.0	28,244	100.0	597	100.0	56,680	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
Under 18 years	0	0.0	54	0.6	0	0.0	54	0.3
18 - 24 years	1,351	12.4	860	9.4	165	56.1	2,376	11.7
25 - 34 years	2,799	25.7	2,334	25.4	83	28.2	5,216	25.6
35 - 44 years	2,521	23.2	2,087	22.8	29	9.9	4,637	22.8
45 - 54 years	1,764	16.2	1,608	17.5	0	0.0	3,372	16.6
55 - 64 years	1,770	16.3	1,531	16.7	17	5.8	3,318	16.3
65 years and over	677	6.2	752	8.2	0	0.0	1,429	7.0
Subtotal	10,882	100.0	9,172	100.0	294	100.0	20,348	100.0
<b>Access Link</b>								
Under 18 years	9	0.4	3	0.2	0	0.0	12	0.3
18 - 24 years	193	8.0	139	11.2	3	7.7	335	9.1
25 - 34 years	341	14.2	246	19.9	10	25.6	597	16.2
35 - 44 years	224	9.3	162	13.1	12	30.8	398	10.8
45 - 54 years	367	15.3	188	15.2	11	28.2	566	15.4
55 - 64 years	581	24.2	240	19.4	3	7.7	824	22.4
65 years and over	696	29.0	263	21.2	0	0.0	959	26.1
Subtotal	2,402	100.0	1,238	100.0	39	100.0	3,679	100.0
<b>All modes</b>								
Under 18 years	1,345	1.2	994	1.1	71	3.2	2,410	1.2
18 - 24 years	18,211	16.4	10,863	11.6	909	41.5	29,983	14.5
25 - 34 years	26,205	23.6	18,652	19.9	639	29.2	45,496	22.0
35 - 44 years	21,116	19.0	18,476	19.7	287	13.1	39,879	19.3
45 - 54 years	18,307	16.5	17,576	18.7	142	6.5	36,025	17.4
55 - 64 years	17,497	15.8	17,552	18.7	173	7.9	35,222	17.0



Mode/Age cohort	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
65 years and over	9,523	8.6	10,790	11.5	39	1.8	20,352	9.8
Total	110,859	100.0	93,909	100.0	2,189	100.0	206,957	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

NJ TRANSIT's customer base is diverse, with slightly more than half reporting their race to be White. Approximately 20 percent identify as Black or African American, 15 percent as Asian or Pacific Islander, and 13 percent mixed race. One quarter of NJ TRANSIT customers are Hispanic or Latino. These patterns shift somewhat by mode. A larger proportion of rail and light rail riders identify as White (66.7 percent and 55.7 percent respectively) than minority races, while a larger proportion of bus riders identify as non-White, 56.1 percent vs. 43.9 percent. Nearly 60 percent of NJ TRANSIT bus riders identify as women of color. Table 47 provides more detail regarding NJ TRANSIT customers' race, ethnicity, and gender identification.

NJ TRANSIT's customer base, including all modes, is well distributed between household income categories. About one third (29 percent) are low income, earning less than \$35,000 per year, while another third (34 percent) are middle income, earning between \$35,000 to \$99,999 per year. Approximately 38 percent of customers earn more than \$100,000 per year. More women and non-binary/gender fluid customers live in middle- and lower-income households than high-income households. Non-binary/gender fluid customers make up the greatest share of riders from lower-income households.

When looking at ridership by mode, there are some notable differences. Rail and light rail riders are more likely to live in higher-income households, while bus and Access link riders live in lower-income households. Rail riders, especially male rail riders, make up the largest proportion of customers living in higher-income households. Sixty-six percent of male rail riders are high-income. Access Link customers, especially female Access Link customers, make up the largest share of customers from lower-income households. Sixty-six percent of female Access Link riders are low-income. More than 80 percent of NJ TRANSIT's lower-income female and male customers use bus. Table 48 provides more detail about the income distribution of NJ TRANSIT customers by mode and gender identification.

Table 47 – NJ TRANSIT customer race and ethnicity by mode and gender

Mode/Race and ethnicity	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/ Gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
American Indian or Alaska Native	598	0.9	624	1.2	48	3.8	1,270	1.0
Asian or Pacific Islander	9,212	13.6	8,793	16.2	173	13.6	18,178	14.8
Black or African American	19,726	29.1	9,942	18.4	220	17.3	29,888	24.3
Mixed Race	10,802	16.0	8,610	15.9	265	20.9	19,677	16.0
White	27,351	40.4	26,154	48.3	563	44.4	54,068	43.9
Subtotal	67,689	100.0	54,123	100.0	1,269	100.0	123,081	100.0
Hispanic (any race)	21,631	17.6	16,370	13.3	459	0.4	38,460	31.2
<b>Rail</b>								
American Indian or Alaska Native	120	0.4	131	0.5	7	1.2	258	0.5
Asian or Pacific Islander	4,187	15.5	4,402	15.9	61	10.1	8,650	15.6
Black or African American	3,398	12.5	2,008	7.2	56	9.3	5,462	9.9
Mixed Race	2,146	7.9	1,832	6.6	123	20.4	4,101	7.4
White	17,229	63.6	19,340	69.8	357	59.1	36,926	66.7
Subtotal	27,080	100.0	27,713	100.0	604	100.0	55,397	100.0
Hispanic (any race)	3,731	6.7	3,146	5.7	119	0.2	6,996	12.6
<b>Light Rail</b>								
American Indian or Alaska Native	17	0.2	98	1.1	17	5.8	132	0.7
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,603	15.3	1,545	17.2	37	12.5	3,185	16.1
Black or African American	1,909	18.2	1,066	11.8	46	15.6	3,021	15.3
Mixed Race	1,279	12.2	1,115	12.4	37	12.5	2,431	12.3
White	5,698	54.2	5,182	57.5	158	53.6	11,038	55.7
Subtotal	10,506	100.0	9,006	100.0	295	100.0	19,807	100.0
Hispanic (any race)	2,302	11.6	2,205	11.1	6	0.0	4,513	22.8
<b>Access Link</b>								
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	0.3	12	1.0	0	0.0	18	0.5
Asian or Pacific Islander	159	6.8	115	9.5	0	0.0	274	7.6
Black or African American	849	36.4	294	24.3	4	10.5	1,147	32.0
Mixed Race	214	9.2	100	8.3	9	23.7	323	9.0
White	1,107	47.4	689	56.9	25	65.8	1,821	50.8
Subtotal	2,335	100.0	1,210	100.0	38	100.0	3,583	100.0
Hispanic (any race)	373	10.4	181	5.1	11	0.3	565	15.8
<b>All modes</b>								
American Indian or Alaska Native	741	0.7	865	0.9	72	3.3	1,678	0.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	15,161	14.1	14,855	16.1	271	12.3	30,287	15.0
Black or African American	25,882	24.1	13,310	14.5	326	14.8	39,518	19.6
Mixed Race	14,441	13.4	11,657	12.7	434	19.7	26,532	13.1
White	51,385	47.8	51,365	55.8	1,103	50.0	103,853	51.4
Total	107,610	100.0	92,052	100.0	2,206	100.0	201,868	100.0
Hispanic (any race)	28,037	13.9	21,902	10.8	595	0.3	50,534	25.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

