L Y N N
TRANSIT ACTION PLAN

Memorandum

Lynn Transit Action Plan Public Input Survey: Summary of Results

INTRODUCTION

The Lynn Transit Action Plan conducted a survey of current transit riders and non-transit riders in Lynn to determine how current riders use transit; what barriers exist that prevent non-riders from using these services; and what strategies may be most effective at increasing ridership and improving the experience of riders.

A total of 976 responses were collected over the nearly two month period in which the survey was open (September 16 to November 11, 2019). The survey was made available in six languages most relevant in Lynn: Ayisyen (Haitian Creole), English, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. The survey asked respondents about their transportation decisions and attitudes towards MBTA services, as well as, what improvements and changes to services they would prioritize.

The results of the survey closely match the findings of the Existing Conditions Analysis conducted as part of the Lynn Transit Action Plan. That analysis found that most trips in Lynn stay within the city and the North Shore, although access to employment centers in Boston and Cambridge are also important, for both users of transit and other transportation modes. The qualitative data collected through this survey compliments the quantitative data of the Existing Conditions Analysis by illustrating how income and other demographic characteristics impact mode choice and travel behavior for this region. Together these analyses and their results will be used to evaluate potential strategies for improving transit services in Lynn and the surrounding region.

KEY FINDINGS

Many residents of Lynn are dependent on MBTA services for transportation to work, school, and other destinations.
- 64% of respondents said they use MBTA services more than once a month (identified as frequent riders), and 74% of these frequent riders reported using the MBTA for trips to work or school most or all of the time.
- Frequent riders also use the MBTA for non-work or school related trips, with 40% reporting that they use the MBTA for all or most of such journeys, like shopping and recreation.
- The primary reasons cited by frequent riders for using MBTA services included: they do not or prefer not to drive (23%), do not have access to a car (21%), or because parking at their destinations is not available or affordable (17%).

Frequent riders use both rail and bus service to make trips within Lynn and to surrounding towns as well as to Boston, including using the Blue Line from Wonderland Station.
- 29% of frequent riders reported travelling on Route 441/442 (Marblehead – Wonderland) bus in a typical week; 27% on Route 455 (Salem Depot – Wonderland); 18% on either Route 450 (Salem

Depot – Haymarket) or the 450W weekend service to Wonderland; and 18% on Route 429, which serves the Northgate Mall (Route 1 employment district) and Lynn Station.

- Nearly 50% of frequent riders reported using subway service in a typical week, and over 40% reported using commuter rail. These results are likely due to bus services being spread across many routes which end at MBTA subway stations. Additional, rail users with access to personal vehicles may have the option to drive to commuter rail or subway stations in addition to accessing them by bus.
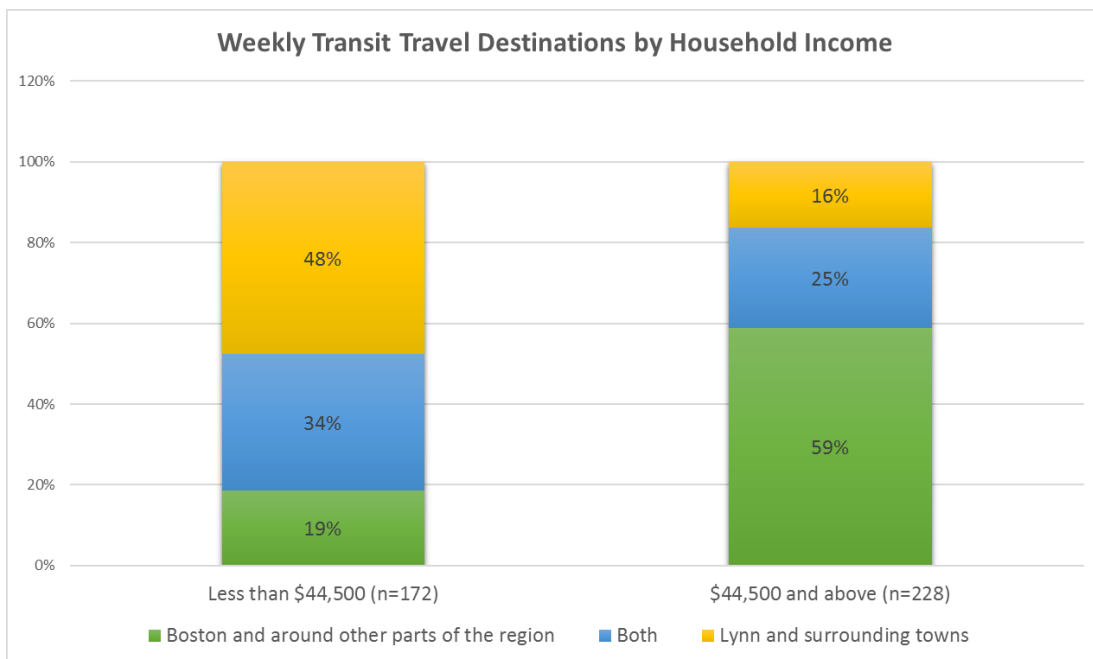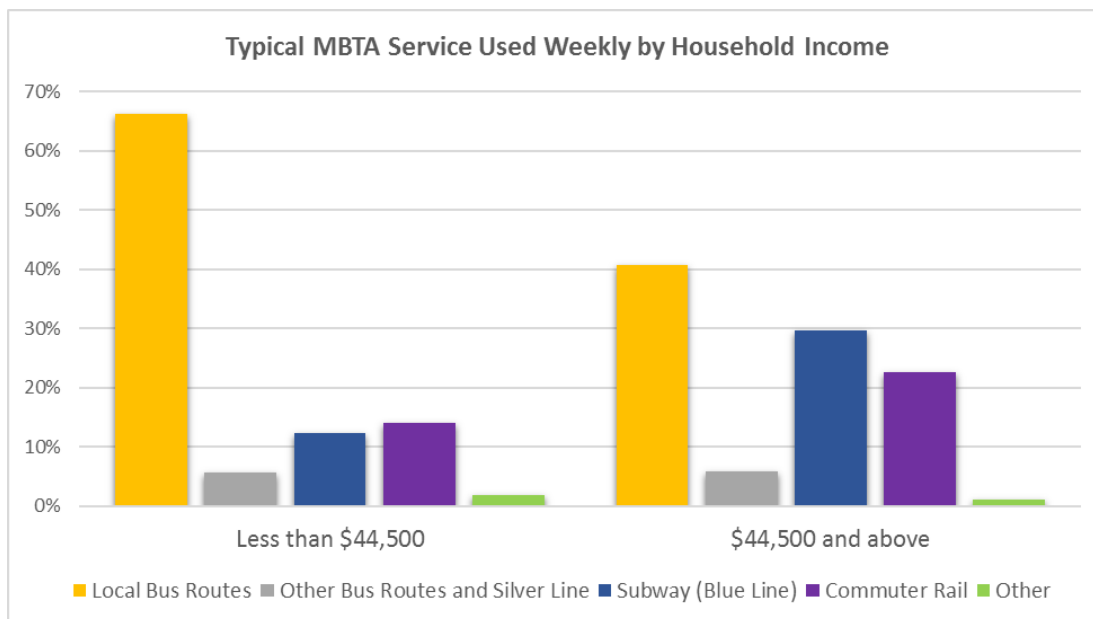
Right: Survey responders who identified themselves as frequent riders were asked to select which services they use during an average week.

