austin MOBILITY BONDS

AUSTIN TRANSIT ENHANCEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT

Public Outreach Summary – Round 1

INTRODUCTION

In November 2020, City of Austin voters approved $460 million for transportation infrastructure improvements, including $19 million for transit projects that improve the speed and reliability of local bus service while making that service safer and easier to access. Transportation and Public Works (TPW), together with CapMetro staff, is currently developing the Transit Enhancement Infrastructure Report. This report will identify roadways within the city that have high needs for transit infrastructure investment and develop planning-level project recommendations for identified locations.

Public outreach is a critical component of any transit enhancement project. The community members who rely on and interact with public transit and its infrastructure can provide meaningful insight on the types of improvements, both operational and access related, and their prioritization. The first round of public outreach to support the development of the Transit Enhancement Infrastructure Report conducted from September 19, 2022 to October 7, 2022. It included in-person outreach events at 10 high-ridership transit hubs across the city as well as online outreach. Surveys were deployed in both English and Spanish and comments were geolocated on interactive maps.

The first round of public outreach focused on understanding the community's priorities for transit infrastructure improvements. The community was asked to rate the importance of investments in making transit fast and reliable by adding infrastructure like bus lanes and signals for transit, investments in making transit easier to access by improving infrastructure like sidewalks and roadway crossings, and addressing equity by focusing transit investments in historically underserved communities. Additionally, demographic data was collected to ensure that that the public that was engaged reflected the demographics of Austin and CapMetro riders. Results are described in detail on the following pages.

IN-PERSON OUTREACH

Round 1 of public outreach, which occurred from September 19, 2022 to October 7, 2022, was conducted through a series of in-person outreach events designed to gather feedback from CapMetro ridership. In-person engagement included a set of map exhibits to introduce the study area so that the respondents could quickly provide feedback. The in-person outreach events were held at ten high-ridership transit hubs across the city of Austin:

1. Tech Ridge Park & Ride
2. North Lamar Transit Center
3. Manor at Susquehanna
4. Norwood Transit Center
5. Westgate Transit Center
6. The Drag (University of Texas (UT) West Mall)
7. Riverside at Pleasant Valley
8. Republic Square
9. Southpark Meadows
10. William Cannon at Bluff Springs

Survey Questions

The Austin Transit Enhancement (ATE) survey had a total of three primary questions and five optional demographic data questions. The primary questions were based on a 5-point rating scale from "Not at all important" to "Extremely important" with the question text as follows below:

1. I believe the City should prioritize investments in making transit fast and reliable for the most riders.
2. I believe the City should prioritize investments in improvements like new sidewalks and roadway crossings that make it safer and easier to get to and from bus stops.
3. I believe the City should prioritize investments in historically underserved areas.

The demographic questions gathered information on the following topics: age, gender, cultural identity, disability identification, and income level. All questions were optional and not all respondents answered every question.

Comparisons were drawn to the 2015 CapMetro Origin and Destination Study and the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates for the City of Austin. These comparisons examined the demographics of survey respondents versus previous transit survey data and the general Austin population. The 2015 CapMetro Study gathered data for different segments of the ridership based on their transit option of choice. For the purposes of this survey comparison, the Fixed/Express category, which represents the majority of CapMetro's bus ridership, was used. The ranges for each of the three data sets were different, so the ranges were altered to fit the other data sets where necessary.

1) IN-PERSON SURVEY RESULTS

In total, 599 in-person surveys were initiated and 423 (71%) were fully completed. A strong majority of respondents rated each of the three primary questions as "Very important" or above, with 88% for the first question, 82% for the second, and 79% for the third. In-person surveys were filled out in both English and Spanish, with English being the majority at 490 (82%) and Spanish at 109 (18%).

Q1: Fast and Reliable Transit	Q2: Sidewalks and Roadway Crossings	Q3: Historically Underserved Areas
88%	82%	79%

Age and Gender Survey Results

GENDER	2015 CAP. METRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
FEMALE	39%	49%	44%
MALE	60%	51%	55%
OTHER	N/A	N/A	1%
AGE	**2015 CAP. METRO**	**2020 ACS**	**ATE SURVEY**
UNDER 18	6%	17%	2%
19-25	25%	7%	15%
26-39	31%	38%	38%
40-64	35%	22%	35%
65+	3%	9%	11%

The percentage of male and female respondents for the ATE survey was split in-between the two other surveys. There was a good representation of both males and females, at 55% and 44% respectively. 1% of respondents listed a gender as other, which was not captured in the other two surveys.

The age ranges were captured differently for each survey, so the ATE and ACS survey data were converted to the 2015 CapMetro measurements. Overall, the ATE data shows a middle-aged to older ridership, with the under 18 and 19-25 age ranges being lower at 2% and 15%, respectively, while the 65+ category was higher at 11%. The highest age range of respondents to the ATE survey was 26-39 at 38%, while 40-64 was the same as the CapMetro data at 35%.

Cultural Identity Survey Results

For the ATE survey, respondents were allowed to select multiple cultural identities; those that did were placed into the 'Two or More" category. Additionally, the 2020 ACS data was captured differently than the ATE and CapMetro survey, with those selecting Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/Latinx also selecting another cultural identity without being in the Two or More category.

