



***SKAGIT  
TRANSIT***

**2018-2023 Strategic Plan  
September 2018**

# Table of Contents

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Section 1: Executive Summary.....	4
Section 2: Introduction.....	6
Section 3: Current Conditions.....	10
Section 4: Community Involvement.....	19
➤ Overview.....	19
➤ 2018 Rider Survey Results.....	20
➤ Public Participation Summary.....	33
➤ Six Key Priorities.....	33
➤ Economic Vitality.....	35
Section 5: Asset and Capital Planning.....	38
Section 6: Demographic Overview.....	42
Section 7: Fixed Route Service Plan.....	48
Section 8: Conclusion.....	53

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## **EXECUTIVE**

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A message from the Skagit Transit Executive Director,

Skagit Transit is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in our county by excelling in the efficient and effective provision of safe, accessible, reliable, and attractive public transportation services by courteous and professional employees. This Strategic Plan will serve as a guide for the service improvements that we make in the next few years. These changes will:

Enhance Safety- better routing will reduce the risk of accidents on a number of routes.

Improve Rural Service- there are a number of service improvements (increased frequency, new routing, and more weekend service) for a number of rural areas.

Improve Customer Service- we have listened to our riders and have targeted our efforts on what they requested in the 2018 rider survey. We will be focused on more Sunday service, more bus shelters, and improved connections.

We are going to enact as many of the low cost improvements in 2019 as we can. These changes will bring about increased productivity and improved connections throughout our system. It is our intention to continue to follow through on this plan in future years as funding allows.

Respectfully,

Dale O'Brien  
Executive Director

## **Section 1: Executive Summary**

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Skagit Transit has developed the 2018 Strategic Plan to create a list of service improvements that reflect the requests of our customers. Skagit County is made up of mix of rural and urban communities. The public transportation needs in those communities may vary, but what Skagit Transit offers is essential for many to maintain their quality of life. Skagit Transit's fixed route services enables the public to reach school, employment, and other essential needs.

Skagit Transit strives to increase economic vitality and enhancing quality of life in Washington through proper transportation investments. Our goal over the next five years is to maintain efficient fixed route service, a growing vanpool program, and ADA complementary transit service within three-quarters of a mile of local fixed route lines. In addition, within the five-year timeframe, Skagit Transit plans to modestly expand service into under-served and unserved urban areas to provide better access to employment centers, shopping areas, health facilities, housing areas, education facilities, and other existing bus, rail, and ferry systems for all persons irrespective of age, income or physical abilities.

The public outreach process included public meetings and a survey of our existing riders. Staff presented some

possible service improvements at the public meetings to gather public feedback about the type of service improvements being suggested. The rider survey had a list of 12 types of service improvements. Participants were asked to select the top three, but they did not have to rank them. The survey produced six key priorities that the strategic plan will focus on.

## Section 2: Introduction

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In 2017, a series of service changes were enacted that have had a significant and positive impact on Skagit Transit. Because of such improvements Skagit Transit began creating a strategic plan to connect the long-term goals of the community with service changes enacted by the agency. The goal of this Strategic Plan is to incorporate public input in developing strategies, goals, and service improvements that will continue to build upon our recent success.

The phrase “Service Improvement” can mean different things to different people and does not always mean a change to a bus route. Improved customer service, staff training, and added bus shelters are great examples of service improvements that are not a service change. A service change is classified as when a bus route either alters its routing or schedule. While it is not possible to anticipate every variation in circumstances that may cause a service change, a Strategic Plan can provide consistent guidance for how a transit agency can adjust its service to reach its long-term goals.

Based upon the public feedback, Skagit Transit has developed a list of prioritized projects. This list of projects will serve as the guide for the service improvements going forward. Projects will be enacted as funding becomes available.

## Mission Statement

To enhance the quality of life in our service area by excelling the efficient and effective provision of safe, accessible, reliable and attractive public transportation services by courteous and professional employees.

## Organizational Values

**Safety:** We commit to ensure that our employees, passengers and the general public's safety are always our first consideration.

**Service Excellence:** We commit to provide safe, clean, reliable, on-time, courteous service for our clients and customers.

**Workforce Development:** We commit to make Skagit Transit a learning organization that attracts, develops, motivates and retains a world class workforce.

**Fiscal Responsibility:** We commit to manage every tax payer and customer-generated dollar as if it were coming from our own pocket.

**Innovation and Technology:** We commit to actively participate in identifying best practices for continuous improvement.



**Sustainability:** We commit to reduce, re-use and recycle all internal resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Integrity:** We commit to rely on the professional ethics and honesty of every Skagit Transit employee.

**Teamwork:** We commit to actively blend our individual talents to achieve world-class performance and service.

## Governance

A nine-member board of directors governs Skagit Transit. Currently, the board is made up of elected officials representing Skagit County, Anacortes, Burlington, Mount Vernon, Sedro Woolley, and other smaller cities, as well as, towns. The team of nine also includes a tenth non-voting position. This position is titled Labor Representative to the Board of Directors.

## Skagit Transit's 2018 Board of Directors

- Mayor of Mount Vernon, Jill Boundreau
- Skagit County Commissioner, Kenneth Dahlstedt (Board Chairman)
- Skagit County Commissioner, Lisa Janicki
- Mayor of Burlington, Steve Sexton
- Skagit County Commissioner, Ron Wesen
- Mayor of Sedro-Woolley, Julia Johnson
- Mayor of Anacortes, Laurie Gere (Vice-Chair)
- Burlington City Council Member, Rick DeGloria

- Mount Vernon City Council Member, Mary Hudson

## Skagit Transit Overview

Skagit Transit serves a number of destinations both inside and outside of Skagit County. Local service is provided to Anacortes, La Conner, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, Mount Vernon, and Concrete as well as many rural areas. Skagit Transit provides regional connections in partnership with Everett Transit, Island Transit, and Whatcom Transit. The partnership has increased our residents' ability to reach Everett, Bellingham, and Island County.

As of 2018, Skagit Transit has three modes of transportation, which include fixed route, Paratransit, and vanpool. Fixed route is broken down between urban, commuter, and rural routes through the county. Paratransit is a secondary option for less able bodies and eligible riders must schedule in advance. Vanpool is a great option for co-workers or for people who work near one another. A group can meet up at one of Skagit Transit's stations or P&R's and carpool to their destination together, rather than drive single occupant vehicles.

## Section 3: Current Conditions

### Fixed Route

Skagit Transit's fixed route service includes local routes, and commuter routes. Fixed route service is offered along a pattern of streets or routes, operating on a set schedule of pulses from Skagit Station, Chuckanut Park and Ride, March's Point Park and Ride, and other designated transfer locations including Skagit Valley College, 10th Street and Q Avenue in Anacortes, as well as, the Sedro-Woolley Park and Ride. On fixed route lines the fare prices range by pass type. The following chart is Skagit Transit's current fare prices listed by pass type.

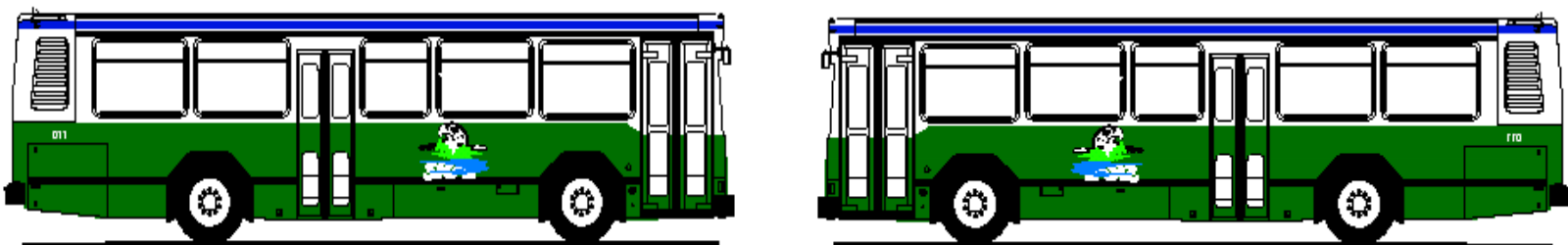
	Regular	Youth	Reduced
Standard Fare (Local)	\$1.00	\$0.50	\$0.50
One-Day Pass (Local)	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
31-Day Pass (Local)	\$25.00	\$12.50	\$12.50
County Connector - Routes 80X and 90X	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
County Connector - Route 80X and 90X within One County	\$1.00	\$0.50	\$0.50
Skagit-Whatcom Day Pass (80X and Local WTA and ST Routes)	\$6.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
County Connector 31-Day Pass - Routes 80X, 90X, and all local routes within the WTA and Skagit Transit systems	\$50.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Transfer Tickets	Valid for 90 minutes in any direction on local buses only. Transfer tickets are not valid on the 80X and 90X.		

Figure 3-1: 2018 Fare Prices

In 2018, there are 19 fixed routes, including six local urban routes, three commuter routes and six rural routes. With all routes combined, Skagit Transit covers 322 miles of streets, roads, and highways.

Local fixed routes operated between 5 and 7 days per week. Commuter routes operate 7 days per week. Rural routes operate between 1 and 6 days per week. Fixed Route operating hours run from 6 AM to 9 PM on weekdays and 7:30 AM to 6 PM on weekends.

All Skagit Transit buses are accessible to persons with ADA requirements. Each bus can hold 2 mobility devices such as wheelchairs or scooters. Plus all fixed route buses have bike racks.



Commuter routes are a special category of fixed route service. In 2017, Skagit Transit operated three commuter bus routes, the 80X making express trips between Mount Vernon and Bellingham, the 90X making express trips between Mount Vernon and Everett, and the 40X making express trips between Anacortes and Mount Vernon.

Commuter bus schedules feature longer stretches of closed-door service and limited stops. Commuter routes also feature peak commute hour scheduling. Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) and Skagit Transit jointly operate the 80X.

	2016	2017	2018	2017-2018 % Change
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	698,182	667,890	726,000	8.7%
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	1,192,251	1,266,296	1,306,000	3.1%
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	67,816	71,103	77,000	8.3%

*Figure 3-2: 2016-2018 Projections Fixed Route Operating Statistics*

## Paratransit Service

Skagit Transit's specialized Paratransit service is comparable to its fixed route bus service. The agency's Paratransit pre-scheduled service is designed for people who are unable to get to the nearest bus stop or use a fixed-route bus. To become a Skagit Transit Paratransit rider, one must go through an eligibility application and approval process. The eligible clients are required to call in advance of the trip and inform Skagit Transit of the origin, destination, and time of the trip. Skagit Transit's

Paratransit or ADA transit operates during the same hours as fixed route and serves  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of fixed route.

	2016	2017	2018	2017 to 2018 % Change
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	64,492	63,977	68,000	6.0%
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	333,240	341,321	364,000	6.4%
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	30,046	31,044	33,000	6.1%

*Figure 3-3: 2016-2018 Projections Paratransit Operating Statistics*

## Vanpool Service

Skagit Transit currently has 47 active vans. Each van has a vanpool group of 5 to 15 individuals with a driver provided from within the vanpool group. All vanpool trips must start or end their trip in Skagit County. Groups pay a monthly fee and a per mile charge. Skagit Transit maintains the vehicles and provides the fuel and insurance. In 2017, the cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each vanpool passenger totaled 4,905,811 miles. By far the largest number of vanpool users, 60%, are traveling to Snohomish County as Boeing employees.

