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Public Outreach

Public Outreach, Input and Participation

Introduction

An important part of the development process for the RTP is public outreach and involvement. To obtain this, several methods were utilized in an attempt to bring as many individuals as possible into the plan development. This included updates at several meetings, targeted emails, and online and hard copy surveys. Additionally, during the development of other planning documents, notice of applicability and linkage to the RTP were identified and incorporated.

Public Meetings

Several meetings regularly held by or specifically scheduled by the MRPC were utilized as opportunities for input and discussion of the RTP. These included:

- RTP Workshops
- Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC)
- Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)
- Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) Advisory Board
- Montachusett Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (MRCEDS) Committee
- The Health Equity Partnership of North Central Mass (CHNA 9)

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION
PLAN
JOURNEY TO 2050
PUBLIC OUTREACH WORKSHOPS**

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) would like to announce a series of meetings that will focus on the 2024 update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Regional Transportation Plan provides guidance to local and state officials in deciding how to spend federal and state transportation funds as well as outlines the transportation priority needs for the region. The plan is a long-range document for the maintenance and improvement for the road, highway, bicycle and pedestrian, bridge, rail, transit, freight and airport systems of the Montachusett Region over the next 20 years. The RTP is a federally mandated document that is developed through studies, discussions with local officials, boards and commissions and public comment/outreach. While the RTP may cover a 20-year period, it is updated every four years so it can be adapted to emerging needs and trends.

The Plan must examine and address all modes of transportation that exist in the region through an inventory of current conditions and then identify various needs and recommendations that can range from specific projects to general goals or policies. Additionally, in order for projects to be eligible for Federal Aid funds through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), they must be reflected within the RTP.

All interested individuals are encouraged to participate in the plan development process through attendance at various outreach events, completion of various surveys, feedback and comments on the draft documents as they are prepared and by contacting the MRPC. All meetings are virtual except where noted.

Register through the QR Codes located next to each listed session above.
Registration can also be done through the MRPC website at www.mrpc.org.
Please take the RTP Survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JGKQWVR>

Subregion 1
November 14
10:00 – 11:00 am
Athol, Hubbardston, Putnam, Chatham, Douglas, Templeton, Winchendon

Subregion 2
November 14
1:00 – 2:00 pm
Ashburnham, Ashby, Grafton, Townsend, Westminster

Subregion 3
November 15
10:00 – 11:00 am
Ayer, Harvard, Lunenburg, Shirley

Subregion 4
November 15
1:00 – 2:00 pm
Clinton, Lancaster, Sterling

Cities
November 17
10:00 – 11:00 am
Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster

Transit / MART
November 29 5:30 – 6:30 pm
** In person **
MART Admin Bldg,
14776 Water Street
Hockley, MA 01420
Pizza will be provided.

Directions to MART facility

A. RTP Workshops

A series of meetings were held at five locations around the region to discuss various topics and to solicit input directly related to the RTP development. A mass mailing was disseminated to

various individuals, organizations and groups announcing the time and locations of these meetings. In addition, all relevant information was posted to the MRPC website.

Focus	Date	Location
MPO Subregion 1	November 14, 2022 10:00 - 11:00 AM	Zoom
MPO Subregion 2	November 14, 2022 1:00 - 2:00 PM	Zoom
MPO Subregion 3	November 15, 2022 10:00 - 11:00 AM	Zoom
MPO Subregion 4	November 15, 2022 1:00 - 2:00 PM	Zoom
Cities	November 17, 2022 10:00 - 11:00 AM	Zoom
Transit	November 29, 2022 5:30 - 6:30 PM	MART Admin. Bldg. Fitchburg, MA
Meeting in a Box w/ MDOT & CHNA9	February 16, 2023 10:00 - 11:30 AM	Zoom

1. RTP Outreach Meeting Comments

The following is a summary of comments made at the RTP Outreach Meetings:

- **Subregion 1 meeting notes**

(submitted after the meeting) Ashburnham put together an informational sheet that focuses on transportation home from emergency situations such as hospitalization. Your health insurance will provide transportation to the hospital via an ambulance but not home. The sheet encourages people to have a plan in place for emergencies.

- **Subregion 2 meeting notes**

- Townsend doesn't have any public transportation except the senior center van.
- Looking for more funding/better clarification for bike/ped infrastructure and projects
- Townsend – asking for assistance to get in contact with the state to discuss these funding issues.

- Can we get engineering design for an RTP project through something like the Safe Streets Grant. It will depend on the program, eligibility requirements and the particular project.
- Rt. 119/Harbor Village intersection at the high school/shopping center – Townsend. Safety concerns with pedestrian crossing for high school and rail trail. Traffic light needed.
- Smaller communities with limited funding make it difficult to incorporate public transportation options.

Comment submitted 11/14/23 –

- I agree 100% with the issues Bill Rideout described regarding the stretch of Route 119 between the high school and Harbor Village shopping center. I agree that it's a very busy and dangerous stretch of road. One thing Bill did not mention is that at the end of the school day, students pour out of the high school and cross the highway to go to the gym, the sub shops, etc. So far, drivers seem to watch out for them, but there's a lot going on with cars going in and out of the shopping center and high school as well as thru traffic.
- You did not mention the intersection at Townsend Road/Proctor Road/Rt. 119, which is a trouble spot for drivers. The long angles of approach from Townsend and Proctor Roads make it very hard to judge when trying to turn onto Rt. 119, especially during rush hour when breaks in traffic are few and far between.
- Regarding the intersection of Routes 119 and 13, our town is the main thoroughfare for traffic from several MA and NH towns. Living near the center of town for many years, I see it first-hand daily. This is not only a congestion issue for drivers, but a safety issue for bicyclists and pedestrians. It seemed like the amount of traffic diminished a bit during the worst of the pandemic, and we hoped it might remain light due to people working from home, but now it seems worse than ever.
- I used to say I would move out of town if I ever had to wait through a second red light, but now I often wait two or even three cycles of the red light before I can get out of my

street. (So I use a bike instead for local errands. Thankfully, we now have a rail trail! And bike lanes!)