Q5: Which MBTA services do you use during an average week?
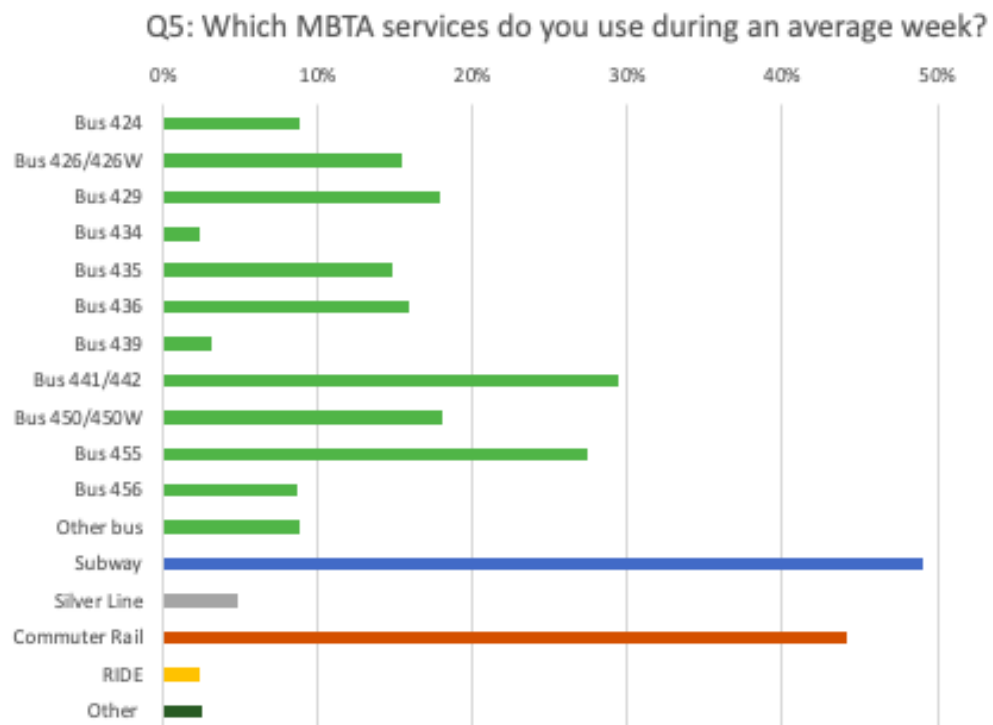
Low-income households (annual household income <$44,500) use these bus services to access local destinations at higher rates than high-income households (annual household income >$44,500), which report using the MBTA to access Boston by riding the Blue Line and commuter rail at higher rates.