	2016	2017	2018 Est.	2017 to 2018 % Change
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	118,028	108,100	110,000	1.7%
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	1,021,395	981,440	1,100,000	11.3%
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	27,976	26,761	27,000	0.8%

*Figure 3-4: 2016-2018 Projections Vanpool Operating Statistics*



## Local Urban Areas

**Anacortes, WA.** Skagit Transit has built a Park and Ride located near Anacortes off Highway 20 at Christianson Rd. The facility is owned by Skagit Transit and the land is leased through a long term lease between Skagit Transit and Shell Oil Products, Inc. The Route 410 provides direct service in and out of Anacortes. Route 410 connects with the 40X at March's Point every trip to allow transfers. The Route 409 circulates thru the downtown region. Skagit Transit also provides connections with other public transportation providers such as Island Transit. The Route 410 provides serve directly to the Anacortes Ferry Terminal.





**Burlington, WA.** Burlington acts as one of Skagit Transit's hubs for fixed route services. The Chuckanut Park and Ride built in 2011 has served as a start or stop point for multiple routes. In Burlington there are currently seven routes that start or pass through the Chuckanut Station. The routes include the 80X, 90X, 185, 195, 208, 300, and the 513. Chuckanut P&R also serves as one of the many meeting points for Skagit Transit's vanpool program.



**Mount Vernon, WA.** Mount Vernon is the Central Hub for all of Skagit Transit. Skagit Station is the start and end point for the majority of Skagit Transit's fixed route services. Skagit Transit Customer Service is located in the lobby. From Skagit Station, one can travel to all the other cities and towns in Skagit County as well as Bellingham in Whatcom County and Everett in Snohomish County. Skagit Station is also a stopping point for Greyhound which is a long distant bus that travels through North America. Another mode of transportation out of Skagit Station is Amtrak.





**Sedro-Woolley, WA.** Skagit Transit operates four fixed route buses out of Sedro-Woolley: Route 300, 305, 717, and 750. The Route 300 connects Sedro-Woolley to Burlington and also performs a loop through Sedro-Woolley. The Route 305 is a direct connection to Skagit Station in Mount Vernon and serves as a way to connect the public with buses that can transport them south of Skagit County. The route 717 and 750 provide service to communities in the eastern portion of Skagit County mostly along the Skagit River, such as Lyman, Hamilton, Concrete, and Marblemount.



## Section 4: Community Involvement

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### Overview

Skagit Transit's Strategic Plan incorporated an extensive public outreach process. This is indicative of the agency's goal to have this plan be a reflection of the public's wants and needs. The agency has created different ways to give the public a voice about improvements for Skagit Transit's services. Skagit Transit uses three methods to hear what the public has to say. In-person rider surveys, public meetings, and an online commenting period.

- **Rider Survey**

- Skagit Transit's planning and outreach team designed a survey that would help the agency create service improvements for fixed and commuter routes.
- Staff and volunteers were out in public over a 4 day period
- Over 350 people filled out the survey and the results were compiled and reviewed.
- After going through the surveys, the top six requested service improvements were identified and the agency was ready to design changes that met those needs.

- **Initial Public Meetings**

- After Skagit Transit surveyed their riders and was able to prioritize what the most requested improvements were, the next step was to have

public meetings to further the agency's understanding of what the public wants.

- Public meetings were held in Concrete, Sedro-Woolley, Mount Vernon, and Anacortes. Skagit Transit staff hosted the meetings and displayed proposed service changes that reflect some of the requests from the surveys.
- A stakeholder specific meeting was held to solicit feedback from local government agencies and non-profits.

- **Plan Adoption Process**

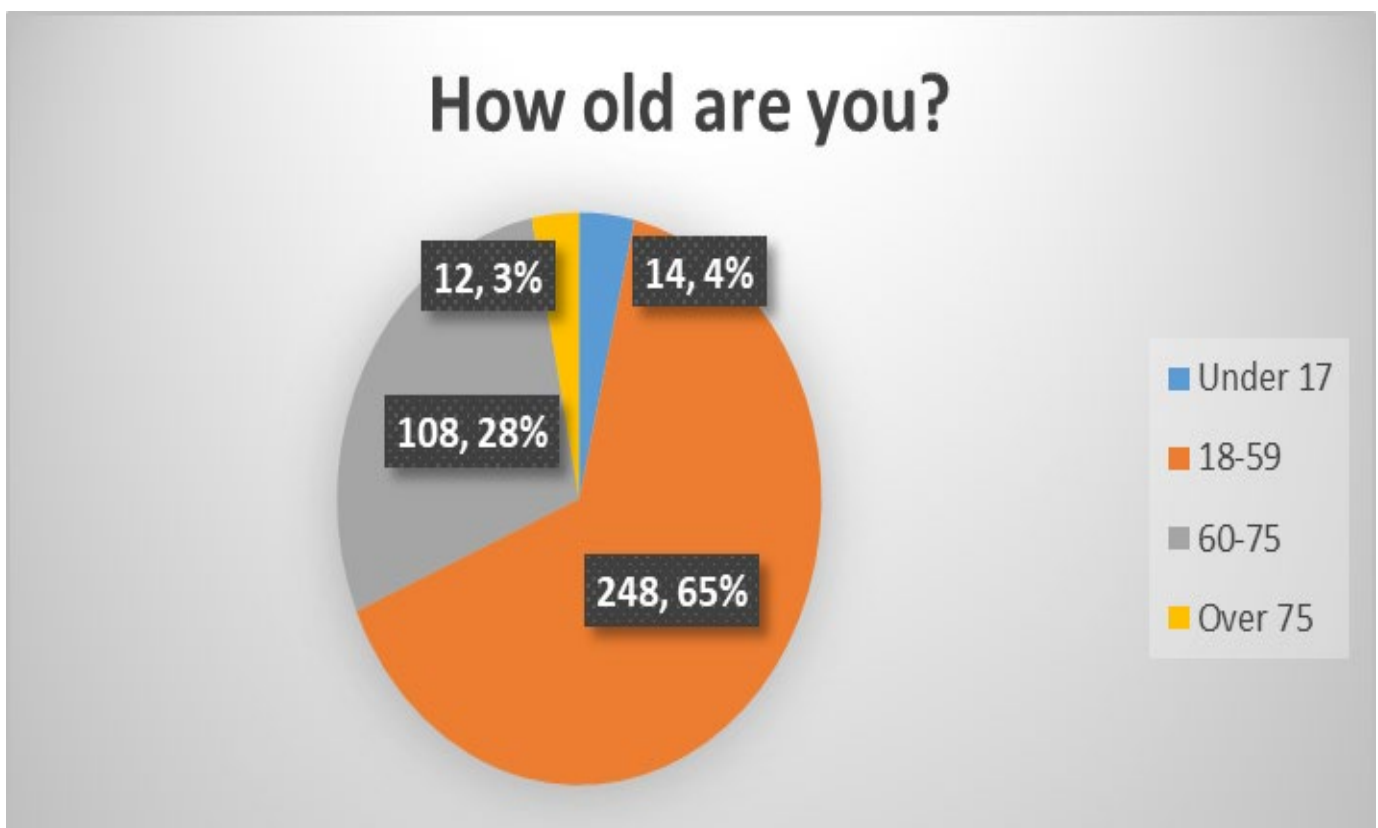
- The Strategic Plan will be presented in draft form at the September Board of Directors meeting and will be open for public comment for 30 days before being considered for adoption.
- Skagit Transit staff will extend an offer to the jurisdictions served to attend city council or other meetings to present the plan.

## 2018 Rider Survey Results

Skagit Transit developed a 12 question survey to find out where, when, and why people utilize Skagit Transit. The survey also worked as a tool to find out the public wants for future changes and gave the agency an idea of who is riding the bus. The following were the main findings:

**Ridership Trends and Travel Demand:** We asked our riders some questions about when, how, and why they use transit.

*Figure 4-1: 2018 Survey Results*

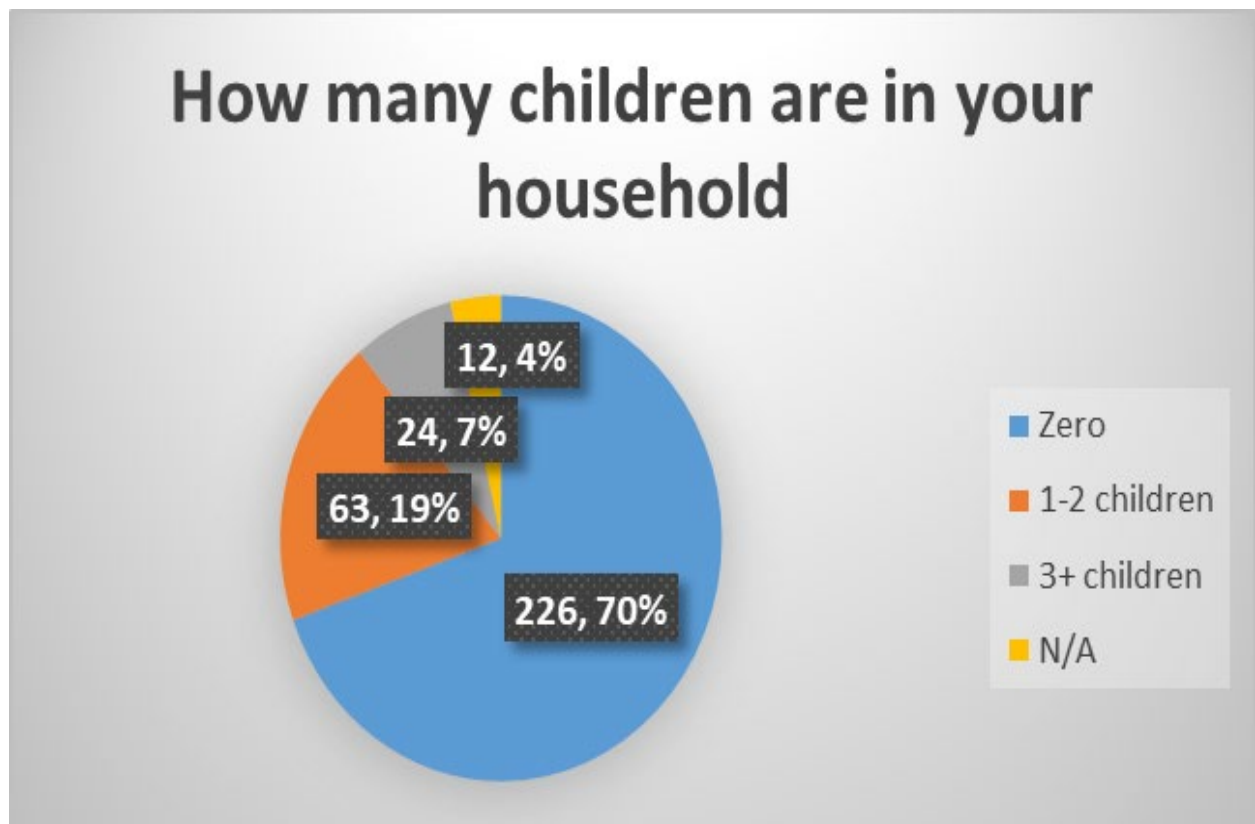


- Majority of Skagit Transit's riders fall between the age of 18 and 59 years of age.