- **Subregion 3 meeting notes**

- Covid travel patterns – Ayer has the commuter rail station where ridership drastically dropped during the pandemic and now it seems to be growing back to the number of riders. Transit seems to be increasing back to pre-pandemic numbers but there are also more people still working from home. Ayer is unsure about where they will be in the future based on commuter rail use. The community needs may change.
- Sterling – Noticed that while traveling on Rt.2 and passing the Littleton Commuter Rail Station, it's noticed that the cars parked there have decreased since the pandemic and still seem to be less than pre-pandemic times.
- Also mentioned Rt. 2 being a barrier at multiple locations – Shirley/Devens; Rt. 2 at I-190 and through Leominster. Brad mentioned some recent projects along the highway that are starting to make improvements but still more needs to be done. How do we impress MassDOT to express the needs along Rt. 2? Improve conversations with MassDOT regarding the issues/needs along the highway and stress the importance within the RTP.

- **Subregion 4 meeting notes**

- No Comments

- **Cities meeting notes**

- Fitchburg – FSU went remote during the pandemic which caused far less users for the transit system. Currently having hybrid and in person. Commuter Rail costs seem to be keeping the ridership low more than the pandemic
- West Fitchburg commuter rail stop (near Great Wolf Lodge). When GW closed during the pandemic, they didn't have to pay lodging tax which was lost revenue to the city.
- EV charging stations – EV charging stations might lead to more tourism/visitors if placed in proper locations.


- Promote the RTP with the local TV access channels. FSU and MWCC
- **Transit meeting notes**
 - Discussion about translating the RTP outreach survey into Spanish
 - Transit Challenges – population is aging and the need for transportation for seniors is increasing and will continue to increase
 - Rules need to change (federal) to allow more people to use the transit services (not just seniors or disabled populations)
 - Economic Development concerns – different shift work off peak hours, people can find work but can't get there. Lots of career centers interested in how to get their clients to/from work – this is the #1 challenge for the transit authority at this time. #2 finding enough drivers to work and getting enough funding to pay enough to retain employees, #3 access to healthcare
 - Mental health concerns – loneliness, lack of transportation for doctors appointments, refilling prescriptions, etc.
 - CDL licenses need to be easier to get. The tests aren't offered enough and the training can be far away. Needs to be simplified.
 - Pandemic changes – ridership is still 60% lower than pre-pandemic and doesn't appear to be increasing. Need more marketing and outreach regarding travel patterns/need.
 - MART is working on altering routes. No one uses the large loop bus routes anymore. Everyone is looking for more micro transit/ on demand services or smaller routes into the neighborhoods (not just major roadways). Shorter trips/times is more realistic.
 - Traffic seems to be increasing along Rt. 2 due to more people moving west.
 - MART receive 2 micro transit grants to pilot.
 - MRPC should take more of a leadership role to help rural communities increase their transit options
 - North Central Chamber of Commerce released a Workforce Development report that states that Transportation is a major concern and a Transportation Management Association (TMA) should be established. Maybe MRPC is the lead?

- Transportation links to housing development. Certain developments require transit access to move forward.

B. Meeting in a Box – Transportation Forum (2/16/23)

This interactive focus group was hosted jointly by MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP), MRPC staff and CHNA 9. The purpose of the meeting was to record feedback and host open discussions about what transportation investments are most important to each community. The feedback gathered assisted both MassDOT and MRPC in developing more targeted goals in our respective transportation plans. We also gauged interest in the possibility of creating a Transportation Management Area for our region. The following questions were asked by MDOT at this meeting. The notes and comments are listed below each question.

**TRANSPORTATION
OPEN FORUM**



When: February 16, 10:00 AM
Where: Zoom (link below)

Please join us on Thursday, February 16th for a one-hour focus group session with MassDOT, Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) and CHNA 9, regarding the State Long-Term Transportation Plan (SLRTP) and the Montachusett Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

This interactive focus group will be hosted jointly by MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP), MRPC staff and CHNA 9. The purpose of the meeting is to record your feedback and host open discussions about what transportation investments are most important to your community. Your feedback will assist both MassDOT and MRPC in developing more targeted goals in our respective transportation plans. We will also be gauging interest in the possibility of creating a Transportation Management Area for our region!

Agenda

10:00-11:00 AM – MDOT & MRPC presentation and guided discussion on the Long-Range Transportation Plan

11:00-11:30 AM – Discussion on creating a Transportation Management Plan (TMA)

11:30 AM – Wrap up & next steps

1. What are the most important features to improve on our roadways? Why?
 - Question about the definition of “Safety Improvements”
 - Question regarding what are “Transit Features”
 - MART could use more bus shelters so people don’t need to stand in the bad weather (Fitchburg)
 - Please provide examples of “climate-resilient infrastructure”

- Survey comment – It would be helpful for more information on Transportation/Transit features before the survey.
2. What are the most important features to improve on our transit network? Why?
 - More reliable transit service (timing and system repairs/maintenance)
 - Community shuttle service for more rural communities are important
 - Paratransit for those who are not just elderly/disabled is needed
 - Templeton wants to connect the senior centers to other senior centers and beyond)
 - Definitions of Paratransit?
 - Groton uses the Senior Center van for seniors but it would be beneficial for other members of the community as well.
 - Townsend agreed and is in a similar position as Groton where the senior center van can only be used for seniors but there are many other residents, and surrounding communities, who would benefit from more services (ex. Disabled populations, youth, access to jobs and/or higher education, etc)
 - Ayer needs a fixed bus line and connections to the Fitchburg/Leominster routes
 3. Are there any other transportation improvements that should be funded?
 - Commuter Rail expansion to Gardner, Athol to Greenfield
 - Survey questions appear to have been written by folks in Boston and not other parts of the state
 - Flashing crosswalk signs (Templeton)
 - Routes connecting Fitchburg to Lowell and Fitchburg to Worcester at least. Maybe Gardner to Worcester too.
 - Good wayfinding takes the mystery out of using any service
 - Since the (new) Twin Cities Rail Trail connects two downtowns in the region (Fitchburg & Leominster), the topic of Bike Sharing Stations seems relevant for a potential commuting option.
 - Bicycle infrastructure is critical and maintenance of that infrastructure is imperative. Groton has the Nashua River Rail Trail which is a critical connector, but is not well maintained by DCR.
 - For communities like Townsend it is both roadways and (non-existing) transit
 4. Which type of improvements are most important for the state to spend money on?