Table 48 – NJ TRANSIT customer household income by mode and gender

Mode/Household income	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/ Gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
Under \$15,000	11,686	17.5	6,805	12.7	291	22.8	18,782	15.5
\$15,000-\$24,999	8,918	13.4	5,189	9.7	110	8.6	14,217	11.7
\$25,000-\$34,999	7,636	11.4	5,244	9.8	143	11.2	13,023	10.7
\$35,000-\$49,999	7,849	11.8	5,549	10.4	124	9.7	13,522	11.1
\$50,000-\$74,999	9,218	13.8	7,173	13.4	246	19.3	16,637	13.7
\$75,000-\$99,999	6,592	9.9	5,764	10.8	138	10.8	12,494	10.3
\$100,000-\$149,999	6,590	9.9	6,991	13.1	90	7.1	13,671	11.3
\$150,000-\$199,999	3,563	5.3	4,241	7.9	68	5.3	7,872	6.5
\$200,000-\$249,999	2,098	3.1	2,644	5.0	23	1.8	4,765	3.9
\$250,000 and over	2,550	3.8	3,796	7.1	41	3.2	6,387	5.3
Subtotal	66,700	100.0	53,396	100.0	1,274	100.0	121,370	100.0
<b>Rail</b>								
Under \$15,000	1,210	4.8	706	2.7	51	8.8	1,967	3.8
\$15,000-\$24,999	924	3.7	622	2.4	38	6.6	1,584	3.0
\$25,000-\$34,999	1,073	4.2	749	2.8	42	7.2	1,864	3.6
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,695	6.7	1,187	4.5	66	11.4	2,948	5.6
\$50,000-\$74,999	3,795	15.0	2,554	9.7	101	17.4	6,450	12.4
\$75,000-\$99,999	3,665	14.5	3,167	12.0	102	17.6	6,934	13.3
\$100,000-\$149,999	4,999	19.8	5,377	20.4	80	13.8	10,456	20.0
\$150,000-\$199,999	3,058	12.1	3,801	14.4	42	7.2	6,901	13.2
\$200,000-\$249,999	1,848	7.3	2,709	10.3	30	5.2	4,587	8.8
\$250,000 and over	2,992	11.8	5,499	20.9	28	4.8	8,519	16.3
Subtotal	25,259	100.0	26,371	100.0	580	100.0	52,210	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
Under \$15,000	560	5.5	420	4.8	46	15.6	1,026	5.3
\$15,000-\$24,999	611	6.0	351	4.0	17	5.8	979	5.1
\$25,000-\$34,999	495	4.9	415	4.8	20	6.8	930	4.8
\$35,000-\$49,999	918	9.0	621	7.2	48	16.3	1,587	8.3
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,893	18.6	1,346	15.5	81	27.6	3,320	17.3
\$75,000-\$99,999	1,649	16.2	1,114	12.8	0	0.0	2,763	14.4
\$100,000-\$149,999	1,692	16.6	1,551	17.9	34	11.6	3,277	17.1
\$150,000-\$199,999	1,125	11.0	977	11.2	9	3.1	2,111	11.0
\$200,000-\$249,999	415	4.1	855	9.8	39	13.3	1,309	6.8
\$250,000 and over	845	8.3	1,035	11.9	0	0.0	1,880	9.8
Subtotal	10,203	100.0	8,685	100.0	294	100.0	19,182	100.0
<b>Access Link</b>								
Under \$15,000	705	30.9	316	27.5	14	41.2	1,035	29.8
\$15,000-\$24,999	498	21.8	143	12.4	6	17.6	647	18.7
\$25,000-\$34,999	301	13.2	107	9.3	0	0.0	408	11.8
\$35,000-\$49,999	196	8.6	128	11.1	0	0.0	324	9.3
\$50,000-\$74,999	249	10.9	175	15.2	3	8.8	427	12.3
\$75,000-\$99,999	139	6.1	118	10.3	0	0.0	257	7.4

Mode/Household income	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/ Gender fluid		Total	
\$100,000-\$149,999	100	4.4	74	6.4	0	0.0	174	5.0
\$150,000-\$199,999	51	2.2	14	1.2	11	32.4	76	2.2
\$200,000-\$249,999	15	0.7	26	2.3	0	0.0	41	1.2
\$250,000 and over	30	1.3	50	4.3	0	0.0	80	2.3
Subtotal	2,284	100.0	1,151	100.0	34	100.0	3,469	100.0
<b>All modes</b>								
Under \$15,000	14,161	13.6	8,247	9.2	402	18.4	22,810	11.6
\$15,000-\$24,999	10,951	10.5	6,305	7.0	171	7.8	17,427	8.9
\$25,000-\$34,999	9,505	9.1	6,515	7.3	205	9.4	16,225	8.3
\$35,000-\$49,999	10,658	10.2	7,485	8.4	238	10.9	18,381	9.4
\$50,000-\$74,999	15,155	14.5	11,248	12.6	431	19.8	26,834	13.7
\$75,000-\$99,999	12,045	11.5	10,163	11.3	240	11.0	22,448	11.4
\$100,000-\$149,999	13,381	12.8	13,993	15.6	204	9.3	27,578	14.1
\$150,000-\$199,999	7,797	7.5	9,033	10.1	130	6.0	16,960	8.6
\$200,000-\$249,999	4,376	4.2	6,234	7.0	92	4.2	10,702	5.5
\$250,000 and over	6,417	6.1	10,380	11.6	69	3.2	16,866	8.6
Total	104,446	100.0	89,603	100.0	2,182	100.0	196,231	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

## Transit use patterns and customer satisfaction

One important objective of this research is to analyze how gender influence customers' use of NJ TRANSIT services and how travel experiences differ by gender. To achieve this objective, the research team examined when customers travel, trip purposes, trip frequency, and mean satisfaction scores for various service attributes.

### *Peak vs. off-peak travel*

Approximately two-thirds of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ TRANSIT service weekdays during peak periods (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM). This is true for both men and women (67.1 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively). A majority (58.6 percent) of customers that identify as non-binary/gender fluid use NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods. Approximately 20 percent of NJ TRANSIT customers travel during off-peak hours on weekdays, and 13 percent use services on weekends. The highest rates of weekday peak period usage are among bus riders. Nearly three quarters of women bus riders report using NJ TRANSIT services weekdays during peak periods. This is true for both men and women. See Table 49 for more detail.

Table 49 – NJ TRANSIT customer peak and off-peak travel by mode and gender

Mode/Peak and off-peak travel	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/ Gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
Weekdays Off-peak	12,740	17.9	11,479	20.4	307	23.0	24,526	19.0
Weekdays Peak (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM)	52,867	74.2	40,917	72.8	907	68.1	94,691	73.5
Weekends	5,624	7.9	3,815	6.8	118	8.9	9,557	7.4
Subtotal	71,231	100.0	56,211	100.0	1,332	100.0	128,774	100.0
<b>Rail</b>								
Weekdays Off-peak	6,098	21.7	6,493	22.8	172	28.3	12,763	22.3
Weekdays Peak (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM)	13,840	49.4	16,284	57.1	238	39.2	30,362	53.1
Weekends	8,101	28.9	5,720	20.1	197	32.5	14,018	24.5
Subtotal	28,039	100.0	28,497	100.0	607	100.0	57,143	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
Weekdays Off-peak	2,001	18.4	1,732	18.8	88	29.9	3,821	18.7
Weekdays Peak (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM)	7,221	66.4	5,607	60.8	163	55.4	12,991	63.7
Weekends	1,660	15.3	1,886	20.4	43	14.6	3,589	17.6
Subtotal	10,882	100.0	9,225	100.0	294	100.0	20,401	100.0
<b>Access Link</b>								
Weekdays Off-peak	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Weekdays Peak (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Weekends	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Subtotal	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>All modes</b>								
Weekdays Off-peak	20,839	18.9	19,704	21.0	567	25.4	41,110	19.9
Weekdays Peak (6-10 AM & 4-7 PM)	73,928	67.1	62,808	66.9	1,308	58.6	138,044	66.9
Weekends	15,385	14.0	11,421	12.2	358	16.0	27,164	13.2
Total	110,152	100.0	93,933	100.0	2,233	100.0	206,318	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

### ***Trip purpose***

In terms of trip purpose, a majority of NJ TRANSIT customers report traveling to work, as the primary reason for their trip. Work travel is the most common trip purpose among male, female, and non-binary/gender fluid customers. Men travel for work at higher rates than both female and non-binary/gender fluid customers, 60 percent vs. 55 percent and 42 percent, respectively. Rates of work travel are highest among bus customers. Sixty-six percent of male bus customers report traveling for work compared to 62 percent of women and 49 percent of non-binary/gender-fluid bus customers. Women across all modes use NJ TRANSIT services for shopping at higher rates than men. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of NJ TRANSIT customers use NJ

TRANSIT services to travel for essential purposes including work, school, shopping, medical, and personal business. Essential travel rates are highest among bus and Access Link users, this is true among men, women, and non-binary/gender fluid customers. Rail and light rail riders take more trips for entertainment, recreation, and social purposes than bus riders, this is especially true for male rail riders, whose rates of essential and non-essential trip making are almost evenly split. Table 50 provides more detail.