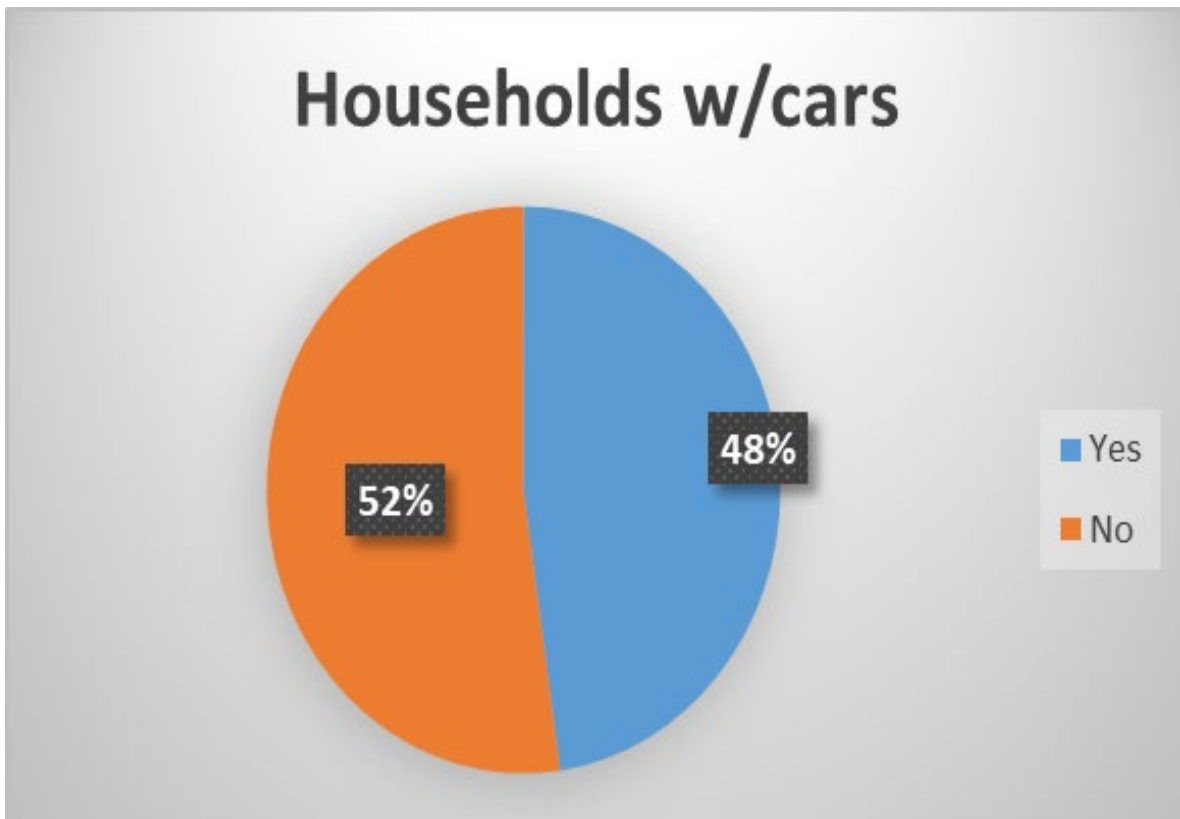


- Majority of Skagit Transit's riders do not have children living with them.

*Figure 4-2: 2018 Survey Results*



- Only about half of the people surveyed own or have a car available to them.



*Figure 4-3: 2018 Survey Results*



- The majority of people surveyed ride the bus either every day or at least 5-10 times a week.
- 41% of respondents are infrequent riders who could lead to ridership growth. This segment should be targeted with marketing as it could lead to them becoming frequent riders.

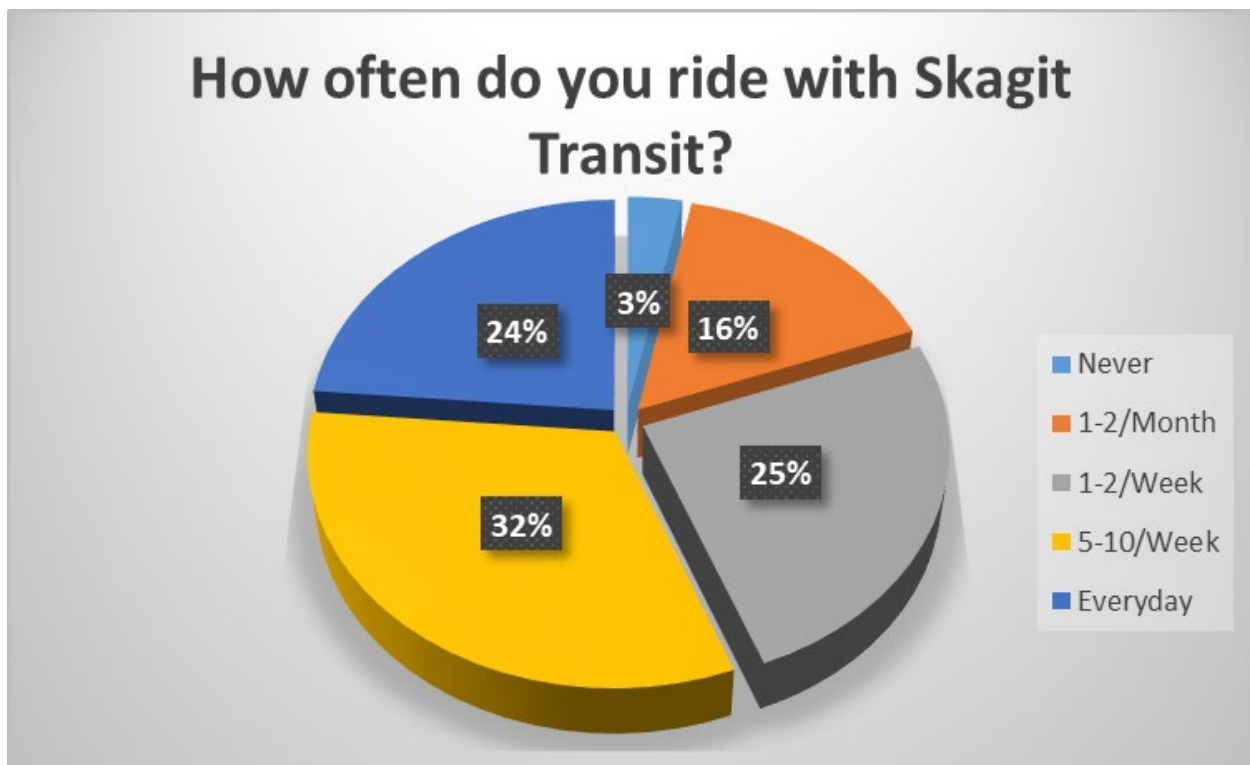


Figure 4-4: 2018 Survey Results

- More than half of the people who took the survey said that they do not consider themselves disabled.

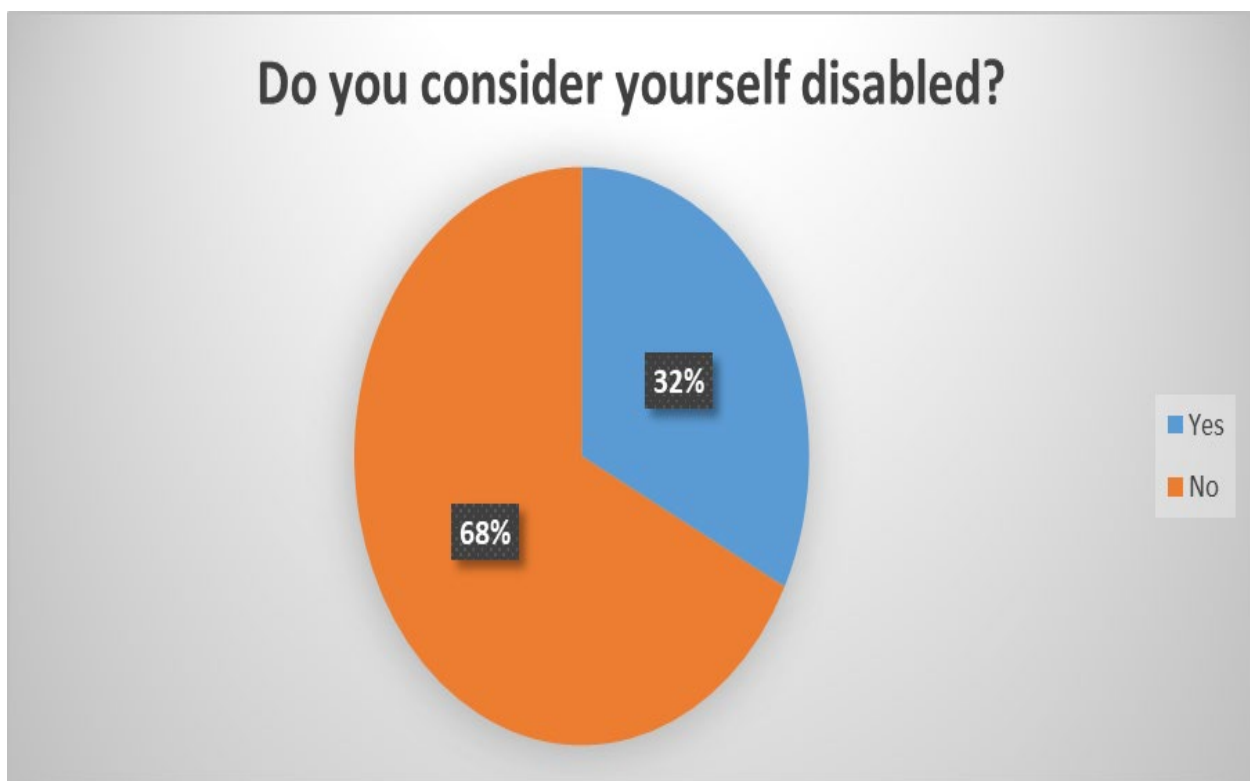
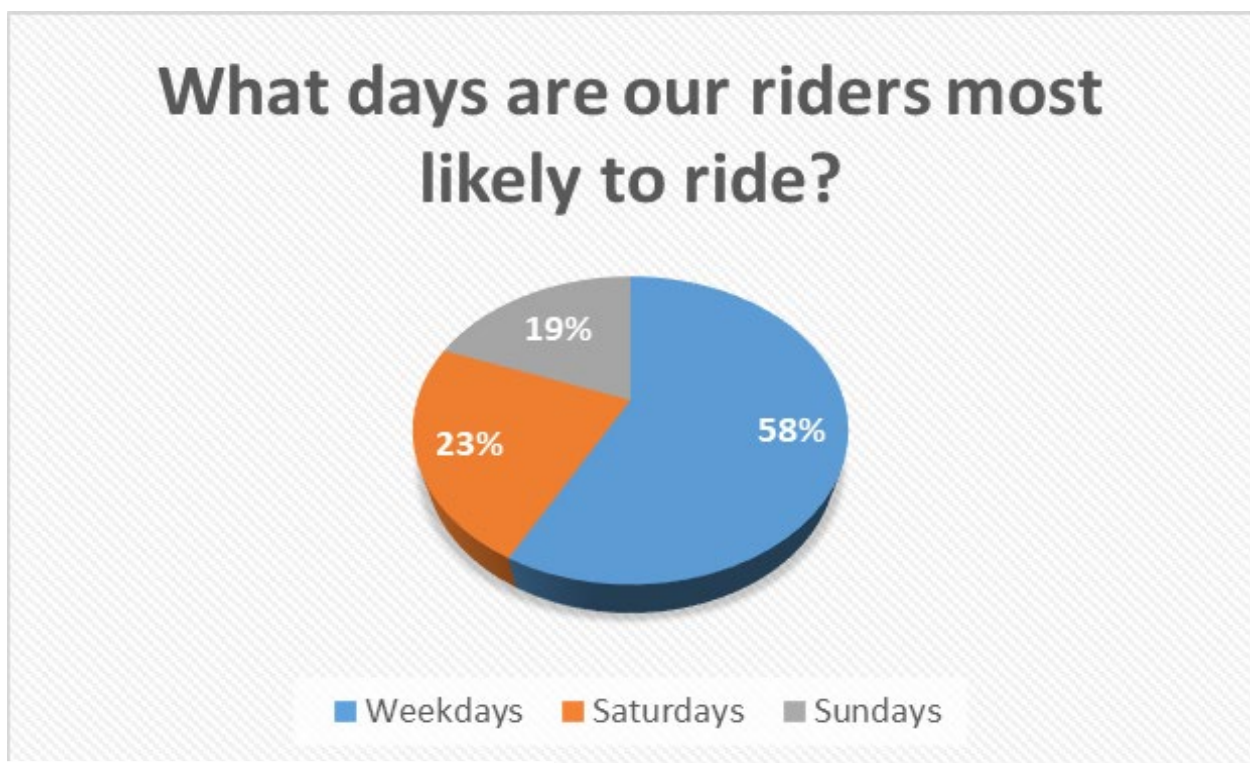