- Statewide, the Commonwealth needs to increase (Ch. 90) roadway funding since the region's roads are in very poor shape. Regionally, state funding toward completion of "Phase 2" of the Twin Cities Rail Trail is a key priority for Fitchburg.
 - How to create a program for the heavily automobile dependent communities (think Athol, Orange region) to provide safe, operable vehicles to low income clientele
 - continued safety improvements to narrowed portion of Route 2 between Phillipston and Orange (eg. ATHOL).
 - GARDNER/ATHOL: If bicycle transportation is a focus, charging points for electric bikes (like exists for automobiles) is a need as well
 - connecting trail systems, rail trails, bike trails, and allowing shared use of state funded trail systems should be receiving state funding.
5. Are there any types of destinations that need better transportation connections? Which are most in need?
- Making extensive plans involving rail transit might have been a good strategy in 1923. However, in 2023, modern information technology and communication make possible the dispatch of a fleet of small vehicles on roadways, which (assuming a sensible implementation) could enable flexible transport options for people living in less-dense regions.
 - Unique tourism/visitor destinations (such as Game On Fitchburg, or Mt. Wachusett ski/snowboarding area) need transportation options aside from individual passenger vehicle.
 - Jobs & healthcare services would be a priority
 - When a person has a need to get to one of these things, they have a need to get to all of these things
6. When funding transportation, how important is it to consider equity and fairness?
- Geography as well as population categories
 - Extremely important because populations that have been previously underserved tend to be those that need it most.
 - Equity is a dire need in our rural communities. This has been recognized by the Rural Policy Advisory Commission but it is difficult to get traction versus the more populous regions of the Commonwealth.
 - Better cost equity regarding Commuter Rail is greatly needed. Many folks without vehicles would also find cost of monthly commuter rail pass something that is cost-prohibitive.

7. When funding transportation, how important is it to consider connectivity and coverage to the places people need to go?
 - Very important. No sense funding a service that does not provide connectivity
 - Again, we have no coverage in much of our area so it's all needed
 - In Ayer, connectivity and coverage are the main issues
 - Townsend would benefit from a continuously running shuttle from town hall east down 119 to shopping to the sr ctr/library and back to the center of town
8. When funding transportation, how important is it to consider reliability and limiting unexpected delays?
 - Hopefully something more reliable than the T!
 - How is DOT an others considering possible micro transit option? "Microtransit is simply tech-enabled shared transportation that lives in the space between traditional fixed route transit and ride hailing technology"
 - more rural community transit availability. Rural towns folk have no way to get around.
9. If you could design a transportation system to meet all your needs, what would it include? Dream big...
 - Bike and pedestrian lanes as well as micro transit
 - statewide-door through door paratransit
 - extended hour transportation options as not all jobs end at 5pm
 - "on demand" door-to-door transportation service (maybe fully automated in the future?)
 - Small local hubs to pick up groups. Door to door probably not practical.
 - In town routes(or micro transit?) that have spokes to bigger transportation hubs like Fitchburg - maybe Gardner and/or Athol in future too

Other Comments/Questions

- Can you talk about how their efforts tie into the states 2050 climate goals?
- Thank You, this was great. Wish you all well in your data collection. It's important.
- More than 40% of MA Greenhouse Gas Emissions are transportation related so some of the climate funds might work looking into how that might relate.

C. Outreach Survey

The MRPC developed a survey for distribution throughout the region that would help in the development of this RTP. Primarily, it would help to identify the mood of the region towards various programming options and needs as well as shape potential planning scenarios. This chapter outlines the survey, the responses received, and conclusions drawn from the results.

The survey was devised to be short, easy to answer and hopefully, provide insight to the needs of the Region. The survey was made available at each of the public outreach workshops put on by the MRPC, at meetings of the MPO, MJTC and full Commission, at each community's Library and Senior Center/Council on Aging and online via SurveyMonkey.com. In addition, notices regarding access to the survey were distributed multiple times to all members of the RTP mailing list. From this outreach effort, 303 responses were received.

The screenshot shows a survey titled "MONTACHUSETT 2020 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN - SURVEY" with the subtitle "WORKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE". It includes a link to the online survey. The form contains several sections: 1. Where do you live? (Zip Code) with a text box. 2. Where do you work or travel to most often in a week? (Zip Code) with a text box. 3. Are you...? with checkboxes for "A Municipal Official", "A Municipal Employee", and "General Public". 4. Rank in importance from 1 (Most) to 10 (Least), the following issues that need to be addressed in your COMMUNITY over the next 25 years. This section lists various issues like Road Maintenance & Infrastructure, Transit Options, Congestion, Pedestrian & Bicycle Accessibility, Safety - Road & Highway, Economic Development, Residential Development, Climate Change & Environment, Changing Demographics, Improved Town Center, and an "Other" field. 5. If you were in charge of allocating transportation funds for your COMMUNITY over the next 25 years, how would you invest or divide a budget of \$100? This section lists investment options like Road Maintenance & Infrastructure, Transit Options, Congestion Relief, Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities, Safety (High Crash Locations), Complete Streets, Community Access, Regional Access, Climate Change & Environment, and an "Other" field. The footer indicates "2020 RTP Survey" and "Page 1 of 2".