CULTURAL IDENTITY	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
ASIAN	4%	7%	4%
BLACK AND/OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	23%	8%	18%
HISPANIC AND/OR LATINO/LATINA/ LATINX	34%	33%	39%
NATIVE/ INDIGENOUS	1%	1%	1%
WHITE	35%	69%	27%
OTHER	2%	1%	3%
TWO OR MORE	N/A	7%	8%

The ATE survey reached a wide and diverse population. Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/Latinx was the highest cultural identity at 39% of survey respondents, a 5%, and 6% higher response rate than the CapMetro and 2020 ACS, respectively. White was the second at 27%, lower than both the CapMetro and 2020 ACS surveys. Black and/or African American, was third in response rate with 18% of respondents. This was lower than the CapMetro survey with 23% but much higher than the 2020 ACS with 8%. Asian representation was the same compared to the CapMetro survey but was 3% lower than the 2020 ACS. Other and Two or More were similar between surveys. Overall, the in-person results resembled the established CapMetro ridership well.

Income Survey Results

The CapMetro survey used much lower increments of measurement for income and the highest income level stopped at $60,000+ instead of $150,000+. The CapMetro and 2020 ACS data were converted to the ATE data format to allow for comparisons between surveys.

INCOME	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
$0 - $24,999	43%	14%	55%
$25,000 - $49,999	15%	18%	19%
$50,000 - $74,999	8%	17%	11%
$75,000 - $99,999	N/A	13%	6%
$100,000 - $149,999	N/A	18%	4%
$150,000+	N/A	20%	4%

Although this question was the most frequently skipped in the survey, the results showed that the ATE survey reached many people from lower income brackets; the top income range was the $0-$24,999 category at 55%. The $25-49,000 range was also somewhat higher at 19% of respondents compared to 15% and 18% from the CapMetro and 2020 ACS surveys, respectively. The CapMetro survey listed its' final category as $60,000+ at 8%. Going by the same format, the ATE survey would show 25% had an income over $60,000 while the 2020 ACS would show 68%.

Disability Survey Results

The final demographic category was respondent's identified disabilities. The CapMetro survey did not gather data on disability, so only the 2020 ACS Five-Year estimates were used for comparison. Both surveys allowed respondents to select multiple disabilities.

DISABILITY	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
COGNITIVE OR INTELLECTUAL	4%	8%
HEARING	2%	5%
VISION	2%	7%
MOBILITY	4%	13%
NONE	91%	74%

Respondents to the ATE survey expressed higher rates of disability compared to the overall population of Austin. 8% of respondents reported a cognitive or intellectual disability, compared to 4% for the 2020 ACS survey. Five percent had a hearing disability, 7% had a vision disability, and 13% reported having a mobility related disability. Seventy-four percent of respondents did not have a disability, 17% lower than Austin in general.

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

The online surveys were advertised and distributed via Facebook ads and the City of Austin Transportation Department's social media. In total, 117 online surveys were filled out, with 109 (92%) completing the entire survey. A strong majority of respondents rated each of the three primary questions as "Very important" or above, with 92% for the first question, 76% for the second, and 87% for the third. A Spanish-language version of the survey was offered, but all online respondents used the English-language version.

Fast and Reliable Transit	Sidewalks and Roadway Crossings	Historically Underserved Areas
92%	76%	87%

Age and Gender Survey Results

GENDER	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
FEMALE	39%	49%	39%
MALE	60%	51%	55%
OTHER	N/A	N/A	5%
AGE	**2015 CAPMETRO**	**2020 ACS**	**ATE SURVEY**
UNDER 18	6%	17%	3%
19-25	25%	7%	18%
26-39	31%	38%	52%
40-64	35%	22%	21%
65+	3%	9%	6%

The ATE online survey leaned more heavily towards males, at 55%, which was 16 percentage points greater than female representation at 39%. The proportion of male and female representation closely matched the 2015 CapMetro survey. Although data was not captured for this category in the other two surveys, 5% listed a gender as other, which was significantly higher than the in-person data. This higher percentage could be due to people feeling more comfortable stating their gender in a completely anonymous format rather than the personal experience offered by the in-person outreach events.

Overall, respondents to the ATE online survey skewed heavily towards the 26-39 category at 52%, which is 21% greater than the CapMetro survey and 14% higher than the 2020 ACS. The under 18 and 19-25 age representation was lower than both the CapMetro survey and the 2020 ACS. The 40-64 age range was lower than both surveys at 21%, and the proportion in the 65+ category was between the result of the CapMetro survey and the 2020 ACS.

Cultural Identity Survey Results

For the ATE survey, respondents were allowed to select multiple cultural identities; those that did were placed into the Two or More category. Additionally, the 2020 ACS data was captured differently than the ATE and CapMetro survey with those selecting Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/Latinx also selecting another cultural identity without being in the Two or More category.