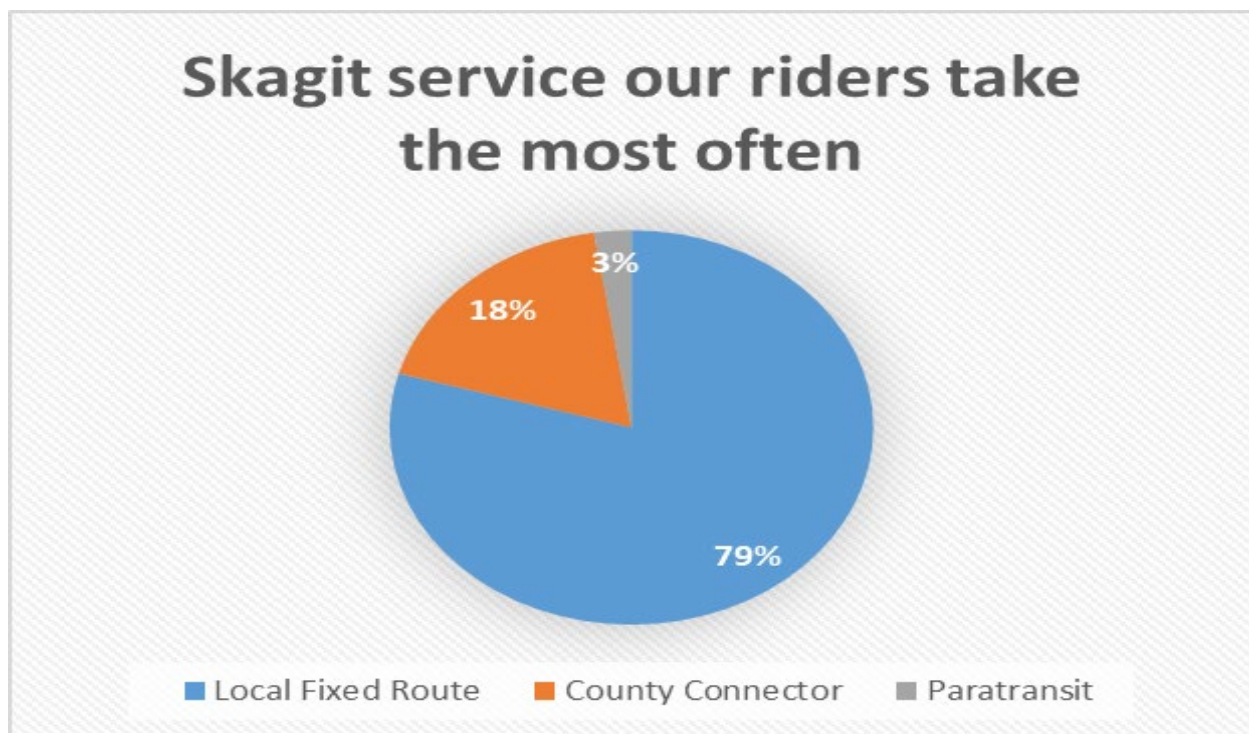
Figure 4-5: 2018 Survey Results

- According to the survey, Weekdays are the most popular days for people to take the bus.



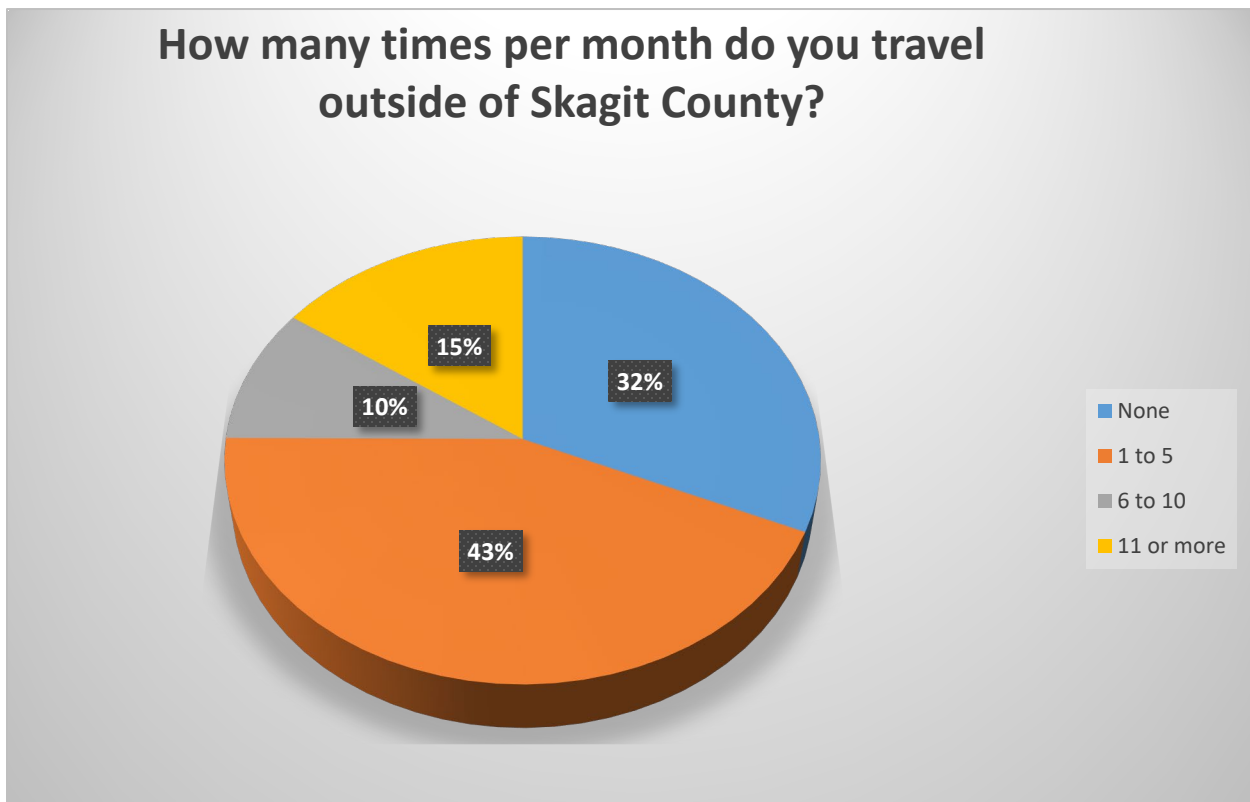
*Figure 4-6: 2018 Survey Results*

- Local Fixed Route is Skagit Transit's most popular mode of transportation.



*Figure 4-7: 2018 Survey Results*

- Majority of the people who participated in the survey said that they leave the county at least 1-5 times a month.