Table 50 – NJ TRANSIT customer trip purpose by mode and gender

Mode/Trip purpose	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
Company business (not commuting)	279	0.4	376	0.7	5	0.4	660	0.5
Entertainment/Recreation	3,872	5.4	3,484	6.2	124	9.3	7,480	5.8
Medical	2,842	4.0	1,710	3.0	20	1.5	4,572	3.6
Personal business	3,594	5.0	3,061	5.4	114	8.6	6,769	5.3
School	9,387	13.2	5,693	10.1	230	17.3	15,310	11.9
Shopping	2,283	3.2	1,447	2.6	53	4.0	3,783	2.9
Social/Visit family or friends	4,726	6.6	3,250	5.8	139	10.4	8,115	6.3
Work	44,247	62.1	37,191	66.2	648	48.6	82,086	63.7
Subtotal	71,230	254.0	56,212	100.0	1,333	219.6	128,775	225.4
<b>Rail</b>								
Company business (not commuting)	281	1.0	686	2.4	2	0.3	969	1.7
Entertainment/Recreation	5,716	20.4	5,289	18.6	113	18.6	11,118	19.5
Medical	479	1.7	463	1.6	7	1.2	949	1.7
Personal business	1,511	5.4	1,817	6.4	36	5.9	3,364	5.9
School	1,798	6.4	1,194	4.2	70	11.5	3,062	5.4
Shopping	203	0.7	112	0.4	0	0.0	315	0.6
Social/Visit family or friends	7,245	25.8	4,420	15.5	221	36.4	11,886	20.8
Work	10,805	38.5	14,517	50.9	158	26.0	25,480	44.6
Subtotal	28,038	100.0	28,498	100.0	607	100.0	57,143	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
Company business (not commuting)	74	0.7	114	1.2	0	0.0	188	0.9
Entertainment/Recreation	1,070	9.8	1,433	15.5	46	15.6	2,549	12.5
Medical	297	2.7	186	2.0	0	0.0	483	2.4
Personal business	686	6.3	647	7.0	26	8.8	1,359	6.7
School	920	8.5	664	7.2	102	34.7	1,686	8.3
Shopping	734	6.7	497	5.4	0	0.0	1,231	6.0
Social/Visit family or friends	919	8.4	825	8.9	0	0.0	1,744	8.5
Work	6,183	56.8	4,859	52.7	120	40.8	11,162	54.7
Subtotal	10,883	38.8	9,225	100.0	294	48.4	20,402	35.7

Mode/Trip purpose	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
<b>Access Link</b>								
Company business (not commuting)	8	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	0.2
Entertainment/Recreation	159	6.6	84	6.8	0	0.0	243	6.6
Medical	849	35.1	363	29.3	3	7.3	1,215	32.8
Personal business	152	6.3	59	4.8	8	19.5	219	5.9
School	155	6.4	91	7.3	3	7.3	249	6.7
Shopping	278	11.5	85	6.8	6	14.6	369	10.0
Social/Visit family or friends	273	11.3	102	8.2	0	0.0	375	10.1
Work	546	22.6	457	36.8	21	51.2	1,024	27.7
Subtotal	2,420	8.6	1,241	100.0	41	6.8	3,702	6.5
<b>All modes</b>								
Company business (not commuting)	642	0.6	1,176	1.2	7	0.3	1,825	0.9
Entertainment/Recreation	10,817	9.6	10,290	10.8	283	12.4	21,390	10.2
Medical	4,467	4.0	2,722	2.9	30	1.3	7,219	3.4
Personal business	5,943	5.3	5,584	5.9	184	8.1	11,711	5.6
School	12,260	10.9	7,642	8.0	405	17.8	20,307	9.7
Shopping	3,498	3.1	2,141	2.2	59	2.6	5,698	2.7
Social/Visit family or friends	13,163	11.7	8,597	9.0	360	15.8	22,120	10.5
Work	61,781	54.9	57,024	59.9	947	41.6	119,752	57.0
Total	112,571	100.0	95,176	100.0	2,275	100.0	210,022	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

### ***Work trip frequency***

The vast majority of riders that use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work report using NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis to make work trips. More bus and light rail customers report being daily/weekly riders than rail and Access Link customers, who report slightly lower rates of daily/weekly work trips. Women are more likely to ride NJ TRANSIT five or more days per week for work than men, 47 percent compared to 44 percent for all modes. These patterns are similar when looking at individual modes, however, a slightly greater share of male than female bus and rail riders use NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week. Regardless of mode, non-binary/gender fluid customers report the most frequent use of NJ TRANSIT services for work travel. A full 62 percent of non-binary/gender fluid bus, rail, light rail, and Access Link customers report using NJ TRANSIT to travel to/from work five or more days per week. See Table 51 for more detail.

Table 51 – NJ TRANSIT customer work trip frequency by mode and gender

Mode/Trip frequency (Work trips)	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
7 times/week	4,035	19.6	3,468	18.1	82	24.3	7,585	18.9
6 times/week	1,855	9.0	1,997	10.4	30	9.0	3,882	9.7
5 times/week	4,887	23.7	4,258	22.2	100	29.5	9,244	23.0
4 times/week	2,364	11.5	2,326	12.1	14	4.2	4,704	11.7
3 times/week	3,306	16.0	3,216	16.8	54	16.0	6,576	16.4
2 times/week	2,101	10.2	2,102	11.0	11	3.2	4,215	10.5
1 time/week	1,025	5.0	898	4.7	18	5.2	1,942	4.8
0 times/week	705	3.4	514	2.7	29	8.5	1,247	3.1
1-3 times/month	204	1.0	239	1.2	0	0.0	443	1.1
6-11 times/year	61	0.3	52	0.3	0	0.0	114	0.3
1-5 times/year	23	0.1	37	0.2	0	0.0	60	0.1
Less than once/year	11	0.1	37	0.2	0	0.0	48	0.1
First time customer	46	0.2	30	0.2	0	0.0	76	0.2
Subtotal	20,624	100.0	19,175	100.0	337	100.0	40,136	100.0
<b>Rail</b>								
7 times/week	305	3.9	398	3.4	5	4.0	708	3.6
6 times/week	247	3.2	386	3.3	3	2.7	636	3.3
5 times/week	1,772	22.7	2,765	23.7	44	37.2	4,581	23.4
4 times/week	765	9.8	1,177	10.1	23	19.0	1,964	10.0
3 times/week	1,608	20.6	2,491	21.4	11	9.6	4,110	21.0
2 times/week	1,373	17.6	2,015	17.3	12	10.5	3,400	17.4
1 time/week	783	10.0	1,047	9.0	8	6.7	1,838	9.4
0 times/week	516	6.6	673	5.8	3	2.4	1,192	6.1
1-3 times/month	297	3.8	422	3.6	0	0.0	719	3.7
6-11 times/year	55	0.7	88	0.8	6	5.2	149	0.8
1-5 times/year	42	0.5	94	0.8	0	0.0	136	0.7
Less than once/year	24	0.3	84	0.7	0	0.0	108	0.6
First time customer	6	0.1	10	0.1	3	2.7	19	0.1
Subtotal	7,792	100.0	11,649	100.0	119	100.0	19,561	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
7 times/week	387	8.7	228	6.2	17	16.6	632	7.7
6 times/week	199	4.5	254	6.9	0	0.0	454	5.5
5 times/week	1768	39.5	1,303	35.6	66	64.3	3,137	38.1