CULTURAL IDENTITY	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
ASIAN	4%	7%	13%
BLACK AND/OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	23%	8%	4%
HISPANIC AND/OR LATINO/LATINA/ LATINX	34%	33%	14%
NATIVE/ INDIGENOUS	1%	1%	0%
WHITE	35%	69%	62%
OTHER	2%	1%	2%
TWO OR MORE	N/A	7%	6%

The ATE online survey reached a far less diverse group of people with a very heavy bias towards White, the highest category at 62%, though it was still lower than the 2020 ACS by 7%. Those reporting Asian were significantly higher in the online survey than the in-person, at 13%. Those identifying as Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/Latinx was drastically lower at 14% of respondents. Those reporting Black and/or African American were also much lower than CapMetro and the 2020 ACS at 4% compared to 23% and 8%, respectively. Native/Indigenous was 0% while Other and Two or More was similar to the 2020 ACS.

Income Survey Results

The CapMetro survey used much lower increments of measurement for income and stopped at a lower overall income level: $60,000+ instead of $150,000+ when compared to the other two surveys. Both survey's data was converted to the ATE data format because the ATE survey only captured data in the below categories. The 2015 CapMetro study also did not have a full representation of the income data, with their results only reaching 66% in total.

INCOME	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
$0 - $24,999	43%	14%	16%
$25,000 - $49,999	15%	18%	20%
$50,000 - $74,999	8%	17%	14%
$75,000 - $99,999	N/A	13%	20%
$100,000 - $149,999	N/A	18%	21%
$150,000+	N/A	20%	19%

Overall, the income ranges had a more even distribution that the in-person results. The $0-24,999 category was significantly lower than the in-person results at 16% but was similar to the 2020 ACS data. The $25,000-49,000 range was a little higher than both other surveys, at 20%. The CapMetro survey listed its' final category as $60,000+ at 8%. Going by the same listing, the ATE survey would show 64%, and the 2020 ACS at 68%, had an income over $60,000. This was the question most frequently skipped in the survey.

Disability Survey Results

The final demographic category was respondent's identified disabilities. The CapMetro survey did not gather data on disability, so only the 2020 ACS Five-Year estimates were used for comparison. Both surveys allowed respondents to select multiple disabilities.

DISABILITY	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
COGNITIVE OR INTELLECTUAL	4%	5%
HEARING	2%	3%
VISION	2%	5%
MOBILITY	4%	7%
NONE	91%	89%

Overall, ATE survey respondents expressed a similar level of disability to the general Austin population. 5% of respondents reported a cognitive or intellectual disability, compared to 4%. 3% had a hearing disability, 5% had a vision disability, and 7% reported having a mobility related disability. 89% of respondents did not have a disability, only 2% lower than Austin in general.

2) COMBINED SURVEY RESULTS

In total, 716 online and in-person surveys were filled out, with 185 (25%) not responding to at least one question. For the combined results, once again a strong majority of respondents rated each of the three primary questions as "Very important" or above, with 88% for the first question, 80% for the second, and 80% for the third. Surveys were filled out in both English and Spanish, with English being the majority at 607 (85%) and Spanish at 109 (15%).

Fast and Reliable Transit	Sidewalks and Roadway Crossings	Historically Underserved Areas
88%	80%	80%

Overall, the two methods of survey outreach delivered very different results. The in-person outreach events received feedback from demographics that more closely resembled the results found in the 2015 CapMetro Origin and Destination Study while the online advertisement brought commentary from a sampling that was similar to the 2020 American Community Survey Five-Year estimates. Though the in-person outreach events required a more logistically intensive process, the results gathered a more accurate representation of the Austin Transit ridership.

Below are the combined in-person and online survey results comparisons.

Age and Gender Survey Results

GENDER	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
FEMALE	39%	49%	43%
MALE	60%	51%	55%
OTHER	N/A	N/A	2%
AGE	**2015 CAPMETRO**	**2020 ACS**	**ATE SURVEY**
UNDER 18	6%	17%	2%
19-25	25%	7%	16%
26-39	31%	38%	40%
40-64	35%	22%	32%
65+	3%	9%	10%

The percentage of male and female respondents for the ATE survey was split in-between the two other surveys. There was a good representation of both males and females, at 55% and 43% respectively. 2% of respondents listed a gender as other, which was not captured in the other two surveys.

Overall, the ATE data shows a more middle-aged ridership, with the under 18 and 19-25 age ranges being drastically lower at 2% and 16%, respectively, while the 65+ category was higher at 10%. The highest age range was 26-39 at 40%, higher than both other surveys. The 32% for the 40-64 age range was lower than the CapMetro data but higher than the 2020 ACS.

Cultural Identity Survey Results

For the ATE survey, respondents were allowed to select multiple cultural identities. Those that did, were placed into the Two or More category. Additionally, the 2020 ACS data was captured differently than the ATE and CapMetro survey with those selecting Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/ Latinx also selecting another cultural identity without being in the Two or More category.