*Figure 4-8: 2018 Survey Results*

## Most Important Qualities

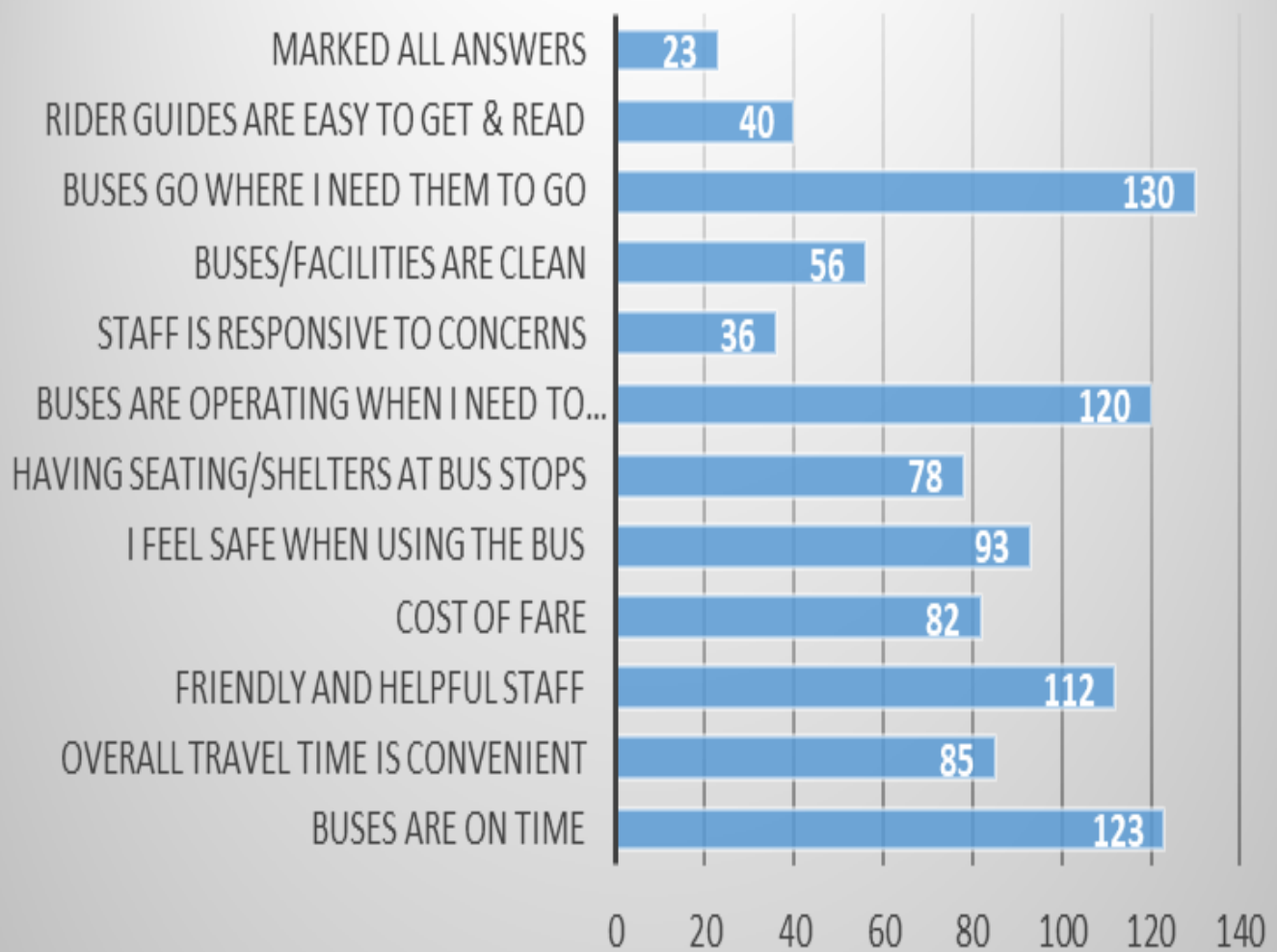


Figure 4-9: 2018 Survey Results

- Riders checked all of the reasons that they ride the bus.
- Reinforces the idea that our system needs to serve a variety of needs.

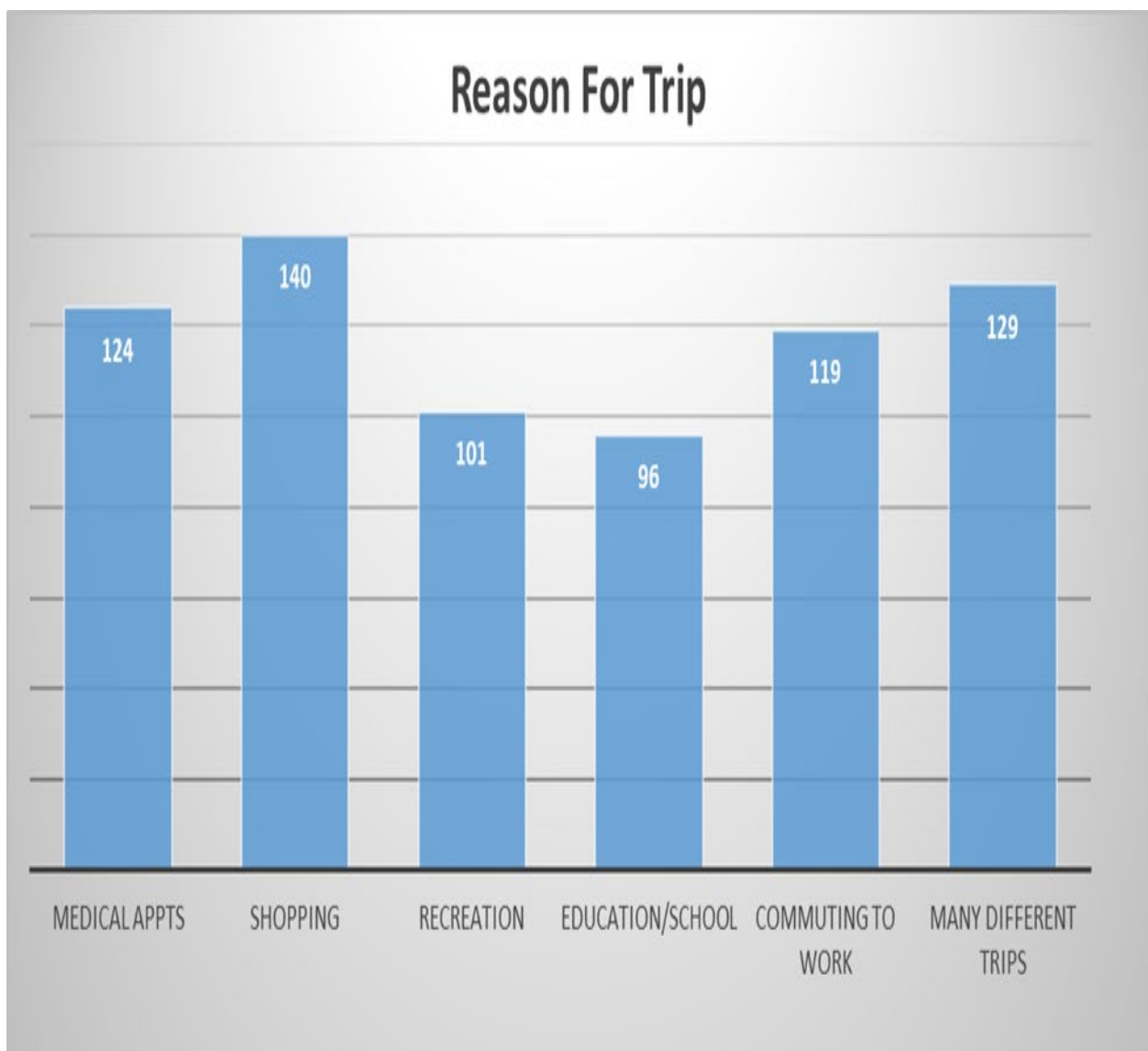


Figure 4-10: 2018 Survey Results

- **Satisfaction:** We asked the riders a series of questions about how satisfied they are and to choose the 3 most important factors about their choice to ride transit. They were not told to rank their choices.

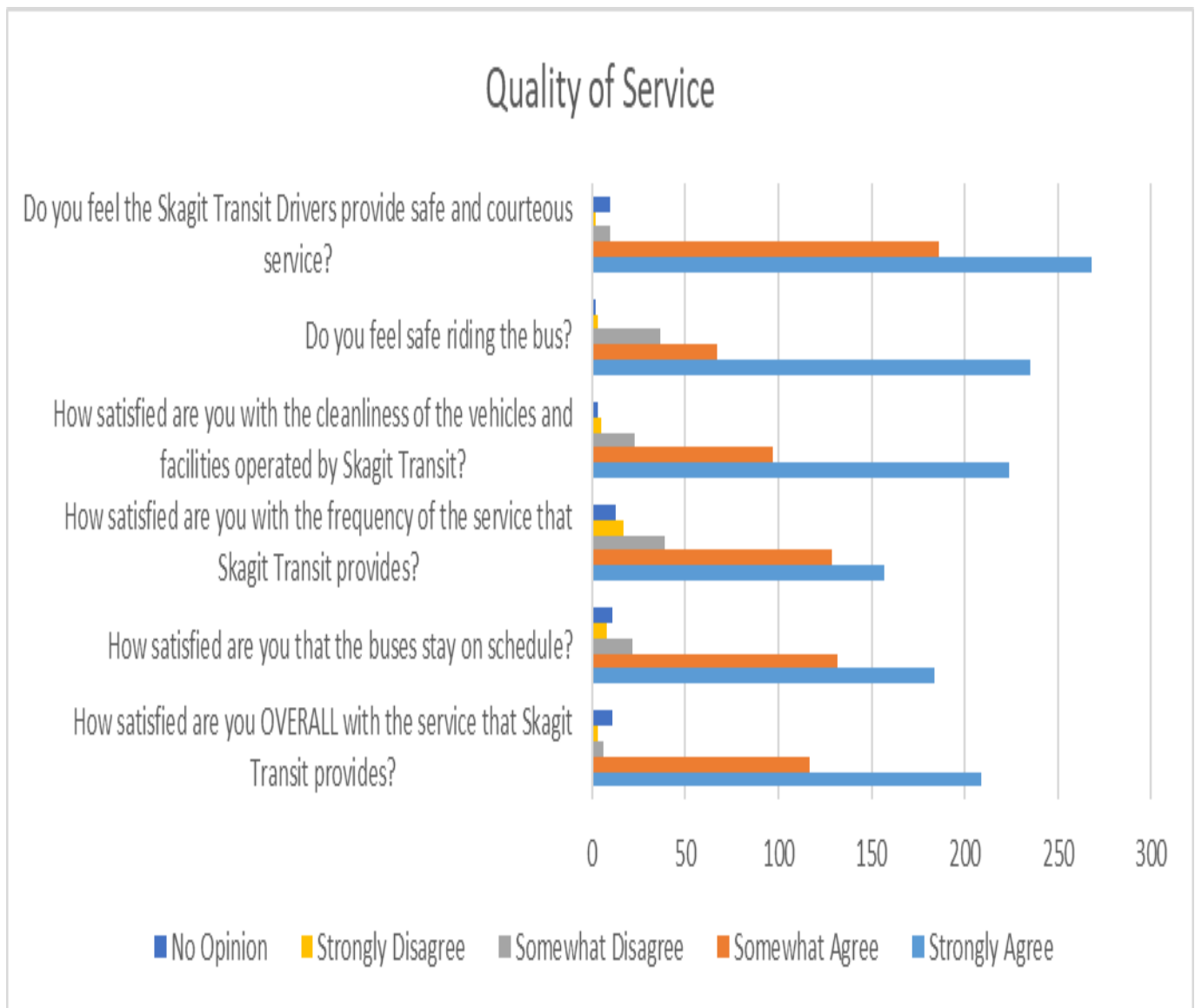


Figure 4-11: 2018 Survey Results



- **Service Improvements:** We asked the riders what the 3 things Skagit Transit should focus on improving. They did not rank their choices.