➤ Questions, Responses and Observations

The following section reviews each question individually, summarizes the responses received and draws observations based upon an analysis of the data.

Question 1 - Where do you live? (Zip Code)

This question simply asks the respondent to identify the primary place of residents by zip code.

Question 1: Where do you live?	No. of Responses From	Percent of Responses
Ashburnham	14	4.62%
Ashby	4	1.32%
Athol	18	5.94%
Ayer	8	2.64%
Clinton	6	1.98%
Fitchburg	18	5.94%
Gardner	47	15.51%
Groton	6	1.98%
Harvard	3	0.99%
Hubbardston	6	1.98%
Lancaster	9	2.97%
Leominster	25	8.25%
Lunenburg	6	1.98%
Petersham	-	-
Phillipston (included w/Athol)	-	-
Royalston (included w/Athol)	-	-
Shirley	5	1.65%
Sterling	5	1.65%
Templeton	14	4.62%
Townsend	63	20.79%
Westminster	13	4.29%
Winchendon	7	2.31%
Devens	1	0.33%
Devens (included w/Harvard & Shirley)	-	-
Outside of Region	23	7.59%
Outside of State	2	0.66%
TOTALS	303	100.00%

<i>MRPC Community Responses</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>91.75%</i>
<i>Non-MRPC Responses</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>8.25%</i>

Of the 303 responses, just under 92% were from residents of the Montachusett region. The remaining 25 respondents were from communities outside of the planning region.

Question 2 - Where do you work or travel to most often in a week?

<u>Community</u>	<u>Responses</u>		<u>Community</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Gardner	57		Hubbardston	2
Leominster	43		Lancaster	2
Fitchburg	27		Templeton	2
Townsend	26		Westminster	2
Athol/Phillipston	14		Andover	1
Ayer	11		Ashby	1
Groton	9		Berlin	1
Ashburnham	6		Burlington	1
Cambridge	6		Chelmsford	1
Devens/Ayer	6		Danvers	1
Worcester	6		Dorchester	1
Clinton	5		Dracut	1
Shirley	5		East Templeton	1
Lowell	4		Granby	1
Nashua, NH	4		Hudson	1
Westford	4		N. Billerica	1
Boston	3		Orange/Warwick	1
Harvard	3		Peterborough, NH	1
Littleton	3		Royalston	1
Lunenburg	3		Sterling	1
West Townsend	3		Sudbury	1
Winchendon	3		Uxbridge	1
Acton	2		Waltham	1
Ashuelot, NH	2		Westborough	1
Greenfield	2			
			Total	285

The majority of respondents travel to the three cities within the Montachusett Region (Gardner, Leominster, and Fitchburg) and 233 or 85% of respondents work (or travel most often) to communities within the Montachusett Region.

Question 3 - Are you ...?

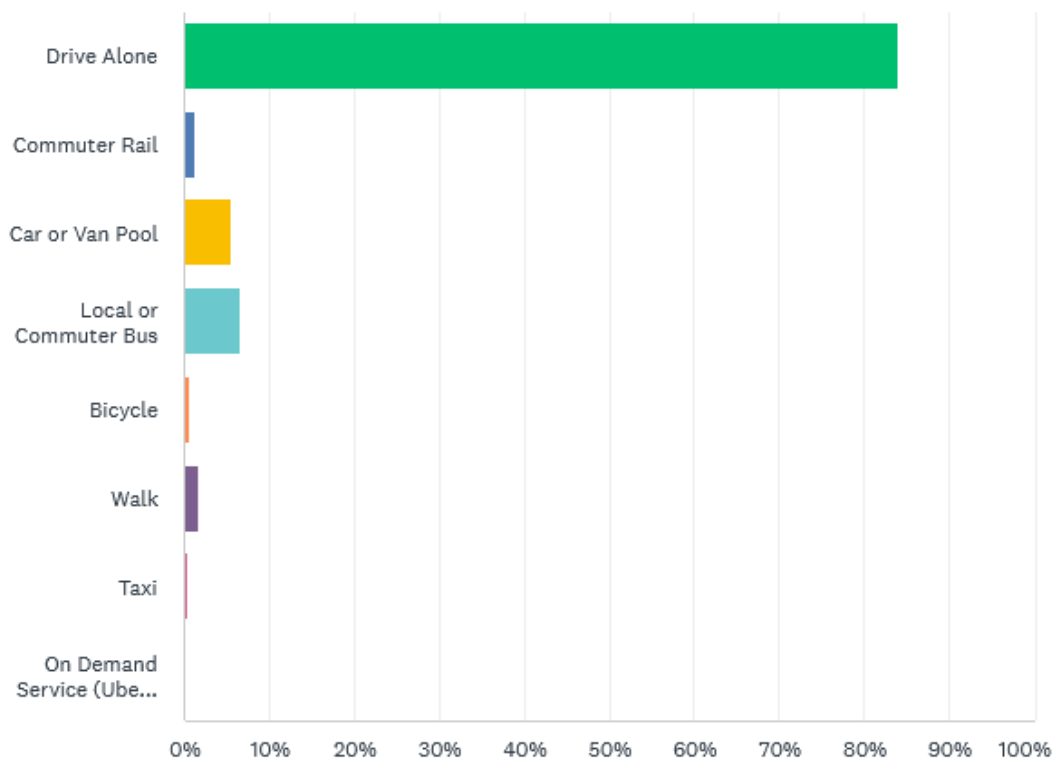
This question identified the respondent as a Municipal Employee, a Municipal Official (board member, etc.) or the General Public.

Question 3 - Are you...