Mode/Trip frequency (Work trips)	Female or woman		Male or man		Non- binary/gender fluid		Total	
4 times/week	296	6.6	361	9.9	20	19.1	677	8.2
3 times/week	823	18.4	586	16.0	0	0.0	1,409	17.1
2 times/week	524	11.7	407	11.1	0	0.0	931	11.3
1 time/week	215	4.8	262	7.2	0	0.0	477	5.8
0 times/week	173	3.9	158	4.3	0	0.0	332	4.0
1-3 times/month	51	1.1	71	1.9	0	0.0	123	1.5
6-11 times/year	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1-5 times/year	17	0.4	9	0.2	0	0.0	26	0.3
Less than once/year	0	0.0	20	0.5	0	0.0	20	0.2
First time customer	20	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	0.2
Subtotal	4,474	100.0	3,660	100.0	103	100.0	8,237	100.0
<b>Access Link</b>								
7 times/week	35	14.3	28	12.1	0	0.0	63	12.8
6 times/week	6	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	1.2
5 times/week	85	34.8	69	29.7	8	53.3	162	33.0
4 times/week	23	9.4	48	20.7	0	0.0	71	14.5
3 times/week	47	19.3	27	11.6	4	26.7	78	15.9
2 times/week	12	4.9	18	7.8	0	0.0	30	6.1
1 time/week	18	7.4	3	1.3	0	0.0	21	4.3
0 times/week	6	2.5	24	10.3	3	20.0	33	6.7
1-3 times/month	9	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	1.8
6-11 times/year	3	1.2	5	2.2	0	0.0	8	1.6
1-5 times/year	0	0.0	5	2.2	0	0.0	5	1.0
Less than once/year	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
First time customer	0	0.0	5	2.2	0	0.0	5	1.0
Subtotal	244	100.0	232	100.0	15	100.0	491	100.0
<b>All modes</b>								
7 times/week	4,762	14.4	4,122	11.9	104	18.1	8,987	13.1
6 times/week	2,307	7.0	2,638	7.6	34	5.9	4,978	7.3
5 times/week	8,512	25.7	8,395	24.2	218	38.0	17,125	25.0
4 times/week	3,448	10.4	3,912	11.3	56	9.8	7,416	10.8
3 times/week	5,784	17.5	6,320	18.2	69	12.1	12,173	17.8
2 times/week	4,010	12.1	4,543	13.1	23	4.1	8,576	12.5
1 time/week	2,041	6.2	2,211	6.4	26	4.5	4,278	6.3
0 times/week	1,400	4.2	1,369	3.9	35	6.0	2,804	4.1
1-3 times/month	562	1.7	732	2.1	0	0.0	1,294	1.9
6-11 times/year	120	0.4	145	0.4	6	1.1	271	0.4
1-5 times/year	82	0.2	145	0.4	0	0.0	227	0.3
Less than once/year	35	0.1	140	0.4	0	0.0	175	0.3

Mode/Trip frequency (Work trips)	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
First time customer	72	0.2	45	0.1	3	0.6	120	0.2
Total	33,134	100.0	34,716	100.0	574	100.0	68,424	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

### ***Non-work trip frequency***

A plurality of light rail (47 percent) and Access Link riders (47 percent) riders and a significant majority of bus riders (76 percent) use NJ TRANSIT on a daily/weekly basis for non-work travel. Less than one quarter of rail riders use the service on a daily/weekly basis for non-work trips. Gender differences are mostly minor. For example, women use bus services for non-work travel at slightly higher rates than men, while men use rail and light rail more frequently than women for non-work travel. For all modes, except bus, non-binary/gender fluid riders use transit for non-work trips at a higher rate than male and female customers. Table 52 provides more detail.

Table 52 – NJ TRANSIT customer trip frequency for non-work trips by mode and gender

Mode/Trip frequency (Non-work trips)	Female or woman		Male or man		Non-binary/gender fluid		Total	
	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%	Riders	%
<b>Bus</b>								
Daily/weekly	9,241	76.3	6,497	75.9	203	73.0	15,941	76.1
1-3 times/month	1,663	13.7	969	11.3	29	10.4	2,661	12.7
6-11 times/year	524	4.3	494	5.8	29	10.4	1,047	5.0
1-5 times/year	575	4.7	484	5.7	5	1.8	1,064	5.1
Less than once/year	48	0.4	76	0.9	0	0.0	124	0.6
First time customer	68	0.6	38	0.4	12	4.3	118	0.6
Subtotal	12,119	100.0	8,558	100.0	278	100.0	20,955	100.0
<b>Rail</b>								
Daily/weekly	3,784	22.0	3,126	22.4	118	26.2	7,028	22.2
1-3 times/month	5,490	31.8	4,321	30.9	170	37.8	9,981	31.5
6-11 times/year	3,612	21.0	2,891	20.7	86	19.1	6,589	20.8
1-5 times/year	4,047	23.5	3,309	23.7	66	14.7	7,422	23.4
Less than once/year	190	1.1	230	1.6	10	2.2	430	1.4
First time customer	116	0.7	102	0.7	0	0.0	218	0.7
Subtotal	17,239	100.0	13,979	100.0	450	100.0	31,668	100.0
<b>Light Rail</b>								
Daily/weekly	864	46.1	374	47.8	11	55.0	1,249	46.7
1-3 times/month	590	31.5	233	29.8	3	15.0	826	30.9
6-11 times/year	149	8.0	61	7.8	0	0.0	210	7.8
1-5 times/year	176	9.4	74	9.5	3	15.0	253	9.5

Mode/Trip frequency (Non-work trips)	Female or woman		Male or man		Non- binary/gender fluid		Total	
Less than once/year	51	2.7	34	4.3	0	0.0	85	3.2
First time customer	44	2.3	7	0.9	3	15.0	54	2.0
Subtotal	1,874	100.0	783	100.0	20	100.0	2,677	100.0
<b>Access Link</b>								
Daily/weekly	864	46.1	374	47.8	11	55.0	1,249	46.7
1-3 times/month	590	31.5	233	29.8	3	15.0	826	30.9
6-11 times/year	149	8.0	61	7.8	0	0.0	210	7.8
1-5 times/year	176	9.4	74	9.5	3	15.0	253	9.5
Less than once/year	51	2.7	34	4.3	0	0.0	85	3.2
First time customer	44	2.3	7	0.9	3	15.0	54	2.0
Subtotal	1,874	100.0	783	100.0	20	100.0	2,677	100.0
<b>All modes</b>								
Daily/weekly	14,753	44.6	10,371	43.0	343	44.7	25,467	43.9
1-3 times/month	8,333	25.2	5,756	23.9	205	26.7	14,294	24.7
6-11 times/year	4,434	13.4	3,507	14.6	115	15.0	8,056	13.9
1-5 times/year	4,974	15.0	3,941	16.4	77	10.0	8,992	15.5
Less than once/year	340	1.0	374	1.6	10	1.3	724	1.2
First time customer	272	0.8	154	0.6	18	2.3	444	0.8
Total	33,106	100.0	24,103	100.0	768	100.0	57,977	100.0

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

## Customer satisfaction

Table 53 displays mean customer satisfaction scores for each mode. Service attributes covered in the tables include opinions of stations, stops, shelters and vehicles; schedules, information, and communication; and reliability and customer experience with things like customer service, feelings of safety and overall satisfaction. Customers were asked to score various service and experience attributes on a scale of zero to ten with zero being unacceptable, five being acceptable and ten being excellent. As shown in the tables mean satisfaction scores generally fall toward the middle of the scale, between acceptable and excellent for most attributes.

When comparing satisfaction scores reported by male and female customers, overall, there are only small differences. Overall, men report slightly lower satisfaction scores for on-time performance/trip time, handling of disruptions, customer service and overall satisfaction, but again, the differences are small. Women report lower scores for satisfaction with vehicle condition and cleanliness, schedules, safety, and security. The latter two attributes show the greatest gender differences.

Nonbinary/gender fluid customers consistently report lower satisfaction scores for almost all attributes. The greatest differences in scores are associated information and communication, handling of service disruptions, on time performance/trip time, and employee performance/customer service. For these attributes, scores are a full 0.5-0.7 lower. Scores are notably lower for station/stop/shelter condition and cleanliness, vehicle comfort, condition and cleanliness, safety and security, and overall satisfaction as well.

In terms of modal differences, customers ratings show that Access Link customers are the most satisfied overall and most specific individual service attributes. The one notable exception is with on time performance and trip time, Access link customers score these attributes lower than customers using other modes. Bus customers are the least satisfied overall with in most cases, consistently lower scores for all service attributes. Overall, rail customers are more satisfied than bus and light rail customers for most service attributes. The handling of service disruptions is one exception. This is the area of lowest satisfaction for rail customers. The lowest satisfaction scores for light rail customers are for information, communication, and security.