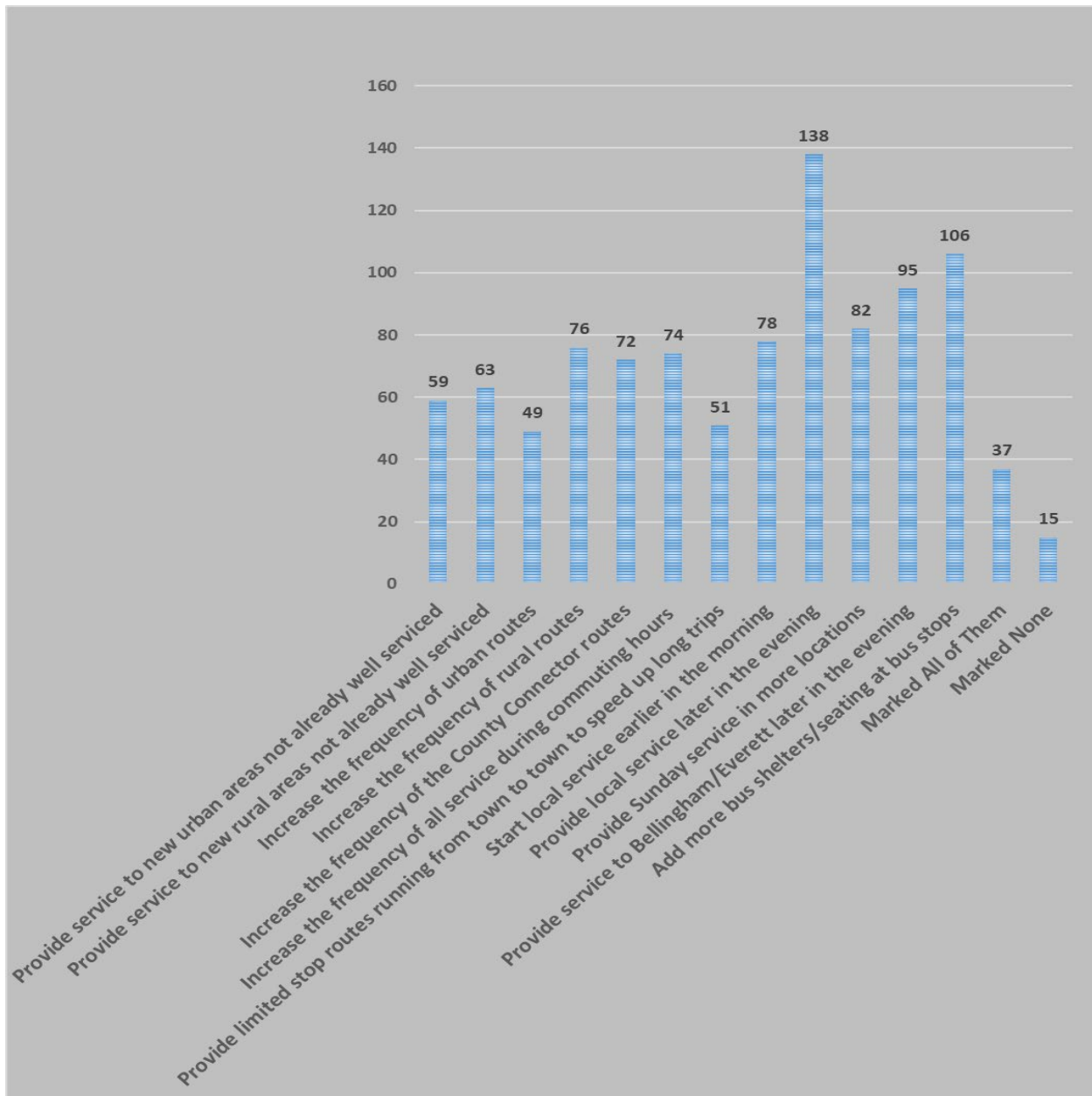


Figure 4-12: 2018 Survey Results

## Public Participation Summary

Skagit Transit has a robust public involvement process that resulted in significant public feedback. This involved in person surveys, public meetings throughout the region, a stakeholders meeting for public and non-profit agency staff as well as Board of Directors meetings. The rider survey provided an initial set of priorities for service improvements that were confirmed in the feedback received at the public meetings.

1. Provide local service later in the evening
2. Add more bus shelters/seating
3. Provide service to Bellingham/Everett later in the evening
4. Provide Sunday service in more locations
5. Start local service earlier in the morning
6. Increase the frequency of the rural routes

## Six Key Priorities:

**Provide local service later in the evening.** This would provide later service inside of Skagit County and could be helpful to many residents such as those in the service sector who may head home after working through the dinner hour. Other residents would have more time to

accomplish personal errands after the regular workday ends at 5PM.

**Add more bus shelters/seating.** Within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile service range of Skagit Transit's fixed route services, about 30% of the people are seniors or are disabled in some way. The most frequent service offered by Skagit Transit is 30 minutes, which means it is not uncommon for riders to wait 15 minutes or more for a bus. Seating at a bus stop can make it practical for our most vulnerable citizens to use the bus. Besides citizens who could use a bench or seat while waiting at the bus stop, shelters provide protection from the weather which is helpful in areas with a long rainy season.

**Provide service to Bellingham/Everett later in the evening.** Both the 80X and 90X routes have shown a steady increase in ridership since the expansion last fall. Many riders on these routes are commuting to work or school both of which can lead to someone commuting later in the evening.

**Provide Sunday Service in more locations.** Feedback that Skagit Transit has heard from surveys, community meetings, and online commenting, is that people would like to take public transportation on Sundays. However,

Skagit Transit has limited service on Sundays even compared to the services offered on Saturday.

**Start local service earlier in the morning.** Residents of Skagit County can take the bus to and from work or school. However, with service starting at 6AM, it can be hard to make it to their destinations on time especially if their work starts before 8AM. For instance, a Sedro Woolley resident commuting by bus cannot get to Skagit Station until 7:15 and that is only if someone can take them to the Sedro Woolley Park & Ride by car. Anacortes residents taking the first bus from the west would get to Skagit Station at 7:30AM.

**Increase the frequency of the rural routes.** Current rural services do not run as frequent as urban fixed route services because of low ridership. Residents from rural areas have asked for increased frequency as a bus that comes once every three hours is not convenient enough to use. However, some rural routes have had a steady increase in ridership and Skagit Transit is seeking grant funding to increase the frequency of select routes.

## **Economic Vitality**

Skagit Transit strives to provide a service that the public can rely on for all their transportation needs. It is Skagit

Transit's goal to give people the mobility options they need to transport them to and from work. The agency has four main public transportation facilities in Skagit County. The public has the ability to walk, drive, or bus to each facility. The goal of the stations or Park & Rides is to connect people to their jobs and core urban areas. Below is the number of jobs people can access in one hour by taking the bus from one of the four public transportation facilities. The data is collected from Remix and is based upon 1 hour of travel time from these locations at 7AM.

**Sedro Woolley Park & Ride:** From Sedro-Woolley P&R you can travel as far north as the Job Corps Center. To the south you can travel to Southern Burlington. In 60 minutes from Sedro Woolley P&R, a rider can access a total of 5,935 jobs and even at 7AM in the morning. A travel time of just 30 minute from the P&R can help her access almost 2000 jobs. The Plan purposes an increase in frequency from routes out of Sedro-Woolley, meaning that the number of jobs and distance a rider would be able to travel in 60 minutes will increase.

**March's Point Park & Ride:** From March's Point riders can travel north as far as Oaks Ave. and Harborview or to the south to Skagit Station. Just in 30 minutes of March's Point, a rider can reach over 500 jobs. The Strategic Plan purposes frequency increases to the 410 and the 40X. With those increases, the number of jobs will increase and a rider will be able to travel a further distance in the 60 minute time frame.

**Chuckanut Park & Ride:** From Chuckanut P&R riders can travel north as far as Sedro-Woolley P&R and south as far as South Mount Vernon P&R. In just 60 minutes you can reach 21,839 jobs. Even in 30 minutes riders starting here can get to over 3,500 jobs in the County. The changes proposed by the strategic plan will have a positive effect on the number of jobs a rider can get to in under an hour.

**Skagit Station:** From Skagit Station a rider can travel as far north as Old Highway 99 and County Shop Lane. To the south, riders can go all the way to the South Mount Vernon P&R. In just 60 minutes, a rider can get to over 22,000 jobs and in just 30 minutes they could reach over 8,000. Skagit Station is the main hub of Skagit Transit's services and as the connections improve riders will be able to reach more job opportunities.

## Section 5: Asset and Capital Planning

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### Fleet Expansion and Replacement

Maintaining Skagit Transit's fleet of vehicles for revenue service is the number one priority whether those vehicles are for fixed route, paratransit, or vanpool. The agency places a high emphasis on the need to maintain the current fleet and facilities. Below is Skagit Transit's plan to replace and expand the fleet as the agency grows over the next 5 years.

### Current Fleet Status

Skagit Transit's main asset is the existing fleet. It is Skagit's job to replace the existing fleet as buses age overtime. The strategic plan allows for timely replacement and a consistent level of service. Vehicles are replaced in accordance with the applicable Federal guidelines for the useful life of these assets to maintain a state of good repair. The chart below is the agencies five year projections for fleet replacements. The chart shows that Skagit Transit will be replacing a multitude of fixed route coaches, vans, and paratransit vehicles over the next 5 years. Skagit Transit will seek competitive grants from both the state and federal level to assist in paying for the new coaches and vehicles.

## Future Expansion

In 2018 Skagit Transit purchased and received a brand new 40 foot Gillig to support our expanded 80X or 90X commuter routes. There are no other planned fleet expansion for the next 5 years at this time. However, some of the service improvements listed on our priority list will require additional vehicles if they are to be implemented.

### Rolling Stock Expansion and Replacement Plan

<b>2018-2023 SUMMARY OF ROLLING STOCK FOR EXPANSION AND REPLACEMENT</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Expansion (Quantity)</b>	<b>Replacement (Quantity)</b>
<b>2018</b>	Commuter Bus	1	0
	Fixed Route	0	5
	Paratransit	0	7
	Vanpool	0	12
	Support	0	0
<b>2019</b>	Commuter Bus	0	0
	Fixed Route	0	3
	Paratransit	0	3



	Vanpool	0	10
	Support	0	2
<b>2020</b>	Commuter Bus	0	0
	Fixed Route	0	6
	Paratransit	0	3
	Vanpool	0	10
	Support	0	2
<b>2021</b>	Commuter Bus	0	5
	Fixed Route	0	2
	Paratransit	0	0
	Vanpool	0	10
	Support	0	5
<b>2022</b>	Commuter Bus	0	0
	Fixed Route	0	2
	Paratransit	0	3
	Vanpool	0	10
	Support	0	2
<b>2023</b>	Commuter Bus	0	0
	Fixed Route	0	0
	Paratransit	0	0
	Vanpool	0	10
	Support	0	1

Figure 5-1: 2018-2023 Rolling Stock

This chart reflects the year that vehicles are ordered. Vehicles may not be received in the same calendar year as that in which they are ordered.

### New Maintenance, Operations, and Administrative Facility

Skagit Transit is currently located in northern Burlington on property leased from Skagit County Government. Growth in the last decade has caused Skagit Transit to exceed the capacity of our current location. 7 percent of staff and a significant quantity of vehicles and support equipment are housed outside of our current facility.

Skagit Transit has purchased an abandoned FedEx building west of Burlington. The new Maintenance, Operations, and Administration (MOA2) construction site is at 11784 Bay Ridge Drive Burlington, WA 98233. Skagit Transit has been operating out of the same building for over 25 years. MOA2 will allow for Skagit Transit to support all of its existing operation from a single facility while providing the capacity to handle future growth should that occur.