An Elected/Appointed Public Official	21
A Public Employee	71
A Member of the General Public	202
No Response	9
Total	303

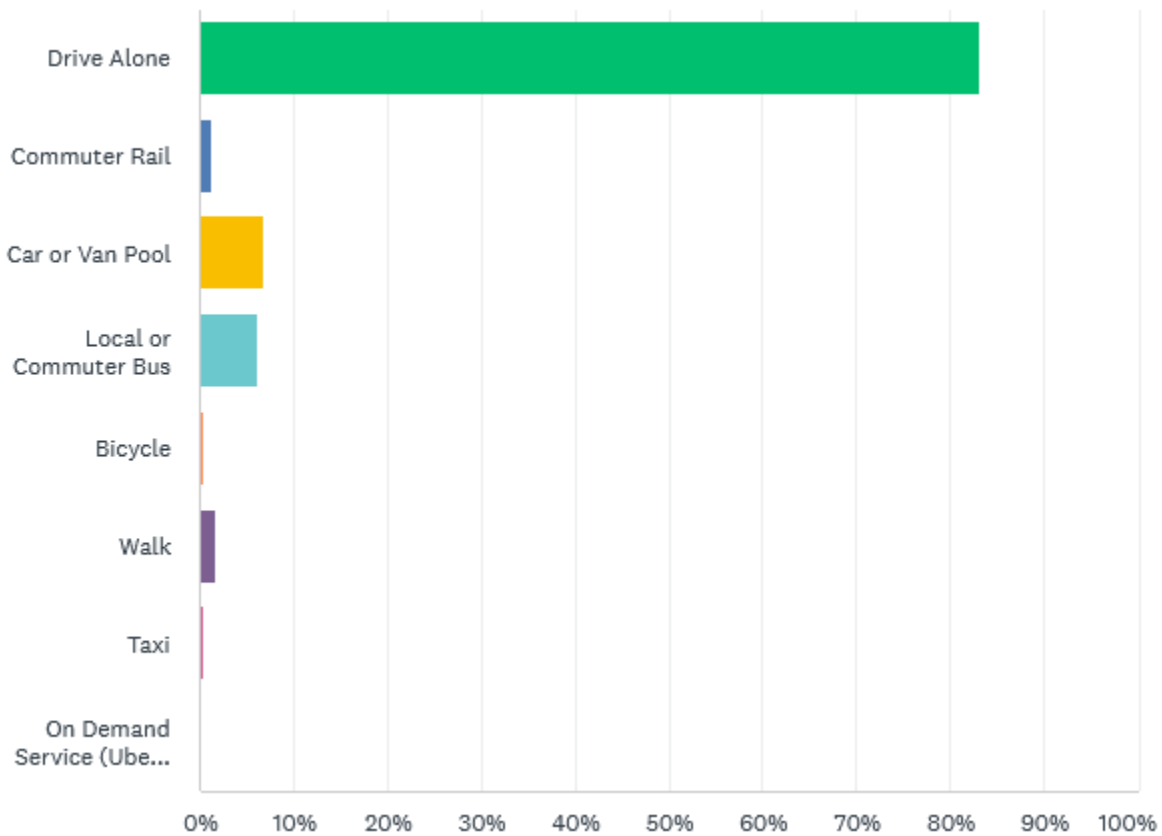
The majority of the respondents (202 or 67%) were members of the general public, seventy-one (71) or 23% were public employees, twenty-one (21) or 7% were Elected/Appointed Public Officials and nine (9) or 3% gave no response.

Question 4 - What is your primary method of travel in a week PRE-pandemic?



Drive Alone is the top choice for survey respondents (84%) followed by Local/Commuter Bus (7%), Car/Van Pool (5%), Walk (2%) and Commuter Rail (1%).

Question 5 - What is your primary method of travel in a week POST-pandemic?

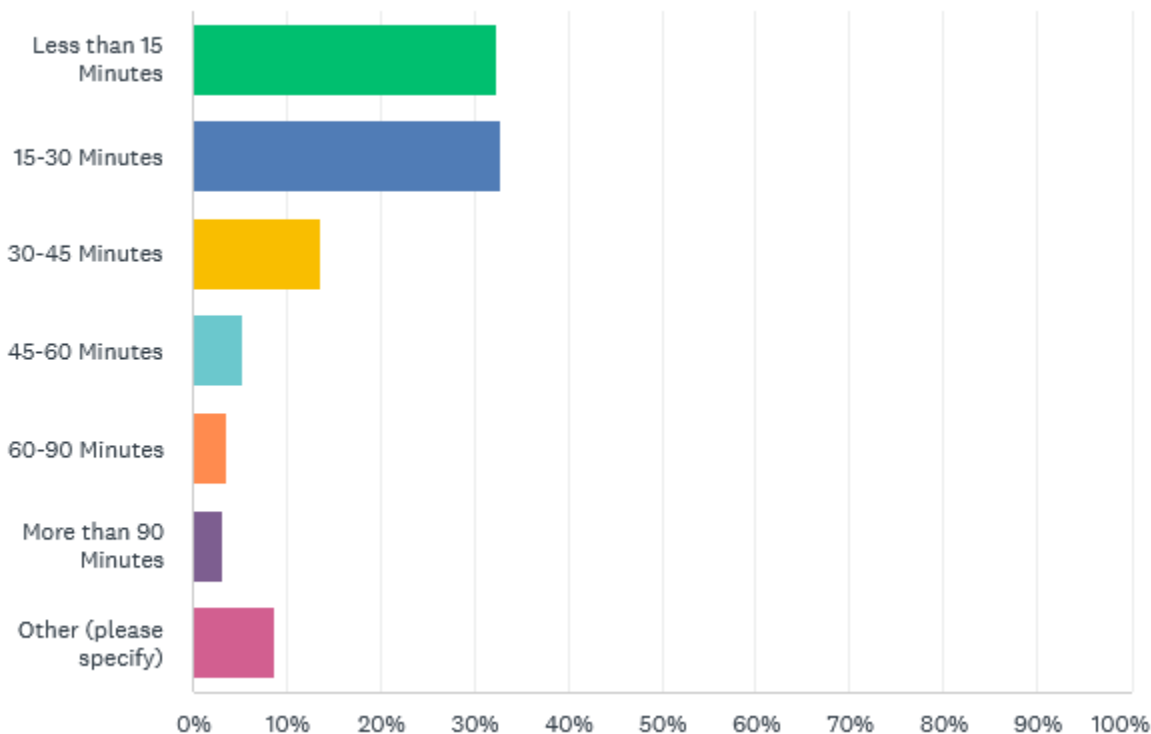


The travel mode appears to have not changed a lot pre and post pandemic. Drive Alone continues to be the top choice at 83% followed by Local/Commuter Bus (7%), Car/Van Pool (6%), Walk (2%), and Commuter Rail (1%).