CULTURAL IDENTITY	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
ASIAN	4%	7%	5%
BLACK AND/OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	23%	8%	16%
HISPANIC AND/OR LATINO/LATINA/ LATINX	34%	33%	34%
NATIVE/ INDIGENOUS	1%	1%	1%
WHITE	35%	69%	34%
OTHER	2%	1%	3%
TWO OR MORE	N/A	7%	7%

The ATE survey, once again, reached a wide and diverse population with Hispanic and/or Latino/Latina/Latinx tied for the top cultural identity at 34%, 5%, and 6% higher than the CapMetro and 2020 ACS, respectively. White was tied with Hispanic at 34%, similar to the CapMetro survey, but much lower the 2020 ACS. The higher percentage of those identifying as White was influenced by the online survey responses. Black and/or African American was lower than the CapMetro at 16% compared to 23%, but much higher than the 2020 ACS with 8%. Asian was a little higher compared to the CapMetro survey but a little lower than the 2020 ACS. Other and Two or More were similar to the 2020 ACS. Overall, the in-person results resembled the established CapMetro ridership well.

Income Survey Results

The CapMetro survey used much lower increments of measurement for income and stopped at a lower overall income level: $60,000+ instead of $150,000+. The CapMetro and 2020 ACS data was converted to the ATE data format because the ATE survey only captured data in the following categories, which would otherwise make the final comparisons less than satisfactory. The 2015 CapMetro study also did not have a full representation for the ridership's income data, with the highest income category set at $60,000+.

INCOME	2015 CAPMETRO	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
$0 - $24,999	43%	14%	47%
$25,000 - $49,999	15%	18%	20%
$50,000 - $74,999	8%	17%	12%
$75,000 - $99,999	N/A	13%	7%
$100,000 - $149,999	N/A	18%	8%
$150,000+	N/A	20%	7%

Overall, the ATE survey reached many people from lower income brackets; the top income range was the $0-$24,999 category at 47%, similar to that of the CapMetro survey. The $25,000-49,000 range was also higher at 20% compared to 15% in the CapMetro survey and 18% in the 2020 ACS. The CapMetro survey listed its' final category as $60,000+ at 8%. Going by the same format, the ATE survey would show 34% had an income over $60,000 while the 2020 ACS would show 68%. This was the question most frequently skipped in the survey.

Disability Survey Results

The final demographic category was respondent's identified disabilities. The CapMetro survey did not gather data on disability, so only the 2020 ACS Five-Year estimates were used for comparison. Both surveys allowed respondents to select multiple disabilities.

DISABILITY	2020 ACS	ATE SURVEY
COGNITIVE OR INTELLECTUAL	4%	7%
HEARING	2%	5%
VISION	2%	7%
MOBILITY	4%	12%
NONE	91%	77%

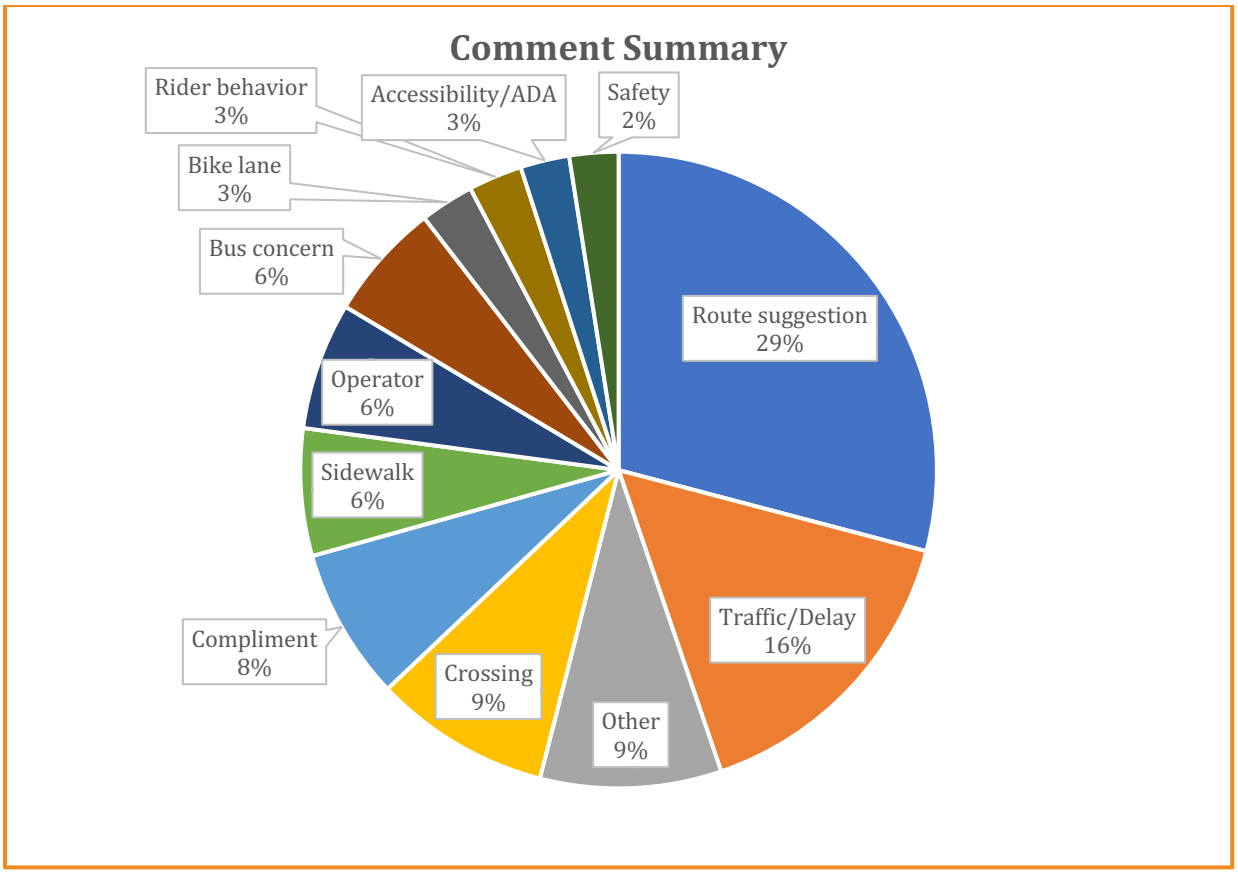
Overall, respondents to the ATE survey again expressed higher rates of disability compared to the overall population of Austin with 7% of respondents reporting a cognitive or intellectual disability, compared to 4% for the 2020 ACS survey. 5% had a hearing disability, 7% had a vision disability, and 12% reported having a mobility related disability. 77% of respondents did identify as having a disability, 14% lower than Austin in general.