## Section 6: Demographic Overview

**Demographic Summary:** In 2010 Skagit County had a confirmed population of 116,901. The most recent estimates were done for 2017 by the United States Census Bureau and the population was said to be 125,619, which is a change of 7.5% or 8,718 people. According to GIS data, Skagit Transit's current Fixed Route Services are accommodating 71,944 people within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile radius. That means Fixed Route Services are currently serving about 57 percent of Skagit County. Fixed Route Services will continue to provide adequate transportation throughout Skagit County and when the Strategic Plan's purposed changes are enacted, there will be a serve population increase.



Figure 6-1: 2016 Skagit Transit Service Population

**Disabled:** In 2016, 10.1 percent of Skagit County's population was disabled in some way. That 10 percent is over 12 thousand people who Skagit Transit strives to serve. Skagit Transit's current fixed route services are providing transportation to over 10 thousand people with disabilities or 14.3 percent of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile service population. With the Strategic Plan's purposed changes, Fixed Route services will continue to meet people's needs. Also, for eligible clients, Skagit Transit has paratransit options available for disabled people of all ages.

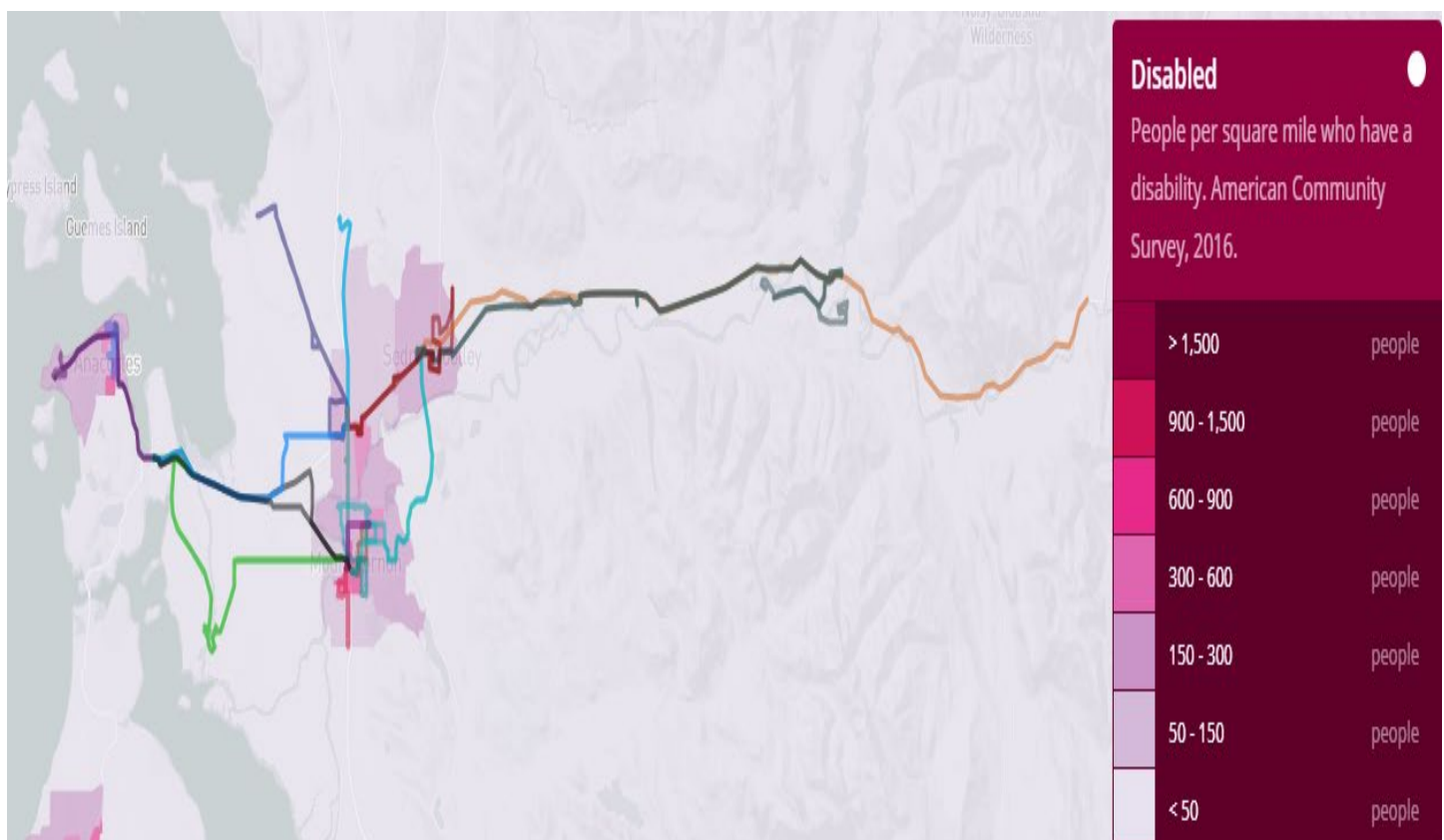


Figure 6-2: 2016 Skagit Transit Disability Population

**Minority:** Skagit County's 2017 minority estimates were at about 27.8% of the population. The minority population break down is 18.3% Hispanic or Latino, 2.7% American Indian and Alaska Native, 2.3% Asian, 1.1% Black or African American, and 3.4% is other. Skagit Transit is currently providing service to over 22,000 people who identify as a minority and live within our  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile service area. That means Skagit Transit's current services are providing transportation for about 63% of the minority population.



Figure 6-3: 2016 Skagit Transit Minority Population

**Poverty:** Skagit County has about 14,194 people estimated to be in poverty. That is 11.3% of the total population. Current services are reaching 17.8% of people in poverty or 12,806 persons. The changes proposed by the Strategic Plan aim to serve more of the population that qualify as low income and cannot afford their own automobile. Low income persons rely on public transportation and Skagit Transit wants to fulfill that need.

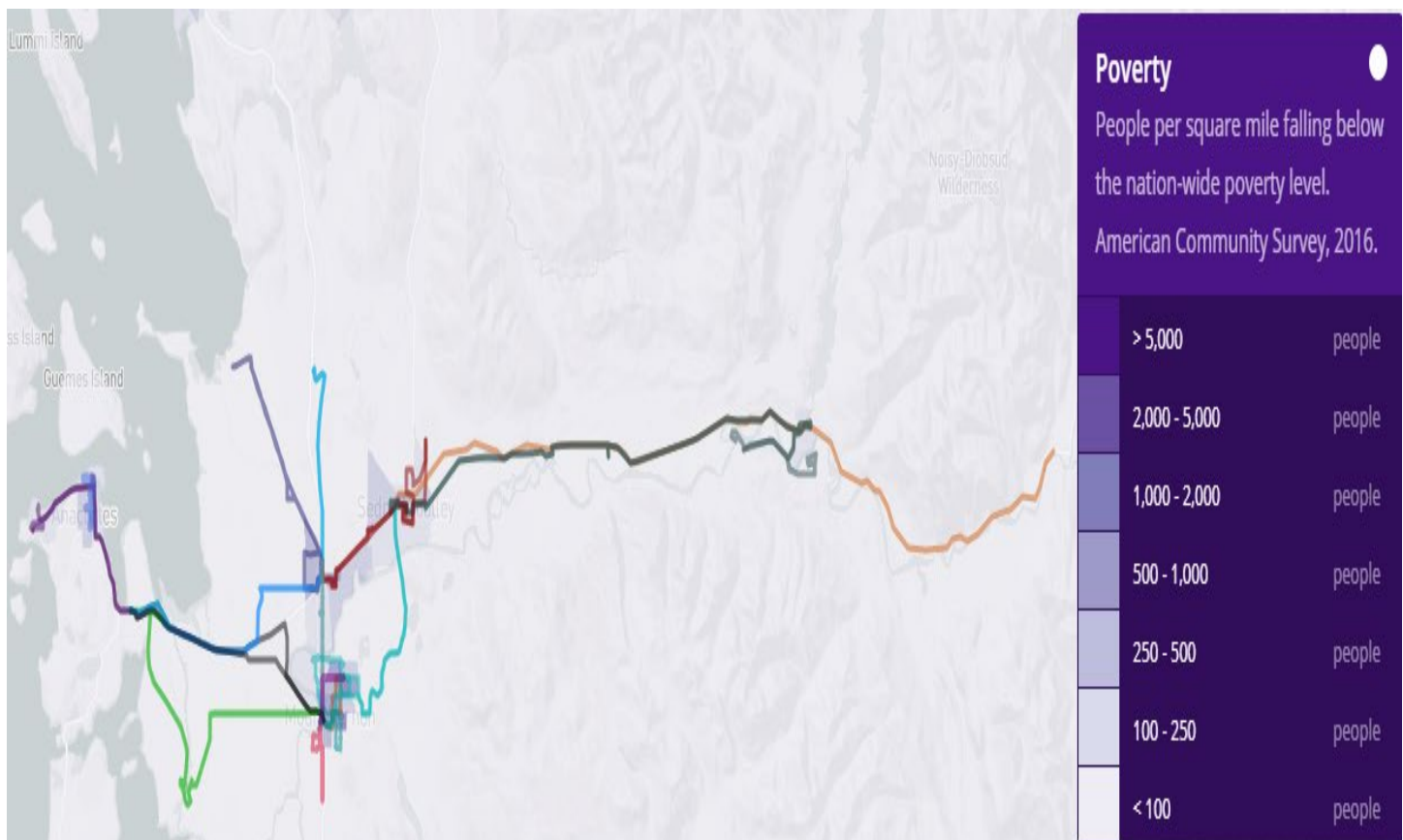


Figure 6-4: 2016 Skagit Transit Poverty Population



**Seniors:** Skagit County's population has over 20% of persons who are 65 years old or older. That is about 25,375 senior citizens who are getting to the point where driving might not be an option. Current Fixed Route services are accessible for 12,877 senior citizens. For those who cannot make it to the fixed route bus stop, Paratransit is also available and it is free of cost. Skagit Transit would like to step in and allow for the county's aging population to stay mobile. Not only does public transportation provide senior citizens a way to get from place to place but it also gives them a sense of freedom.