Question 6 - What is your average length of commute one way PRE-pandemic?

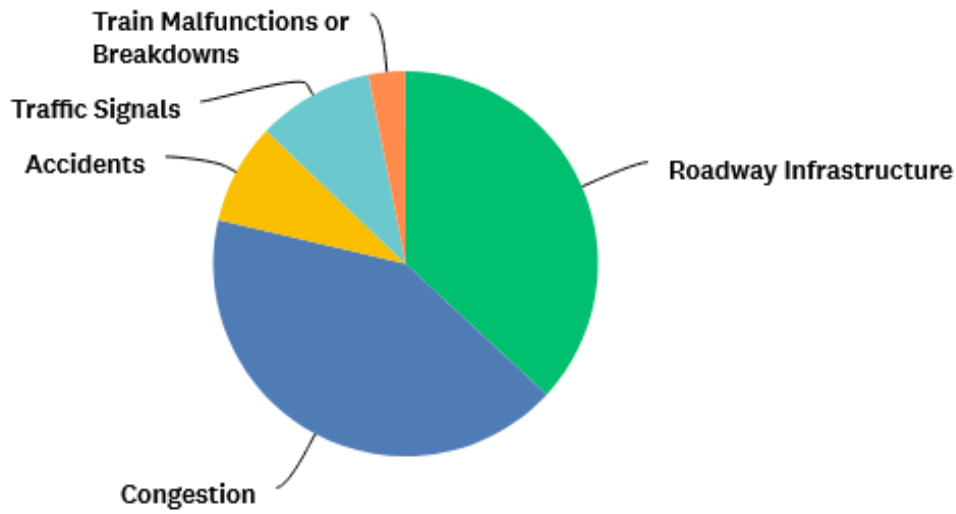
The responses are fairly spread out with 15-30 minutes being the top choice with 36%, followed by Less than 15 Minutes (27%), 30-45 Minutes (12%), 45-60 Minutes (7%), 60-90 Minutes (4%) and More than 90 Minutes (3%). The responses in the “other” category (11%) mainly included people who are retired or work from home.

Question 7 - What is your average length of commute one way POST-pandemic?



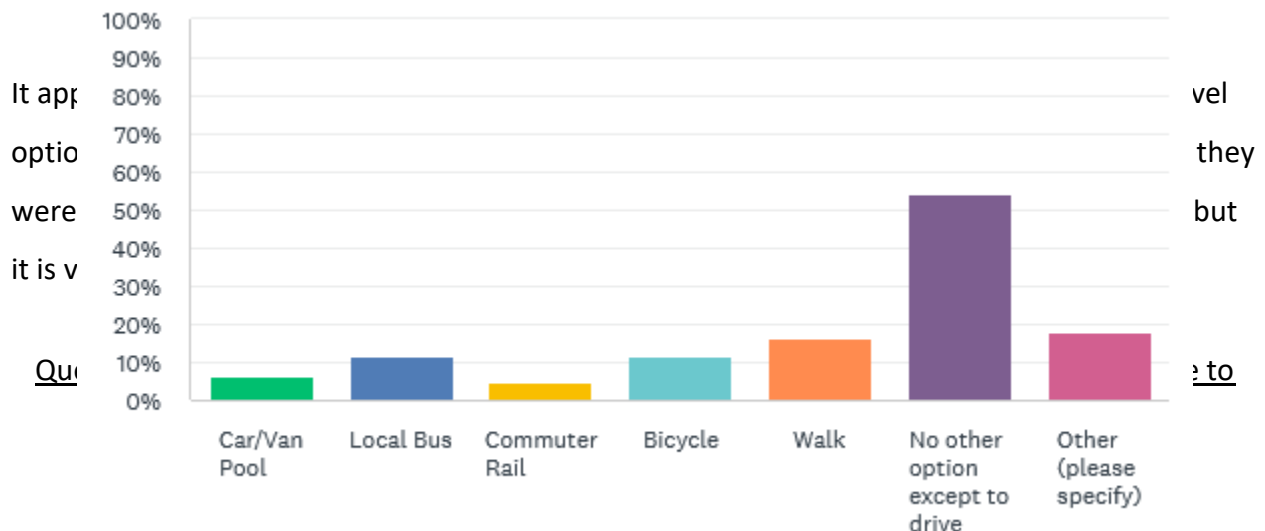
These responses were similar to the pre-pandemic question previously with the top choice still being 15-30 minutes (33%) which was a decrease from pre-pandemic (36%). Less than 15 minutes increased to 32% from 27%. The remaining answers were very similar to the pre-pandemic responses.