3) COMMENT SUMMARY

424 total comments were received, covering a wide variety of topics ranging from route suggestions and traffic or delays to operator and rider behavior. As expected, not all comments were relevant to the project, including operator and rider behavior comments. 57% of comments received were not relevant to the scope of the Transit Enhancement project but were passed on to CapMetro.

Comments could discuss multiple topics and were marked as such, with the most popular topics being Route Suggestions, Traffic or Delay, and Crossings. Other was comprised of topics that individually made up only 1% or less of the total comment topics. These ranged from comments about pricing and pavement to coordination and the transit app.

Though a majority of comments came from the Austin transit riders, some bus operators also provided feedback about issues they noticed along the routes. These were generally included in the Route Suggestion category as most pertained to how the route itself is laid out, but a few operator comments discussed problems with Sidewalks and Crossings as well as Accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance at some bus stops.

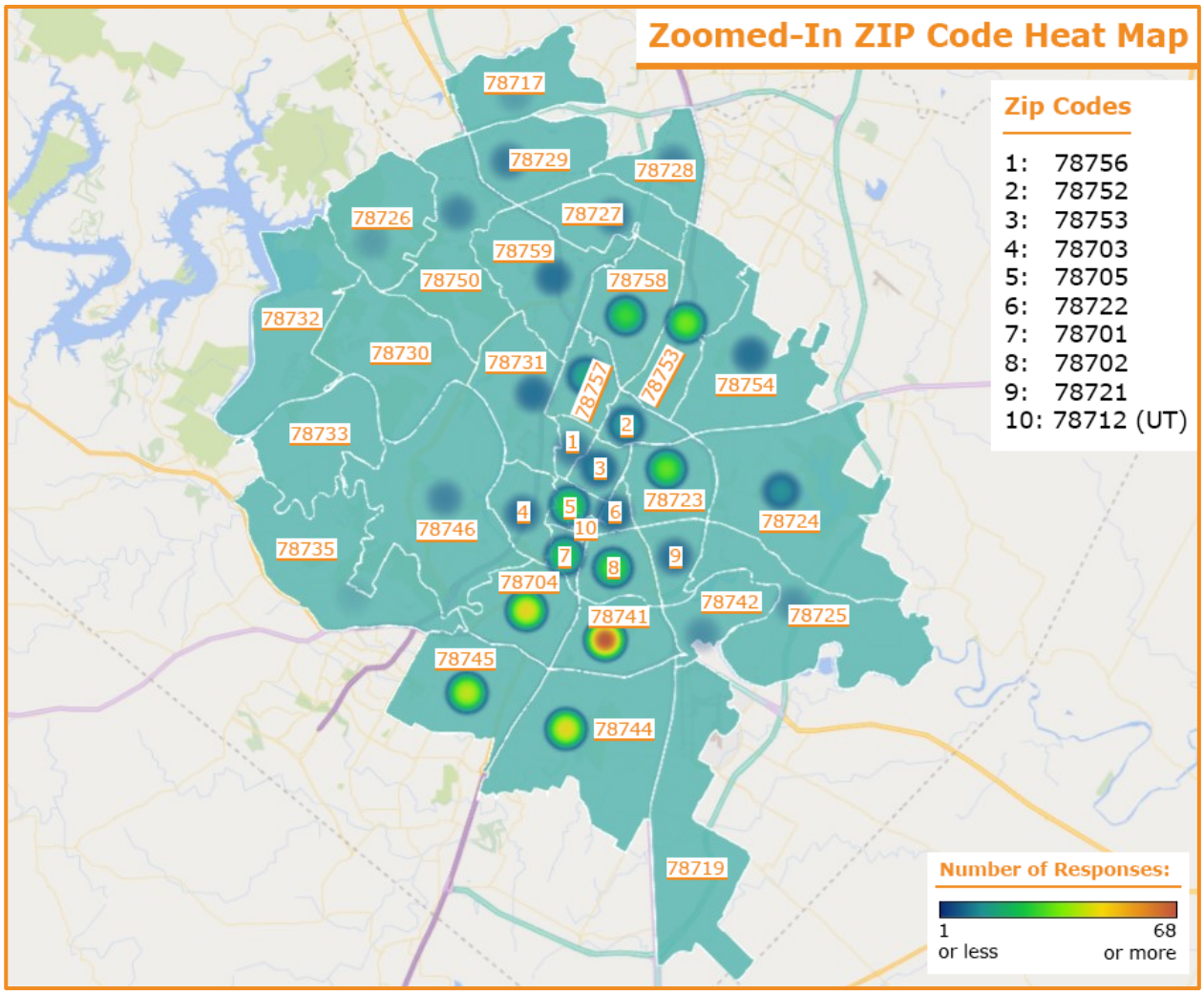

Comment Summary
Rider behavior 3%
Accessibility/ADA 3%
Safety 2%
Bike lane 3%
Bus concern 6%
Route suggestion 29%
Operator 6%
Sidewalk 6%
Traffic/Delay 16%
Compliment 8%
Crossing 9%
Other 9%

4) HEAT AND PIN MAPS

To determine whether a robust representation of CapMetro's ridership was achieved, a question was included asking for the respondent's ZIP code. From those ZIP codes, several maps were created to illustrate the survey's reach. For the purposes of these maps, outliers from other states and countries were excluded.

Zoomed-In ZIP Code Heat Map

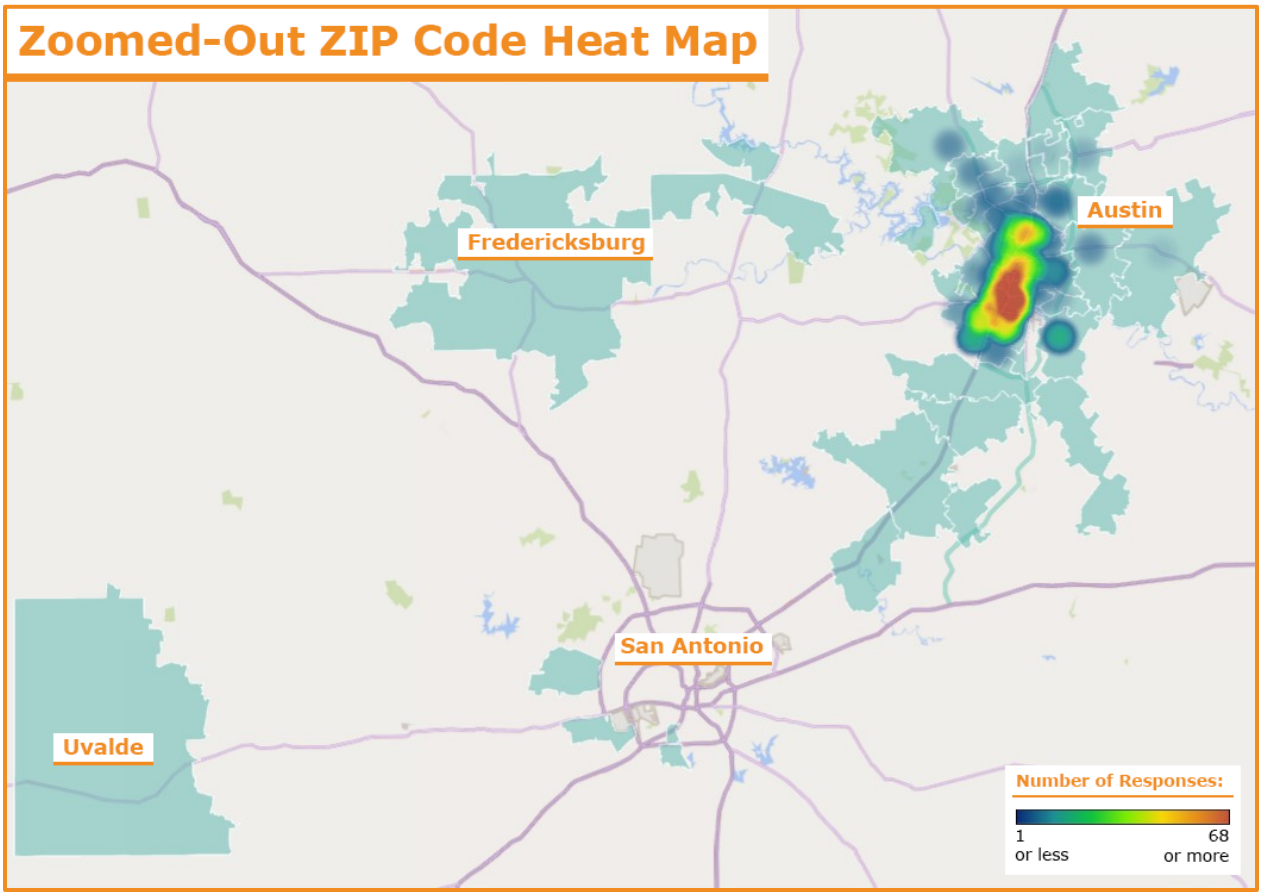
Two ZIP code heat maps were created to highlight the level of respondents inside and outside the city of Austin, respectively. This map is focuses on where the majority of respondents were living in the city. Most surveys were from people who lived south, central, and north of downtown Austin. Fewer surveys were submitted by respondents living on the west side of the city.