Table 53 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select station, stop and vehicle characteristics

Station, stop, and vehicle characteristics	Bus			Rail			Light Rail			Access Link			All modes		
	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF
Boarding Station Parking Availability	7.0	7.1	6.8	7.5	7.6	6.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.3	7.3	6.9
Boarding Station Parking Fee	6.5	6.5	6.9	5.9	5.8	5.4	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.2	6.1	6.1
Ease of Access and Exit from the Parking Lot	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.5	6.9	8.3	8.2	8.3	--	--	--	7.8	7.8	7.6
Safety of the Parking Lot	6.9	7.3	6.9	7.4	7.5	6.3	7.6	7.8	7.7	--	--	--	7.3	7.5	7.0
Security of Parking Lot	6.8	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.4	7.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.0	7.3	7.2
Boarding Station/Stop/Shelter Condition	6.3	6.3	5.7	7.0	6.8	6.9	6.9	7.1	6.3	--	--	--	6.7	6.7	6.3
Boarding Station/Stop/Shelter Cleanliness	6.2	6.3	5.6	6.9	6.8	6.6	6.6	6.9	5.1	--	--	--	6.6	6.7	5.8
Arrival Station/Stop/Shelter Condition	6.2	6.2	5.9	6.4	6.1	6.7	6.9	7.0	6.5	--	--	--	6.5	6.5	6.3
Arrival Station/Stop/Shelter Cleanliness	6.1	6.2	5.8	6.2	5.9	6.3	6.7	6.9	5.9	--	--	--	6.3	6.3	6.0
Seating Availability	6.8	7.0	6.7	7.3	7.3	6.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.1	7.2	6.8
Comfort On-board	6.6	6.8	6.1	7.0	6.8	6.6	--	--	--	7.4	7.3	6.8	7.0	7.0	6.5
Vehicle Interior Conditions other than cleanliness	6.2	6.5	5.9	6.5	6.5	6.6	--	--	--	7.6	7.6	7.1	6.8	6.9	6.5
Cleanliness On-board	6.2	6.6	5.9	6.6	6.6	6.8	--	--	--	7.9	7.9	6.9	6.9	7.0	6.5

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

Note: F = Female or women, M = Male or man, NB/GF = Non-binary or gender fluid

Table 54 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select schedule, information, and communication characteristics

Schedules, information, & communication	Bus			Rail			Light Rail			Access Link			All modes		
	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF
Weekday AM Peak Schedule (6 AM - 10 AM)	6.3	6.5	5.9	6.8	6.8	6.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.5	6.6	6.4
Weekday Midday Schedule (10 AM - 4 PM)	6.0	6.2	5.7	6.5	6.4	6.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.3	6.3	6.1
Weekday PM Peak Schedule (4 PM - 7 PM)	6.1	6.3	5.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.3	6.4	6.1
Weekday Evening/Night Schedule (after 7 PM)	5.7	5.9	5.3	6.1	5.9	6.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.9	5.9	5.7
Weekend/Holiday Schedule	5.4	5.6	5.1	6.0	5.8	5.7	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.7	5.7	5.4
Availability of NJ TRANSIT Information	6.1	6.2	5.5	6.6	6.5	6.4	5.7	5.9	4.7	7.3	7.3	6.8	6.5	6.5	5.8
Signage/Information Availability	6.2	6.3	5.2	6.5	6.4	6.2	5.7	5.9	4.8	--	--	--	6.1	6.2	5.4
NJ TRANSIT Website - Access Link online ease of use	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.3	7.6	7.7	7.3	7.6	7.7
NJ TRANSIT Mobile App	7.1	7.1	6.4	7.5	7.4	7.0	6.8	7.0	5.9	--	--	--	7.1	7.2	6.4
My Transit App	6.5	6.6	6.0	6.6	6.4	6.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.6	6.5	6.2
My Bus App	6.9	7.0	6.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.5	3.5	3.1
Where's my ride App	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.1	7.2	6.7	7.1	7.2	6.7
STATION Announcements	6.0	5.9	5.0	6.2	6.0	6.0	5.2	5.4	4.4	--	--	--	5.8	5.8	5.1
ONBOARD Announcements	6.3	6.3	5.5	6.1	6.0	5.9	5.7	6.1	5.2	7.4	7.3	5.8	6.4	6.4	5.6

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

Note: F = Female or women, M = Male or man, NB/GF = Non-binary or gender fluid

Table 55 – NJ TRANSIT customer mean satisfaction scores for select reliability and experience characteristics

Reliability and experience	Bus			Rail			Light Rail			Access Link			All modes		
	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF	F	M	NB/GF
Availability of Information about Accessible Services	6.3	6.5	5.3	6.2	6.3	5.8	--	--	--	7.2	7.1	6.5	6.6	6.7	5.8
Service Disruption Announcements/Info	5.6	5.6	4.8	5.7	5.4	5.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.7	5.5	5.2
On Time Performance - Boarding Station/Stop/Pick up location	6.2	6.4	5.4	7.3	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.8	6.0	6.6	6.3	4.9	6.7	6.7	5.8
On Time Performance - Arrival Station/Stop	6.5	6.7	6.2	6.9	6.6	6.8	6.9	7.0	6.3	--	--	--	6.8	6.7	6.4
Trip Time	6.8	6.9	6.2	6.9	6.6	6.7	7.4	7.4	6.1	6.4	6.1	5.1	6.9	6.8	6.0
Scheduling	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.5	6.5	3.8	2.2	2.2	1.3
Quality of Transfer	6.7	6.8	6.3	6.8	6.6	6.5	--	--	--	7.2	7.0	4.5	6.9	6.8	5.8
Handling of Service Disruptions	5.9	5.9	4.9	5.7	5.3	5.5	--	--	--	6.6	6.5	5.9	6.1	5.9	5.5
Employee Performance	7.0	7.2	6.9	7.7	7.4	7.9	--	--	--	7.8	7.8	6.6	7.5	7.5	7.1
Customer Service	6.7	6.8	6.4	7.5	7.3	7.6	--	--	--	7.5	7.4	6.3	7.3	7.2	6.7
Payment Options	7.8	8.0	7.3	8.4	8.3	8.1	7.9	8.1	6.8	--	--	--	8.1	8.2	7.4
Safety	6.8	7.1	6.2	7.1	7.1	7.1	6.8	7.0	6.6	7.9	7.8	7.2	7.1	7.3	6.8
Security	6.5	6.7	5.9	6.6	6.6	6.6	5.4	5.6	5.0	8.0	8.1	7.6	6.6	6.8	6.3
Reliability of Accessible Features	6.8	7.0	5.8	6.3	6.5	6.2	--	--	--	7.5	7.6	7.1	5.2	5.3	4.8
Overall Value for your Money	6.7	6.9	5.8	6.4	6.4	6.1	6.8	7.1	5.3	7.7	7.7	7.6	6.9	7.0	6.2
OVERALL SATISFACTION with NJ TRANSIT	6.8	6.9	6.0	7.0	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.9	5.9	7.5	7.3	7.7	7.0	6.9	6.6

Source: NJ TRANSIT Customer Satisfaction Survey, Spring and Fall 2022

Note: F = Female or women, M = Male or man, NB/GF = Non-binary or gender fluid

## APPENDIX E – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

### Marginalized Genders Travel Survey

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#### Start of Block: Informed Consent

**Title of Study:** Understanding how marginalized genders travel using NJ TRANSIT

**Principal Investigator:** Jon Carnegie

This online consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide information that will help you decide whether you want to take part in the study. It is your choice to take part or not. If you decide to take part, instructions at the end of document will tell you what to do next. Your alternative to taking part in the research is not to take part in it.

#### **Who is conducting this research study and what is it about?**

You are being asked to take part in research conducted by Jon Carnegie, Executive Director of the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University. This research is sponsored by NJ TRANSIT with funding from the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. The purpose of the research is to investigate how gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation impact individual travel choices and experiences. The research will also investigate how different groups use NJ TRANSIT services, their experiences, and if they have ever been harassed or assaulted when using NJ TRANSIT.

#### **What will I be asked to do?**

If you take part in the research, you will be asked to complete a one-time online survey questionnaire. You will be asked questions about you and your experience using NJ TRANSIT (including questions about gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation as well as past experiences of harassment and assault while using public transit). We expect it will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey. We anticipate that approximately 1,500 people will take part in this study.

#### **What are the risks of harm or discomforts I might experience if I take part in this study?**

Breach of confidentiality is a risk of harm but a data security plan is in place to minimize such a risk. Also, some questions may make you feel uncomfortable. If that happens, you can skip those questions or withdraw from the study altogether.