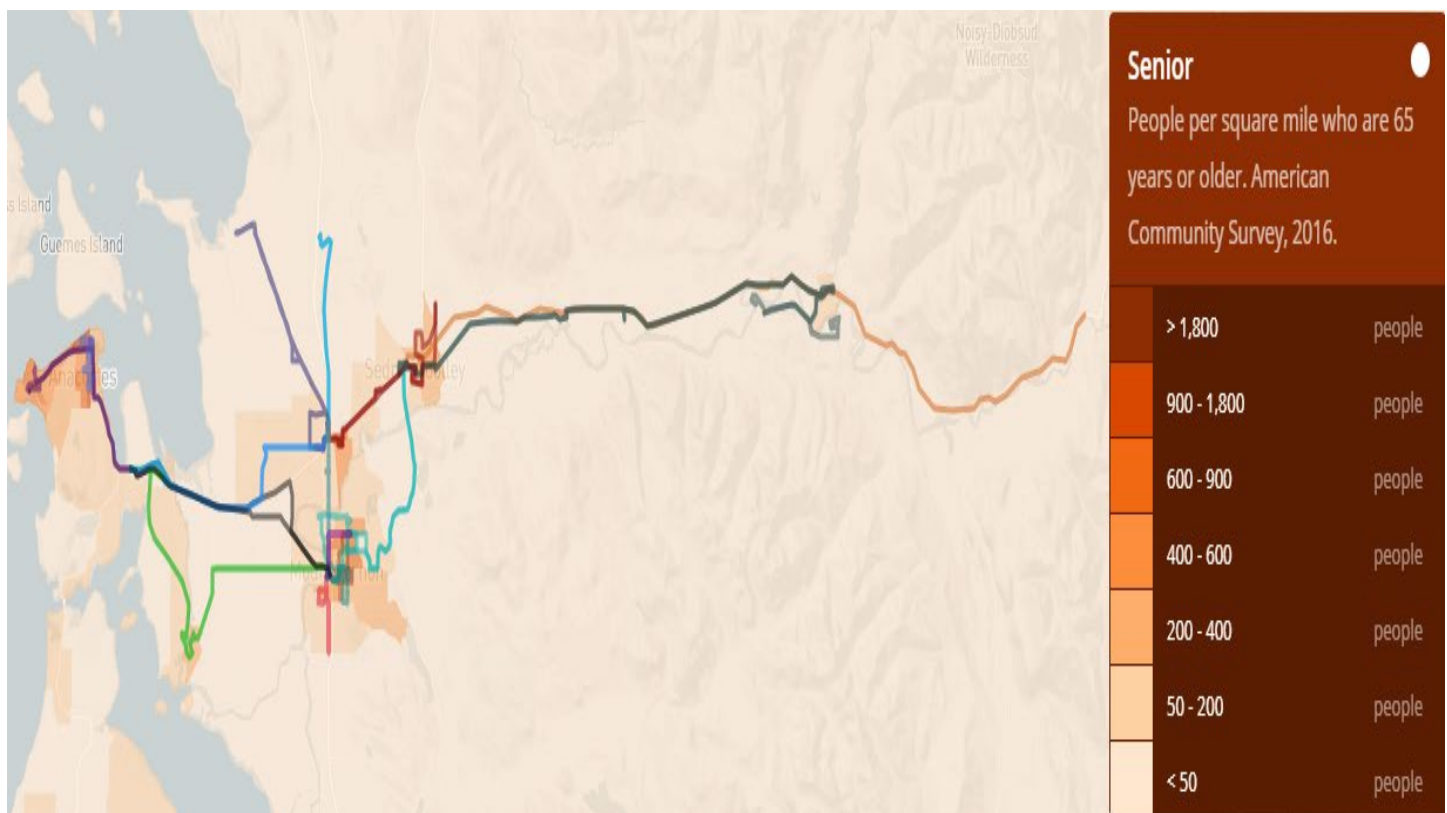


Figure 6-5: 2016 Skagit Transit Senior Population



**Concluding Demographics:** According to the United States Census Bureau the total employment in Skagit County is 41,928. Skagit Transit currently connects the public to over 35 thousand jobs or 83% of the total. The mean travel time to work for persons 16 and older is 25.5 minutes. The elapsed time does include time waiting for public transportation and with purposed changes the average commute time will be reduced. The Plan's recommendations have taken all demographics into consideration. Not only to reach further into the various communities of Skagit County, but also to target the members of the public who rely on public transportation.



Figure 6-6: 2016 Skagit Transit Job Population

## Section 7: Fixed Route Service Plan

After going through the strategic planning process, Skagit Transit has drafted a priority list of projects to carry out over the next 6 years.

Rank	Project	Annual Service Hours	Annual Cost	New Coaches in service	Grant	Imp. Date
1	Route 204 Expansion (60 min Freq. Weekday, and Weekend)	0	0	0		Jan 2019
2	Route 207 Routing & Schedule Change	0	0	0		Jan 2019
3	Route 750 Schedule Change	112	\$8,400	0		Jan 2019
4	Route 305-2 Hr. Expansion in PM	435	\$32,625	0		Jan 2019
5	Route 409- add 3 hours of service, expand into 60 minute loop	768	\$57,600	0		Sept. 19
6	Route 80X Schedule Change	0	0	0		Mid 2019
7	Route 410 Expand Span of Service 1 HR	256	\$19,200	1	CGP	Sept 19
8	Increase Freq. on Routes 513 & 615	3,250	\$243,750	0	CGP	Sept 19
	<b>Grand Total of First Year Projections</b>	4,821	\$361,575	1		
9	Route 300 Routing and Schedule Change	0	0	0		TBD
10	Increase Weekend service Route 717	858	\$64,350	0	CGP	TBD
11	Route 409 Frequency Increase	3,900	\$292,500	1	CGP	TBD
12	Sunday Service in Anacortes-Current Service	1,716	\$128,700	0	CGP	TBD
13	Routes 185/195 Expanded Service	1,820	\$136,500	0	CGP	TBD
14	Route 204 Frequency Increase	3,900	\$292,500	1		TBD
15	Route 207 Frequency Increase	3,900	\$292,500	1		TBD
16	New Route 30X	2,080	\$156,000	0	RMG	TBD
17	Increase in Weekday Span of Service by 2 Hours	6,760	\$507,000	0		TBD
18	Ferry Service Upgrade (Inc. Freq. 410 and 40X)	10,088	\$759,600	2	RMG	TBD
	<b>Grand Total of all Projections</b>	39,843	\$2,991,225	6		

Figure 7-1: 2018 Prioritized Project List

## Descriptions of Purposed Changes

**Route 204 Expansion:** The 204 expansion will extend the route into a 60-minute loop by replacing the Route 305 in east MV; would allow us to re-write entire schedule for route 204 and to re-route the Route 305.

**Route 207 Routing and Schedule Change:** This will extend the route into a 60-minute route, which will provide a stable schedule. The routing change will correct safety issues at Austin Lane, provide service to North MV along Martin, put a bus stop in front of the new YMCA, and enable riders to better utilize Wal-Mart.

**Route 750 Schedule Change:** Due to low ridership, Skagit Transit will operate the Route 750 on Tuesdays as a pilot project. The AM trips will start earlier and the PM trips will run later into the day. Along with time expansion, the 750 will also add a 2<sup>nd</sup> trip to both the AM and PM runs. If ridership does not improve after two years, this route may be cancelled.

**Route 305 Run-time Expansion:** The 305 will have an added 2 hours of service to run later into the evening. It will also have its routing adjusted to remove east Mount Vernon and will instead serve north Mount Vernon. This will eliminate the need to cross a narrow bridge on Highway 9.

**Route 80X Schedule Change:** The 80X is a route that Skagit Transit operates with Whatcom Transit Agency. They have asked us to work on a new schedule and we are working on a new schedule that will not disrupt the current services Skagit Transit already provides but may improve the efficiency for both agencies.

**Route 300 Routing and Schedule Change:** Split Route 300 into two hourly routes. This changes the routing in both cities. Route 300 would run from SW to Burlington. Route 301 would be the loop in SW. Job Corps would be a regular stop and the layover would occur at the Sedro Woolley Park & Ride. This will require the presence of a driver comfort station before enacting this change.

**Routes 513 and 615 Frequency Increase:** Both the 615 and 513 have seen increasing ridership for a number of years. The Swinomish Tribe has requested to have our Route 615 to run more frequently between the tribal housing area and their new medical clinic. Route 513 frequency is increasing because when Skagit Transit moves to its new Maintenance Operations and Administrative Facility, there will be a need for more service to that location. Increasing the frequency of our rural routes was a big request from the public and this will help us to accomplish that.

**Route 409 Expansion and Frequency Increase:** This first phase is to add 3 hours of service to the Route 409.

This will increase its weekday span of service to match the Route 410 which also serves Anacortes. In the second phase, the Route 409 will be turned into a 60-minute loop to better serve the areas to the south and west of Commercial Avenue.

**Route 410 Run-Time Expansion:** Skagit Transit has received feedback from the public, stating that they would like the 410 to run for an extra hour.

**Route 717 Weekend Service and Frequency on Weekdays:** This will allow for the 717 to have more trips on Saturday and for the first time have service on Sunday. Increasing weekday frequency will give the 717, as currently structured, service every 1.5 hours on weekdays.

**Anacortes Sunday Service Expansion:** Skagit Transit already runs services in Anacortes on Saturdays. The agency is going to offer the same services on Sundays as well.

**Route 185/195 Expand Service:** The 185 and 195 routes will each operate 5 days a week. The goal is to run each route all day long and eliminate the mid-day gaps. Another benefit of running these routes more frequently is to provide better service to the growing area west of Burlington Blvd along Peterson Road.

**Route 204 Frequency Increase:** Route 204 was extended to a full 60 minute loop but has traditionally run every 30 minutes in the past. A second bus will be added to create 30 minute frequency on weekdays. Weekends will slow down to a 60 minute frequency.

**Route 207 Frequency Increase:** The route 207 was extended into a 60 minute route, which provided a stable schedule. The frequency during the week would be changed to every 30-minutes to help this route cope with an expected increase in ridership due to the high use areas it serves.

**Route 30X (New Route):** A new route called the 30X will speed up travel from Skagit Station to the Sedro Woolley Park and Ride. It will have only three stops which include, Skagit Station, Sedro-Woolley P&R, and Chuckanut P&R. The route will start with a limited schedule to see if this service would be utilized by the public. We will utilize buses and drivers assigned to other routes to provide this service when possible.

**Increase in Weekday Span of Service by 2 Hours:** Skagit Transit's overall goal is to increase the span of all routes in operation. Two of the top six service improvement requests from our rider survey dealt with starting local service earlier and running local service later.

**Ferry Service Upgrade (Increase 410 and 40x Frequency):** Upgrading the ferry service will take the 40X and the 410 to 30 minute intervals and interline them to provide better service to the ferry terminal.

## **Section 8: Conclusion**

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The 2018 Strategic Plan provides guidance for Skagit Transit into the future. By establishing a demographic basis of who is currently riding and who lives near our services, we are setting a foundation for future growth. Every agency needs to know who their customer is so that they can meet the needs of those customers.

Skagit Transit will be able to set goals and objectives with future improvements. We know who our customers are and what they want from the agency. Our rider survey has provided us with that information. This plan includes a prioritized list of improvements focused on that feedback.

Skagit Transit will continue to follow the needs of the County and strive to better our services every year. With an inclusive and transparent planning process, we will take into account the possible outcomes as we improve our services. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead. We do not view this Strategic Plan as the end of the discussion on future improvements. It is just a part of the ongoing conversation we want to continue to have with the public, our riders, and the jurisdictions we serve.



“The drivers are so nice”

“Reliable way to and from work”

“Great Drivers”



“Very helpful folks...”

“Good People”

“Small Town”

“Amazingly Clear Windows”