Zoomed-Out ZIP Code Heat Map

This-map shows most of the ZIP codes submitted by respondents. Again, outliers from different states and countries were excluded. Most comments were submitted from the Austin area and surrounding cities, but a few came from other locations, including Fredericksburg, San Antonio, and Uvalde.

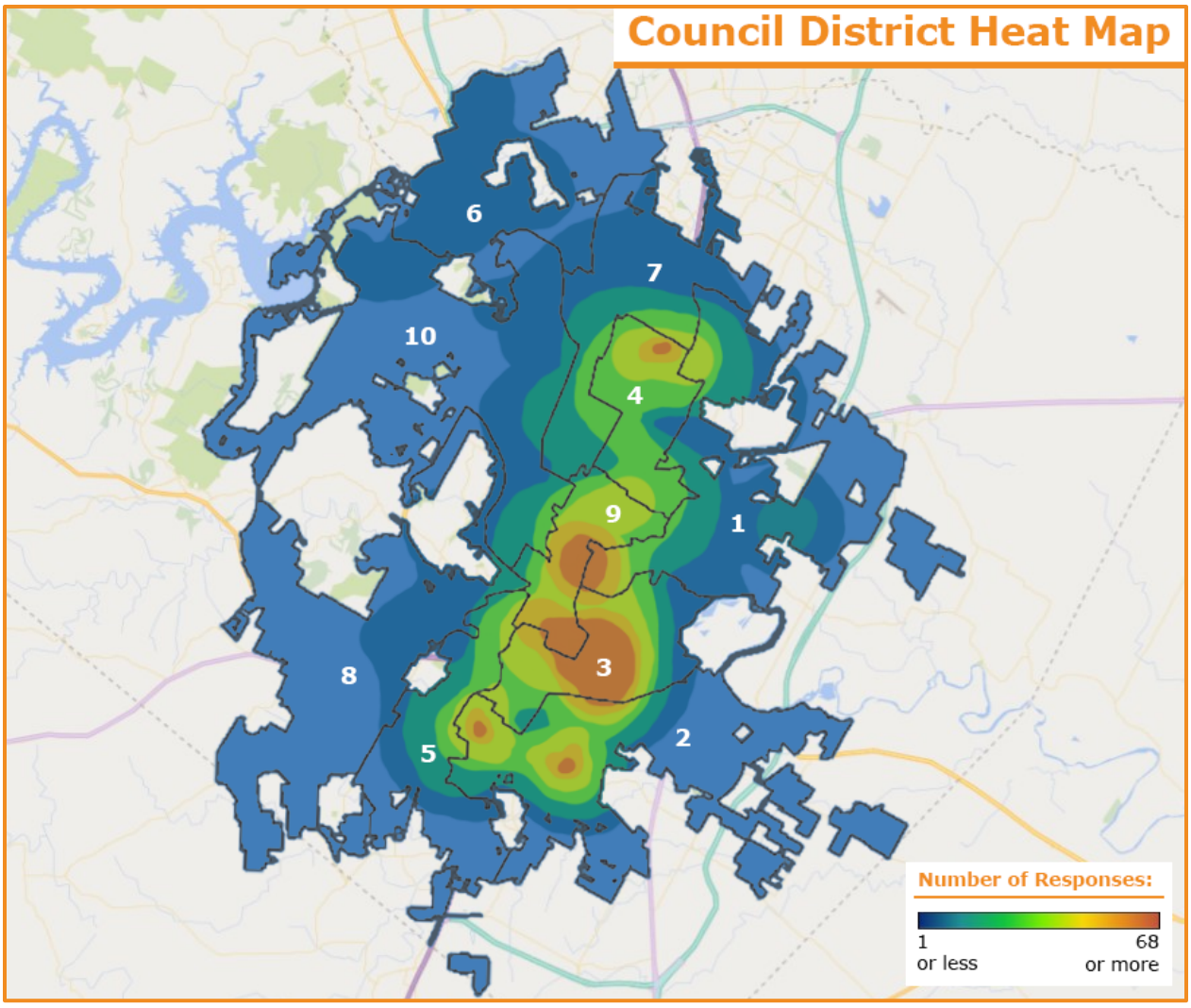
At least one respondent explained that they commuted by train from San Antonio to Austin, then used the CapMetro Transit system for transportation within Austin.