#### **Are there any benefits to me if I choose to take part in this study?**

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study. However, your answers may help NJ TRANSIT improve the travel experience for public transit customers.

#### **Will I be paid to take part in this study?**

You will not be paid to take part in this study. However, at the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to enter a lottery drawing to receive a \$100 gift card, or if you choose a NJ TRANSIT monthly pass. The winners will be chosen at random after the survey is completed.

#### **How will information about me be kept private or confidential?**

All efforts will be made to keep your responses confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. We will use an online survey software program to collect and forward your responses to us. We will know your computer's IP address when you respond to the online survey. Prior to analyzing your answers, we will remove and destroy your IP address so no link will exist between your identity and your responses. In addition, if you choose to enter the gift card lottery, you will be asked to provide us with your name, phone number, and email address. This information will not be linked to your answers. No information that can identify you will appear in any professional presentation or publication.



**What will happen to my information after the study is over?**

After information that could identify you has been removed, de-identified information collected for this research may be used for other research we conduct without obtaining additional informed consent from you.

**What will happen if I do not want to take part or decide later not to stay in the study?**

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part, you can choose to skip questions that you do not wish to answer. Once you click the final 'Next' button at the end of the survey, your responses cannot be withdrawn as we will not know which ones yours are.

**Who Can I Contact If I Have Questions?**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research, or need more information you can contact the **Principal Investigator: Jon Carnegie at 848-932-2840 or by email at [carnegie@rutgers.edu](mailto:carnegie@rutgers.edu)**. If you have questions, concerns, problems, information or input about the research or would like to know your rights as a research subject, you can contact the Rutgers IRB or the Rutgers Human Subjects Protection Program via phone at (973) 972-3608 or (732) 235-2866 or (732) 235-9806 OR via email [irboffice@research.rutgers.edu](mailto:irboffice@research.rutgers.edu), or you can write us at 335 George Street, Liberty Plaza Suite 3200, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Please print out this consent form if you would like a copy of it for your files. If you do not wish to take part in the research, close this website address. **By clicking on the 'Next' button at the bottom of this page and beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older, have read and understand the information presented above, and agree to take part in the research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation in the research without penalty by not completing the survey.**

End of Block: Informed Consent

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Start of Block: Introduction

**Introduction**

Rutgers University is conducting research on how people of different genders travel with a specific focus on how women and sexual and gender minorities travel on NJ TRANSIT. Please complete this survey to help NJ TRANSIT develop integrated solutions to address the needs of current and future women and LGBTQIA+ customers. We encourage everyone to take the survey.

**Our first set of questions ask about you and where you live. Your answers will help the research team understand who is responding to the survey.**

What is your current home city/town?



What is your current home zip code?

How do you currently describe yourself? **(Select only one)**

- ☐ Female
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ A combination of genders
  - ☐ Non-binary
  - ☐ Intersex
  - ☐ Something else, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ I don't know or prefer not to say
- 

Do you identify as transgender?

- ☐ No
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ I don't know or prefer not to say
- 

Which of the following best represents your sexual orientation? **(Select only one)**

- ☐ Gay or lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual person
- ☐ Straight, that is not gay, lesbian, or bisexual
- ☐ Pansexual
- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Something else, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I don't know or prefer not to say

End of Block: Introduction

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Start of Block: General Travel Questions

### General Travel Questions

This set of questions ask about your general travel patterns, how often you use NJ TRANSIT, why or why not, and how safe you feel riding NJ TRANSIT if you are a NJ TRANSIT customer.

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Overall, about how often do you travel for different purposes, NOT just when riding NJ TRANSIT? (**Select one response for each type of trip**)

	Never/ Not applicable	5 or more days/week	3-4 days/week	1-2 days/week	1-3 times per month	A few times per year
Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping/ Errands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social visits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation/ Entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

What mode do you **most often** use for different trip purposes? *(Select one response for each type of trip.) You should select the mode you use for main part or longest (distance) part of your trip. For example, if you walk to a bus stop, ride the bus across town, get off the bus and walk to your final destination, you should select bus.*

	Not applica ble	Walk, bike, or scooter	Electri c bike or electri c scoote r	Drive my own vehic le	Carp ool	Uber/ Lyft/ Taxi	NJ TRAN SIT Bus	NJ TRAN SIT Rail	NJ TRAN SIT Light Rail	NJ TRAN SIT Access Link	PATH	SEP TA	PATC O	Fer ry	Oth er
Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping/ Errands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social visits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation / Entertainm ent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often do you ride NJ TRANSIT buses, trains, light rail, and/or Access Link?

- ☐ I **regularly** ride NJ TRANSIT
- ☐ I **rarely or infrequently** ride NJ TRANSIT
- ☐ I **used to ride** NJ TRANSIT, but **no longer do**
- ☐ I have **never** used NJ TRANSIT
- 



Why do you **NOT currently ride** NJ TRANSIT? (*Select your top three reasons*)

- ☐ Service does not go where I need to go
- ☐ Service is not available when I need to travel
- ☐ Service is unreliable
- ☐ Service does not come often enough
- ☐ Service is too slow/trips take too long
- ☐ I have disability that makes it hard to use transit
- ☐ I feel unsafe using NJ TRANSIT
- ☐ I am afraid of getting sick
- ☐ I am afraid of being harassed or assaulted
- ☐ Transit vehicles are not clean
- ☐ Transit vehicles are too crowded
- ☐ NJ TRANSIT costs too much
- ☐ I have to make too many transfers
- ☐ Taking NJ TRANSIT is confusing
- ☐ I prefer to travel a different way
- ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

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Page Break

End of Block: General Travel Questions

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Start of Block: Questions for NJ TRANSIT riders



Why do you choose to ride NJ TRANSIT? (**Select your top three reasons**)

☐

I have no other way to get where I need to go

☐

NJ TRANSIT is the most affordable option for me

☐

NJ TRANSIT is the most convenient option for me

☐

I feel safe riding NJ TRANSIT

☐

Riding NJ TRANSIT is good for the environment

☐

NJ TRANSIT saves me money

☐

NJ TRANSIT is faster than my other options

☐

Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

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Page Break

How often do you carry packages, bags and/or travel with a cart or stroller **when riding NJ TRANSIT?**

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Most of the time
- ☐ About half the time
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

Page Break

On a scale of 1-5, tell us how safe you feel when using NJ TRANSIT to travel **when it is DAYLIGHT out?**  
*(Move the RED slider to the appropriate number. 1 means you feel very unsafe and 5 means you feel very safe. Click on 1 if you want to record your answer as 1=Very unsafe. If you do not ride NJ TRANSIT when it is light out, select not applicable)*

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	
Getting to stop/station to begin my trip						
Using the stop/station parking lot						
Waiting at stop/station to begin my trip						
While on the transit vehicle						
Getting from stop/station to my final destination or next mode						

You reported feeling 1=very unsafe or 2=somewhat unsafe when using NJ TRANSIT to travel **when it is DAYLIGHT out**, please tell us what makes you feel unsafe.

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On a scale of 1-5, tell us how safe you feel when using NJ TRANSIT to travel **when it is DARK outside?**  
***(Move the RED slider to the appropriate number. 1 means you feel very unsafe and 5 means you feel very safe. Click on 1 if you want to record your answer as 1=Very unsafe. If you do not ride NJ TRANSIT when it is dark outside, select not applicable)***

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	1	2	Neutral	3	Somewhat safe	4	Very safe	Not Applicable
Getting to stop/station to begin my trip										
Using the stop/station parking lot										
Waiting at stop/station to begin my trip										
While on the transit vehicle										
Getting from stop/station to my final destination or next mode										

You reported feeling 1=very unsafe or 2=somewhat unsafe when using NJ TRANSIT to travel **when it is Dark outside**, please tell us what makes you feel unsafe.

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If you generally feel safe **when riding NJ TRANSIT**, but there was a time when you witnessed or observed an incident or had an experience that made you feel unsafe **but you were not directly involved**, please tell us about this incident or experience. If you have nothing you would like to share, then skip this question. Please **DO NOT INCLUDE** names, places, dates, and other identifying information in your answers.

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Page Break





Select the number **two hundred** from the list below.