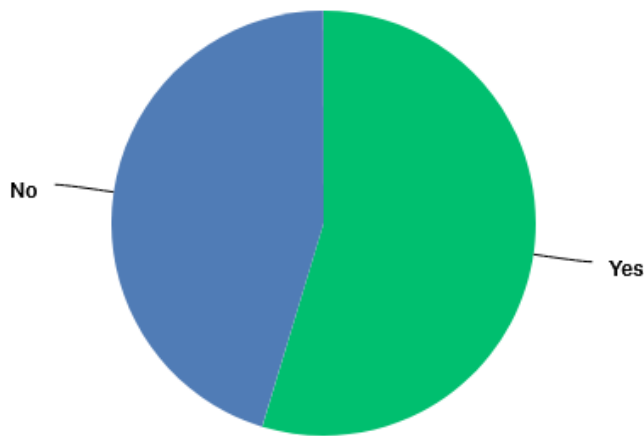
Question 8 – What is the major condition that impacts your commute the most?



Congestion (42%) and Roadway Infrastructure (37%) were the top responses for what has the highest impact on commutes. Accidents, Traffic Signals and train malfunctions seem to have a much lower impact. Of the written comments, weather, distracted drivers, and lack of public transportation options/times were the most mentioned. These responses continue to align with responses received from the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan survey.

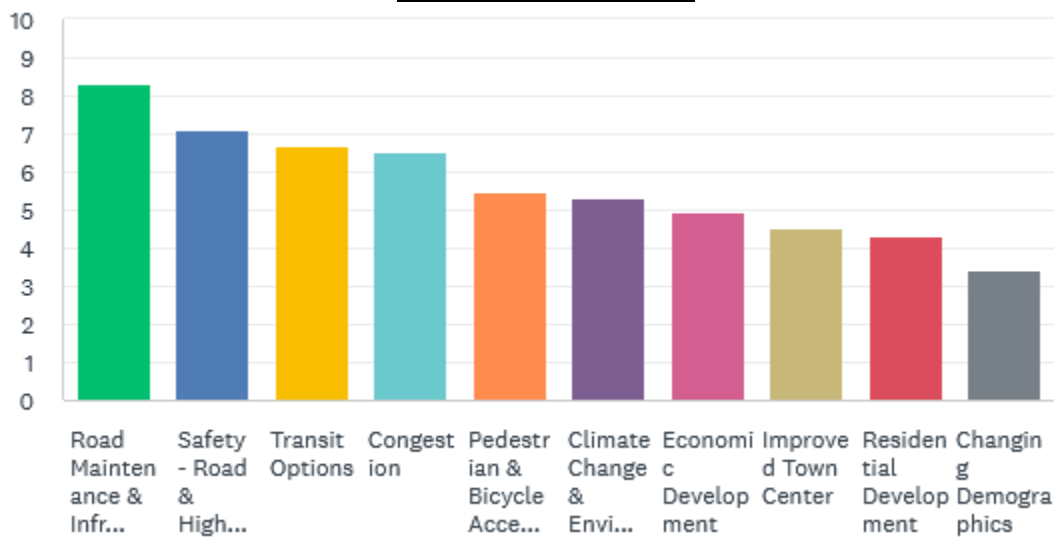
Question 9 - If you drive alone to your job, are there any other commuting options currently available to you? (select all that apply)





The responses for this question were almost evenly divided. Slightly more people (55%) indicated that they would use other transportation options if they were available as opposed to 45% responding that they would not.

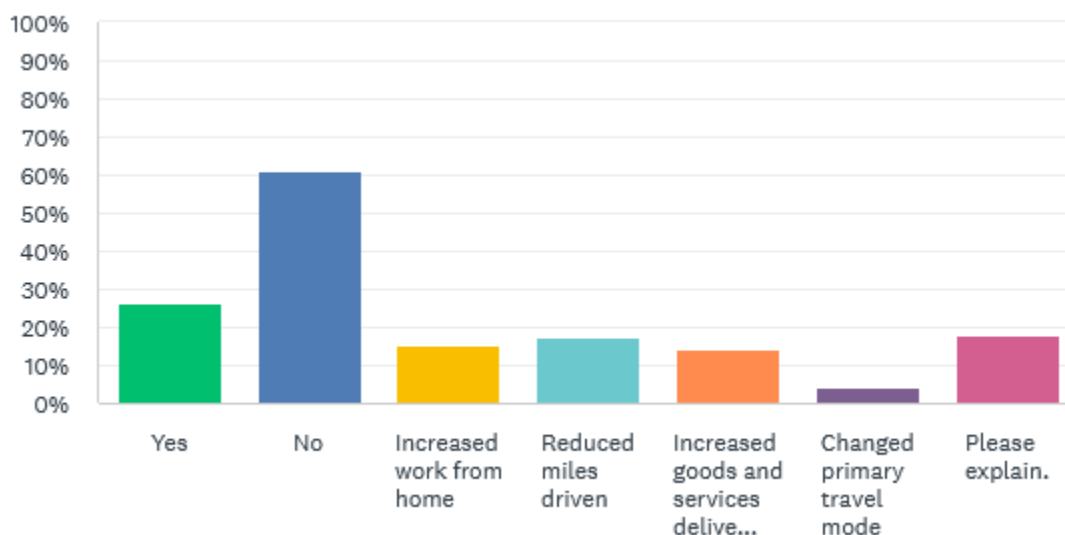
Question 11 - Rank in importance the following issues that need to be addressed in your travels over the next 25 years.



This question involved ranking the responses from most important to least important. The options that ranked the most important were Road Maintenance & Infrastructure, Safety – Road & Highway, Transit Options, and Congestions. Changing Demographics and Residential Development were ranked as the least important.