Council District Heat Map

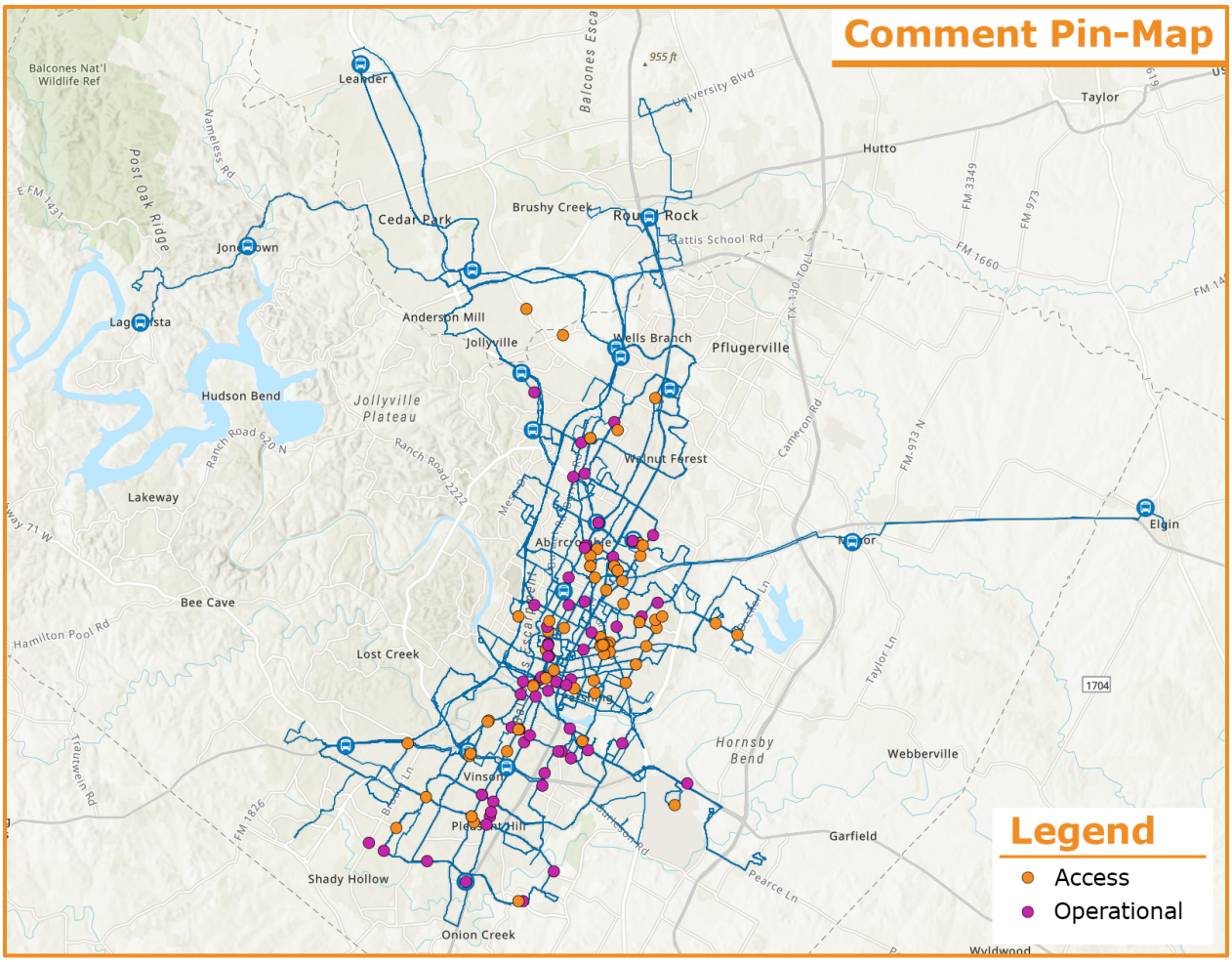
A third map was created to show how comments fit into the Austin City Council Districts. Since the districts do not line up exactly with ZIP codes, this map is an approximation of the submitted comments.

The districts with the most responses were 3 and 9. Once again, comments were generally within south, central, and north Austin, though there were some to the northwest and east.



Comment Pin-Map

A comment pin-map was also created to provide respondents the ability to point out specific issues or provide area-specific suggestions along the current transit lines. The pin-map tool received 79 comments mapped at specific points around the transit system. Fifty-two of the survey comments that were considered relevant to transit operations, infrastructure, and access were added to the pin-map, for a total of 131 mapped comments.



6) CONCLUSION

Overall, demographics of those surveyed were similar to the 2015 CapMetro Origin and Destination Study and 2020 American Community Survey, with a few key differences:

- Black and/or African American cultural identity was lower than the CapMetro 2015 survey data.
- Respondents' reported zip codes tended to be grouped in south, central, and north Austin, while outer Austin had significantly less.
- The younger age groups, those under 18 and 19-25, were significantly less represented.
- The level of reported disability was higher than the 2020 ACS Five-Year Estimates.

The in-person outreach events received feedback from demographics that more closely resembled the results found in the 2015 CapMetro Origin and Destination Study while the online advertisement brought commentary from a sampling that was similar to the 2020 American Community Survey Five-Year estimates. Though the in-person outreach events required a more logistically intensive process, the results gathered a more accurate representation of the Austin Transit ridership.

Most respondents supported all three of the primary questions, with improving the speed and reliability of the transit services being the most popular option.

Round 1 of public outreach elicited feedback from a wide and diverse sample of the Austin transit ridership. The above noted differences between the in-person outreach and online outreach may be explained by each survey's methodology. These differences will be taken into consideration when planning the next round of public outreach for the Austin Transit Enhancement program. The results of the outreach will inform the weighting of potential transit enhancement project locations in order to determine a list of top locations for investment.