- ☐ 100
- ☐ 200
- ☐ 300
- ☐ 400
- ☐ 500

End of Block: Questions for NJ TRANSIT riders

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Start of Block: Questions about most frequent trip

**Questions about your most frequent NJ TRANSIT trip**

This set of questions ask about your travel and experiences making your **most frequent trip** using NJ TRANSIT.

Thinking about the **most frequent trip** you make using NJ TRANSIT, which service do you use?

- ☐ NJ TRANSIT Bus
- ☐ NJ TRANSIT Rail
- ☐ NJ TRANSIT Light Rail
- ☐ NJ TRANSIT Access Link



What is the purpose of the **most frequent trip** you take using NJ TRANSIT?

- ☐ Go to work
  - ☐ Go to school
  - ☐ Visit with friends/family
  - ☐ Shopping/Errands
  - ☐ Medical appointment
  - ☐ Recreation/Entertainment
  - ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
-

Where do you usually begin your **most frequent trip**?

- ☐ Home
- ☐ School
- ☐ Work
- ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

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Page Break

What is the name of the city/town where you **BEGIN** your **most frequent trip**? *(For example, if you are traveling from your home in Berkeley Heights using the Fanwood train station, you should enter Berkeley Heights.)*

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of the city/town where you **END** your **most frequent trip**? *(For example, you are traveling from work in Newark to your home in Highland Park but your train stops in New Brunswick, you should enter Highland Park)*

\_\_\_\_\_

On what days of the week do you make your **most frequent trip** by **XXXXX** and what time or times do you travel for this trip? *(Select all that apply)*

	12 a.m. to 6 a.m.	6-10 a.m.	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	4-8 p.m.	8 p.m. to 12 a.m.
Monday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Page Break

When using NJ TRANSIT to make your **most frequent trip**, please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experiences using NJ TRANSIT.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Other riders are courteous	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT is physically comfortable for me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT employees are courteous	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT employees respond quickly to incidents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safer when other customers are present	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safer around other customers who are the same gender as me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safer when NJ TRANSIT police are present	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safer when NJ TRANSIT employees, other than police are present	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT employees treat me with respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Page Break

When using NJ TRANSIT to make your **most frequent trip**, please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about NJ TRANSIT **facilities and vehicles**.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Transit stops and stations have adequate lighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Signs at stops and stations help me find my way when using NJ TRANSIT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The waiting areas and public spaces in NJ TRANSIT facilities are clean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT vehicles are clean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are enough public restrooms in NJ TRANSIT stations and terminals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT restrooms are clean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NJ TRANSIT restrooms feel safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are enough security cameras at NJ TRANSIT stations and terminals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Security cameras make me feel safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safer when transit spaces are free from graffiti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Questions about most frequent trip

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Start of Block: Traveling with children

**Traveling with children**

This set of questions ask about your experiences **traveling with children** ages infant to 17 years old **when riding NJ TRANSIT**.

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Do you normally travel with a child or children ages infant to 17 years old **when riding NJ TRANSIT**?  
(*Select all that apply*)

- ☐ I do not travel with children
- ☐ Infant or child 6 or younger in a stroller
- ☐ Infant or child 6 or younger with no stroller
- ☐ Child 7-12 years old
- ☐ Teenager 13-17 years old

Now we want to hear about your experiences **traveling with children when riding NJ TRANSIT**. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
It is easy to get around when traveling with children on NJ TRANSIT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting on/off transit vehicles with children is easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It would be good to have a place to park my stroller without having to remove my child	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are enough family-friendly restrooms in stations/terminals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ramps, escalators, and elevators make it easy to get around stations/terminals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ramps, escalators, and elevators are located where I need them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other riders are courteous of people traveling with children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use different routes/stops when traveling with children than when traveling alone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I travel at different times when traveling with children than when traveling alone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my household, I am the person most often responsible for traveling with children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Why do you **NOT** travel with a child or children when riding NJ TRANSIT? (*Select all that apply*)

☐

I do not have children/My children are teenagers or adults

☐

Too difficult

☐

Too expensive

☐

Need to carry packages

☐

Public transit may not be safe for children

☐

Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Traveling with children

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Start of Block: Traveling with adults that need assistance

**Traveling with adults that need assistance**

This set of questions ask about your experiences traveling with adults that need care assistance **when riding NJ TRANSIT**.

Do you travel with an individual that has a disability or other person(s) that needs care assistance **when riding NJ TRANSIT**?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Does the person you travel with use a wheelchair or other mobility assistance equipment **when riding NJ TRANSIT**?

☐

No

☐

Yes, a wheelchair

☐

Yes, a cane or walker

☐

Yes, some other equipment



Now we want to hear about your experiences **traveling with individuals that need care assistance when riding NJ TRANSIT**. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Getting on/off transit vehicles is easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wheelchair tie downs are available when I need them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wheelchair tie downs are easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stations/terminals have enough accessible bathrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ramps, escalators, and elevators make it easy to get around stations/terminals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kneeling buses, wheelchair lifts, and bridge plates make it easier for me to board vehicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escalators and elevators are working when I need them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to get around when traveling on NJ TRANSIT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Why do you **NOT** travel with an individual(s) that needs care assistance **when riding NJ TRANSIT?**  
(Select all that apply)

- ☐ There is no one in my life that needs this kind of assistance
- ☐ Too difficult
- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Need to carry packages
- ☐ Public transit may not be safe for people that need care assistance
- ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_





Select the number 200 from the list below.

- ☐ 100
- ☐ 200
- ☐ 300
- ☐ 400
- ☐ 500

End of Block: Traveling with adults that need assistance

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Start of Block: Experiences with harassment and assault

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**Experiences of harassment and assault**

This section of the survey will ask questions about your experiences with harassment and or assault while using NJ TRANSIT. **Harassment** is unwelcome non-physical conduct, whether sexual or otherwise, that has the effect of threatening or intimidating you. It is often based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or pregnancy), national origin, older age, or disability. **Assault** is any attempted and/or completed physical behavior intended to intimidate or harm another individual. **Sexual assault** is any attempted and/or completed physical behavior of a sexual nature against you and occurs without your consent, whether or not intended to harm or intimidate you.

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What precautions do you take or strategies do you use to feel safer and/or to avoid harassment or assault **when riding NJ TRANSIT?** (*Select all that apply*)

- ☐ I do not take precautions or alter my behavior
  - ☐ Choose a seat away from other people
  - ☐ Avoid making eye contact
  - ☐ Move to another seat or location
  - ☐ Travel at certain times of day
  - ☐ Get off the vehicle or abandon the transit trip if harassment occurs
  - ☐ Avoid traveling at night
  - ☐ Choose to take only routes I believe are safe
  - ☐ Use stations/stops that I believe are safe
  - ☐ Limit how much I travel/Make fewer trips
  - ☐ Travel other ways (drive, walk, taxi, etc.)
  - ☐ Carry items I can use to protect myself
  - ☐ Change the way I dress when I ride NJ TRANSIT
  - ☐ Change the way I speak or act when I ride NJ TRANSIT
  - ☐ Alert others about my travel plans
  - ☐ Sit near or wait with someone that has a similar gender expression as me
  - ☐ Travel with others
  - ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
-

Have you ever been harassed or assaulted while using NJ TRANSIT?

- ☐ No
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ Prefer not to say
- 

We understand that the next set of questions may be difficult. If any of the questions presented in this section cause you any emotional distress, there are resources available that can provide support and assistance to victims of harassment and assault. If you need support or assistance, please contact:

**RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network):** (866) 488-7386. The nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. They have a 24/7 hotline available to provide support to victims.

**The Trevor Project:** (866) 488-7386. The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning young people ages 13-24.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** (800) 273-8255 (online chat available). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Crisis Text Line:** Text START to 741-741. Crisis Text Line is free, 24/7 support for those in crisis. Text from anywhere in the USA to text with a trained Crisis Counselor.

**The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender National Hotline:** (888) 843-4564 and The GLBT National Youth Talk line (serving youth through age 25): (800) 246-7743. Both organizations provide telephone, online private one-to-one chat, and email peer-support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States.

**Trans Lifeline:** (877) 565-8860. Trans Lifeline is a trans-led organization that connects trans people to the community, support, and resources they need to survive and thrive.