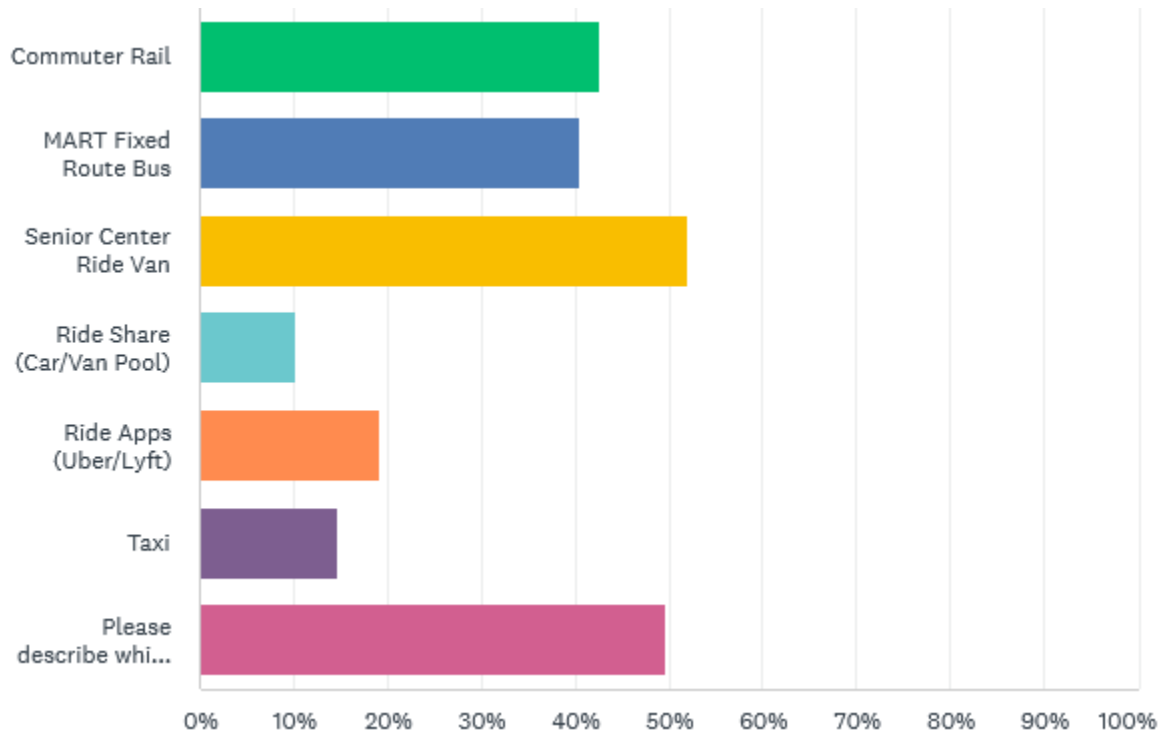
Question 12 - Are your travel habits significantly different compared to pre-pandemic times?

(select all that apply)



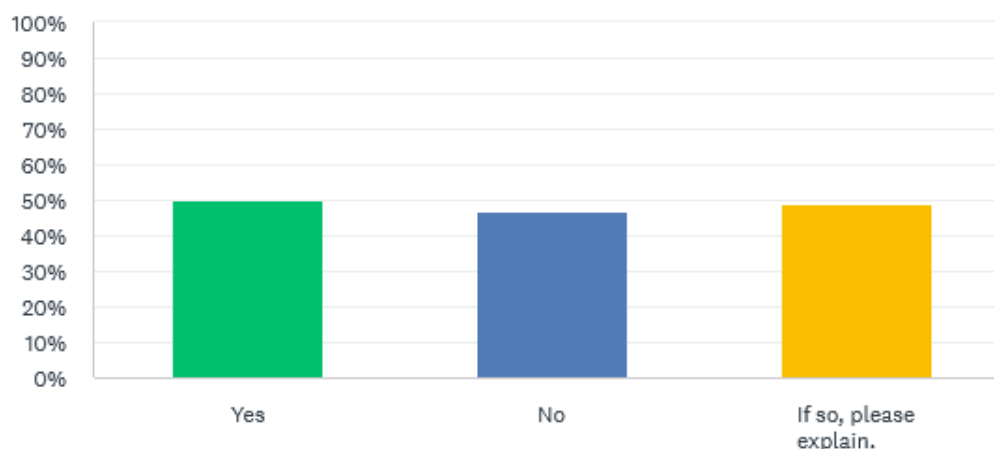
Most people (61%) responded that their travel habits have not changed since the pandemic. 17% said that they reduced their miles driven, 15% increased work from home and 14% increased goods and services delivered to home.

Question 13 - Are you aware of any of the following transportation services being offered in your community, and if so, do you utilize them? (select all that apply)



Over half (52%) of the survey respondents were aware of the Senior Center Ride Van followed by Commuter Rail (43%), and MART Fixed Route Bus (40%). Many people mentioned not needing transportation alternatives or that there was a need but nothing was available in their area of the region. Cost was also mentioned as a transportation barrier.

Question 14 - The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has set a goal to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050. Due to a large proportion of GHG emissions originating from the transportation sector, do you take any measures in your travel habits to reduce GHG?



This question was almost split 50/50 with the yes answers being slightly more. The written explanations indicated that most people try to consolidate trips, purchase hybrid vehicles, and walk/bike whenever possible.

Trends

Overall, the bulk of the survey respondents did not have a significant change in their transportation habits in relation to pre vs post pandemic and there were a lot of respondents who were seniors and/or retired so this may have impacted the outcome. Each community seems to have unique transportation needs. A lot of the survey responses focused on the need for more transportation infrastructure improvements, concerns with safety and improvements/increased transit options. It seems that transportation alternatives are still needed and the ones that currently exist may not meet the needs of most of the survey respondents. Based on feedback that we received from the Meeting in a Box forum, there are a lot of folks who use the senior center vans because they are a convenient door-to-door service. The issue is that there is not enough capacity to provide services to all residents.

Recommendations

Even though the outreach that was conducted for this Regional Transportation Plan was extensive, more attention could be considered to the special population groups in order to continue with the equity needs and goals of the Montachusett Region. It is also clear that further analysis should be done for transportation alternatives such as senior services and on demand transportation services.

Action Items

- Continue to include various special populations and groups in the outreach efforts to ensure that a broad range of needs are identified and met
- Continue to expand on the outreach efforts by further developing the outreach contact lists