

**MASS TRANSIT MEMORANDUM**  
**No. 021910-1**

**February 19, 2010**

**TO:** Jerry Bauer, Assistant City Manager

**FROM:** Paul McChancy, Mass Transit Administrator  
*PMS*

**RE:** First Transit Passenger Survey

Attached for your review is one copy of the summary report on the passenger survey done by First Transit. The survey includes passenger opinions and comments about the Transit System, and information about the passengers. Page 5 gives First Transit's conclusions and suggestions to improve the Transit System, based on passenger opinions and comments.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Encl.

# Decatur Public Transit System PASSENGER SURVEY SUMMARY 2009

First Transit staff conducted a passenger satisfaction survey for the Decatur Public Transit System (DPTS). The survey team used a written survey form to obtain passenger information, opinions and comments about the fixed route bus system. The team collected 668 completed surveys. The results of the survey are summarized below:

## Passenger Satisfaction:

### 1. Courtesy of the Bus Drivers:

Excellent	-- 59%	
Good	-- 31%	Good to Excellent – 90%
Fair	-- 9%	
Poor	-- 1%	Poor to Fair – 10%

### 2. Safety of the Bus Drivers:

Excellent	-- 53%	
Good	-- 35%	Good to Excellent – 88%
Fair	-- 10%	
Poor	-- 2%	Poor to Fair – 12%

### 3. Security on Buses:

Excellent	-- 41%	
Good	-- 34%	Good to Excellent – 75%
Fair	-- 17%	
Poor	-- 6%	Poor to Fair – 23%
No opinion	-- 2%	

### 4. Cleanliness of Buses:

Excellent	-- 26%	
Good	-- 32%	Good to Excellent – 58%
Fair	-- 26%	
Poor	-- 16%	Poor to Fair – 42%

### 5. Courtesy of DPTS Staff:

Excellent	-- 44%	
Good	-- 39%	Good to Excellent – 83%
Fair	-- 13%	
Poor	-- 3%	Poor to Fair – 16%
No opinion	-- 1%	

6. Security at the Transit Center:

Excellent	-- 38%	
Good	-- 38%	<u>Good to Excellent – 76%</u>
Fair	-- 17%	
Poor	-- 5%	<u>Poor to Fair – 22%</u>
No opinion	-- 2%	

7. Cleanliness of the Transit Center:

Excellent	-- 40%	
Good	-- 39%	<u>Good to Excellent – 79%</u>
Fair	-- 16%	
Poor	-- 3%	<u>Poor to Fair – 19%</u>
No opinion	-- 2%	

8. Bus Schedule Reliability:

Excellent	-- 35%	
Good	-- 41%	<u>Good to Excellent – 76%</u>
Fair	-- 19%	
Poor	-- 4%	<u>Poor to Fair – 23%</u>
No opinion	-- 1%	

9. Availability of Information:

Excellent	-- 42%	
Good	-- 41%	<u>Good to Excellent – 83%</u>
Fair	-- 14%	
Poor	-- 2%	<u>Poor to Fair – 16%</u>
No opinion	-- 1%	

10. Area Served by Buses:

Excellent	-- 40%	
Good	-- 43%	<u>Good to Excellent – 83%</u>
Fair	-- 14%	
Poor	-- 2%	<u>Poor to Fair – 16%</u>
No opinion	-- 1%	

11. Frequency of Bus Service:

Excellent	-- 37%	
Good	-- 42%	<u>Good to Excellent – 79%</u>
Fair	-- 17%	
Poor	-- 3%	<u>Poor to Fair – 20%</u>
No opinion	-- 1%	

**Passenger Comments:**

The Passenger Survey also contained the open-ended question: What is the most important improvement to the transit system you would want? The following table groups the 665 comments and shows the percentage of responses for each:

Late night service	21.4%
New buses	13.4%
Improved vehicle maintenance	9.6%
Sunday service	9.2%
Improve on-time performance	7.1%
Cleaner buses	6.8%
Expanded service area	6.5%
Increased frequency	6.3%
Improved security / safety	5.9%
Improved customer service	4.4%
Monitoring students	4.2%
Passenger amenities	2.6%
Reduced fares	1.8%

**Demographics:**

1. Sex: 52% of the respondents are female and 48% are male.

2. Age: 18 and under -- 5%  
19 – 24 -- 12%  
24 – 34 -- 16%  
35 – 49 -- 34%  
50 – 64 -- 31%  
65 and over -- 6%

3. Race: African-American -- 49%  
White -- 48%  
Native American -- 2%  
Hispanic -- 1%  
All other races -- 1%

4. Ability to Speak English:  
Very well -- 91%  
Well -- 8%  
Not very well -- 1%  
Not at all -- 0%

5. Language Spoken at Home:

English	-- 96%
Spanish	-- 2%
All others	-- 2%

**Usage Profile:**

1. Purpose of This Trip:

Work	-- 37%
Personal Business	-- 18%
Shopping	-- 17%
Medical	-- 13%
School	-- 6%
Recreation, Social or Dining	-- 6%
All Others	-- 3%

2 Reason(s) for Riding the Bus:

No car available	-- 48%
No driver license	-- 27%
Less expensive	-- 13%
The Environment	-- 6%
Avoid parking or traffic problems	-- 3%
All other reasons	-- 3%

3. How Often You Ride the Bus:

5 - 6 days per week	-- 66%
3 - 4 days per week	-- 20%
1 - 2 days per week	-- 8%
Less than once per week	-- 4%
First time rider	-- 1%

4. How Long You've Used the Bus:

2 years or more	-- 64%
1 - 2 years	-- 19%
Less than 1 year	-- 17%
(Less than 1 month - 5%)	

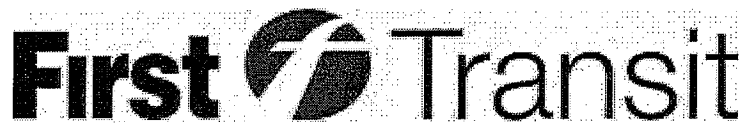
**Conclusion:**

Overall, the Transit System's passengers are very pleased with the service provided. They feel safe on the system, they use the system extensively, and they are pleased with the operators and staff. This does not mean that DPTS can not improve. The following suggestions are made based on the survey results, to enhance the system and address the customer's comments:

1. Monitor the activities of the school children better to reduce disruptions on the buses and at the terminal.
2. Enhance the bus cleaning process to provide cleaner buses.
3. Enhance the maintenance processes to reduce bus failures.
4. Monitor schedule adherence and make route and schedule changes where possible.
5. Review marketing plans to target the populations that are not currently riding the bus. Also monitor changes in the community demographics and provide materials as needed.
6. As funds become available, consider expanding the hours of service.
7. Review the route interlining to see if transfers can be reduced.

The addition of the new transit buses will address some of the passenger's requests. DPTS must ensure that the new buses are kept clean and maintained or any gains will be lost. The addition of the new buses into the fleet will also give DPTS an opportunity to market the system to new passengers. This opportunity should be capitalized on with print media and some free rides.

The key to the continued success of the Transit System is to continuously monitor system performance and the passengers' needs. Much of what is being done is good or excellent but without monitoring, this could degrade.



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