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Page Break

How frequently do you experience harassment or assault when using NJ TRANSIT?

- ☐ It has happened only one time
  - ☐ It happens, but not often
  - ☐ It happens frequently, at least half the times I ride
  - ☐ It happens every time I ride
  - ☐ Prefer not to answer
-



What type of harassment or assault have you experienced while using NJ TRANSIT? (**Select all that apply**)

- ☐ Staring/leering
  - ☐ Verbal comments (including slurs)
  - ☐ Verbal comments of a sexual nature
  - ☐ Misrecognition/misgendering
  - ☐ Denied entry or service to a NJ TRANSIT facility or vehicle
  - ☐ Being followed
  - ☐ Personal space invaded or blocked from passing
  - ☐ Shown sexual/pornographic images
  - ☐ Reported to authorities when not needed or for no reason
  - ☐ Unwelcome/unwanted touching or brushing
  - ☐ Groping
  - ☐ Kissing
  - ☐ Penetration
  - ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 

How long ago did the **most recent** incident of harassment or assault occur?

- ☐ 6 months ago, or less
  - ☐ 7-12 months ago
  - ☐ 13-24 months ago
  - ☐ More than 24 months ago
  - ☐ Cannot recall or prefer not to answer
- 

Page Break

In your own words, please describe the most recent incident of harassment or assault you experienced while using NJ TRANSIT. Please describe the type of harassment or assault, who harassed or assaulted you, whether any bystanders intervened and what they did, and any other information you think is important to share. **Please DO NOT INCLUDE names, places, dates, and other identifying information in your answers.**

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Page Break

Was this incident reported to authorities?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, reported to NJ TRANSIT
- ☐ Yes, reported but **NOT** NJ TRANSIT?



Why was the incident not reported? (***Select all that apply***)

- ☐ It would not have made a difference
- ☐ I did not think it was a big deal at the time
- ☐ My immigration status
- ☐ I don't trust authorities
- ☐ I did not know who to report it to
- ☐ I did not think people would believe me
- ☐ I did not know how to report it
- ☐ I fear interacting with authorities
- ☐ I was uncomfortable sharing what happened
- ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Were you physically harmed during this incident?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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Page Break

Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about this incident.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Prefer not to say
When this incident occurred, I feared I would be harmed or assaulted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This incident caused me to fear for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This incident caused me to feel anxiety stronger than I did before it happened	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This incident caused me to experience depression/made my depression worse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had thoughts of suicide because of this incident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The incident caused me to lose my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The incident caused me other financial hardship, such as a new medical expense	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Page Break



Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about what you think were the harasser's or attacker's motives during this incident. **I believe the harasser/attacker was motivated by my...**

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Don't know or prefer not to say
Gender, gender identity, or gender expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economic status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical size	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Race/ethnicity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Were you a NJ TRANSIT employee when this incident happened?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

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If you were a NJ TRANSIT employee when this incident occurred, did the incident happen during your workday or when you were riding NJ TRANSIT as a customer?

- ☐ I was not a NJ TRANSIT employee
- ☐ I was harassed/assaulted during my workday as a NJ TRANSIT employee
- ☐ I was harassed/assaulted while riding NJ TRANSIT as a customer
- ☐ Don't remember
- ☐ Prefer not to say

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Before moving on, we wanted to share the list of resources available once again to you if you are

experiencing any emotional distress. These resources can provide support and assistance to victims of harassment and assault. If you need support or assistance, please contact:

**RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network):** (866) 488-7386. The nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. They have a 24/7 hotline available to provide support to victims.

**The Trevor Project:** (866) 488-7386. The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning young people ages 13-24. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-8255 (online chat available).

**The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Crisis Text Line:** Text START to 741-741. Crisis Text Line is free, 24/7 support for those in crisis. Text from anywhere in the USA to text with a trained Crisis Counselor.

**The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender National Hotline:** (888) 843-4564 and **The GLBT National Youth Talk line** (serving youth through age 25): (800) 246-7743. Both organizations provide telephone, online private one-to-one chat, and email peer-support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States.

**Trans Lifeline:** (877) 565-8860. Trans Lifeline is a trans-led organization that connects trans people to the community, support, and resources they need to survive and thrive.

End of Block: Experiences with harassment and assault

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Start of Block: Ways to improve

#### **Potential ways to improve travel experiences**

This set of questions ask about what you do to feel safer and/or to avoid harassment or assault when using NJ TRANSIT. It also asks you opinions about things that could improve safety and make you feel safer when using NJ TRANSIT.

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Page Break



What are the three most important things that make you feel safe when riding or waiting for NJ TRANSIT? *(Select up to three)*

- ☐ Adequate lighting
  - ☐ Other people nearby
  - ☐ Open businesses nearby
  - ☐ Emergency intercom or call box nearby
  - ☐ Security cameras
  - ☐ Transit employees nearby
  - ☐ Transit police nearby
  - ☐ Other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 



Thinking about police officers you see when using NJ TRANSIT, there are...

- ☐ Too few officers
  - ☐ The right amount of officers
  - ☐ Too many officers
- 



What things do you think would improve your experience when riding NJ TRANSIT? (*Select up to three options*)

- ☐ Implement an open stroller section on buses and trains so I can travel with my children without taking them out of their stroller
  - ☐ Improve lighting
  - ☐ Increase police presence
  - ☐ Improve station/stop maintenance
  - ☐ Improve employee training such as gender-sensitivity training
  - ☐ Include gender identity as a protected class in terms of civil rights protections
  - ☐ Make it easier to alert NJ TRANSIT staff when you feel unsafe or need help
- 

What else can NJ TRANSIT do to improve your experience when riding NJ TRANSIT?

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End of Block: Ways to improve

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Start of Block: Demographics

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### Demographics

This final set of questions will help the research team understand how your experiences might be influenced by your personal characteristics.

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What is your age?

- ☐ 18-24
  - ☐ 25-34
  - ☐ 35-44
  - ☐ 45-54
  - ☐ 55-64
  - ☐ 65 and over
-

Are you employed?

☐ No

☐ Yes



What is your current home zip code?

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What is your approximate **yearly household** income?

☐ Under \$15,000

☐ \$15,000-24,999

☐ \$25,000-34,999

☐ \$35,000-49,999

☐ \$50,000-74,999

☐ \$75,000-99,999

☐ \$100,000-149,999

☐ \$150,000-\$199,999

☐ \$200,000-249,999

☐ \$250,000 and over

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Are you of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin?

- ☐ No, I am not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- ☐ Yes, I am Puerto Rican
- ☐ Yes, I am Cuban
- ☐ Yes, I am another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (e.g., Argentinean, Colombian, Nicaraguan), please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 

What is your race?

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Page Break

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How well do you speak English?

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Not well
- ☐ Not at all
- 

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

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What language(s) do you speak at home?

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Do you have one or more of the following disabilities that makes it difficult for you to use NJ TRANSIT bus, train, or light rail? **(Select all that apply)**

- ☐ No
  - ☐ Yes, a disability affecting my vision (blind or low vision)
  - ☐ Yes, a disability affecting my hearing (deaf or difficulty hearing)
  - ☐ Yes, a disability affecting my mobility (difficulty walking or using stairs)
  - ☐ Yes, a disability not listed above, please specify
- 

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Do you use a wheelchair or other mobility assistance equipment?

- ☐ No
  - ☐ Yes, a wheelchair
  - ☐ Yes, a cane or walker
  - ☐ Yes, some other equipment
-

Please select the appropriate number column for each question below.

	0	1	2	3	4	5+
How many <b>people</b> are in your household, <u>including yourself</u> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How many <b>children under 18</b> are in your household?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How many <b>licensed drivers</b> (including yourself) are in your household?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How many <b>vehicles</b> (cars, motorcycles, pick-up trucks, SUVs, vans, etc.) are available for you to use in your household?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete the survey. Your responses and opinions are very important to this research. As a thank you, you may enter a drawing to win a **\$100 gift card**, or if you choose a **NJ TRANSIT monthly pass**. Please **click on next to record your responses**. When you do, you will be redirected to separate survey to provide us with your contact information. This way, your contact information will not be linked to your responses. If you do not wish to enter the drawing **click on next to record your responses** and close out of the next survey session.

End of Block: Demographics

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