- 66% of respondents from low-income households reported using MBTA bus services in a typical week, as compared to only 41% of respondents from high-income households.
- 30% of respondents from high-income households reported using the Blue Line in a typical week, and 23% reported using the commuter rail, while 12% of respondents from low-income households reported using the Blue Line and 14% reported using the commuter rail.
- 48% of respondents from low-income households reported using transit to travel to destinations within Lynn and the surrounding towns on a weekly basis, while only 19% reported using transit to traveling to Boston and other parts of the region.

- Conversely, only 16% of high-income households reported using transit to access destinations within Lynn and surrounding towns on a weekly basis, and 59% reported using transit to travel to Boston and other parts of the region

Typical MBTA Service Used Weekly by Household Income

Legend: Local Bus Routes ■ Other Bus Routes and Silver Line ■ Subway (Blue Line) ■ Commuter Rail ■ Other

Weekly Transit Travel Destinations by Household Income

	Less than $44,500 (n=172)	$44,500 and above (n=228)
Lynn and surrounding towns	48%	16%
Both	34%	25%
Boston and around other parts of the region	19%	59%

Legend: ■ Boston and around other parts of the region ■ Both ■ Lynn and surrounding towns

Frequent and infrequent riders have similar priorities for improvements to MBTA Service.

- The top five priorities for both frequent and infrequent riders were increased frequency, improved reliability, expanded span of service and service coverage, and reduced fare cost.
- Increased service frequency was identified by the highest percentages of frequent and infrequent riders as a priority, 47% and 33%, respectively
- However the second most identified priority differed between the groups, with improved reliability being identified by 39% of frequent riders and 31% of infrequent riders identifying expanded service coverage.
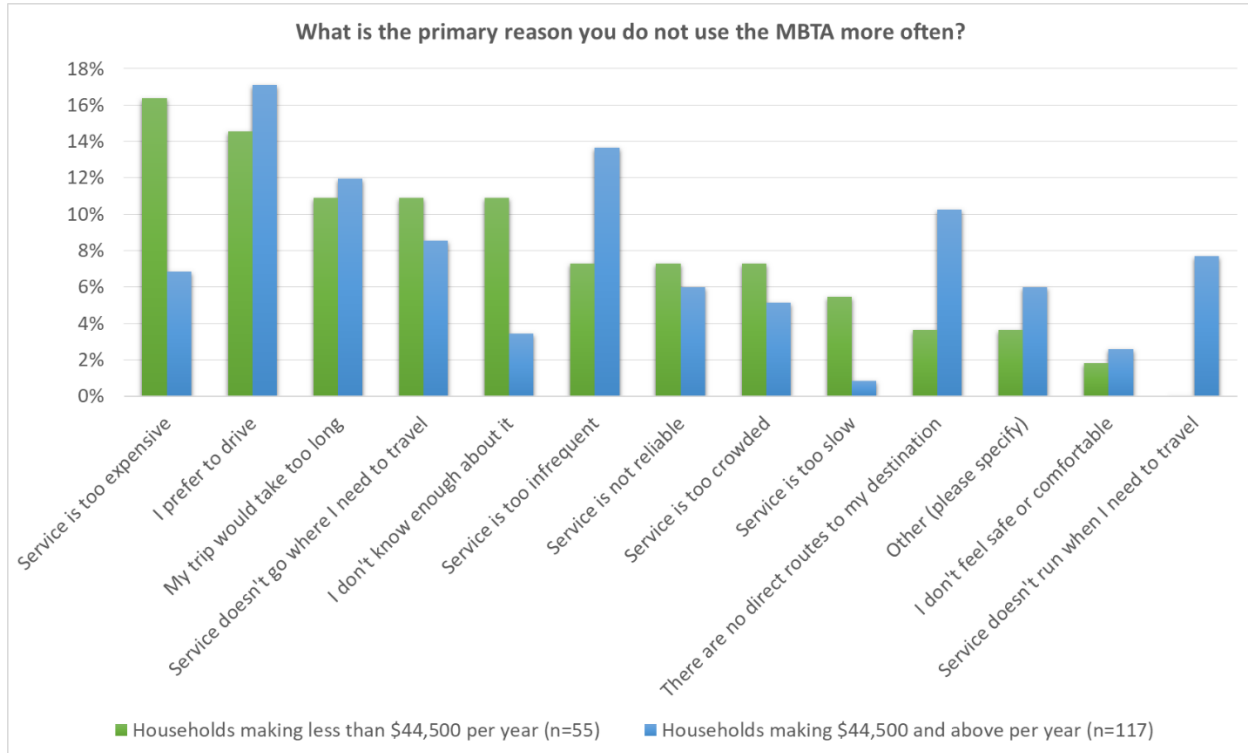
Right: Frequent and infrequent riders rank their priorities for improvements to MBTA services.
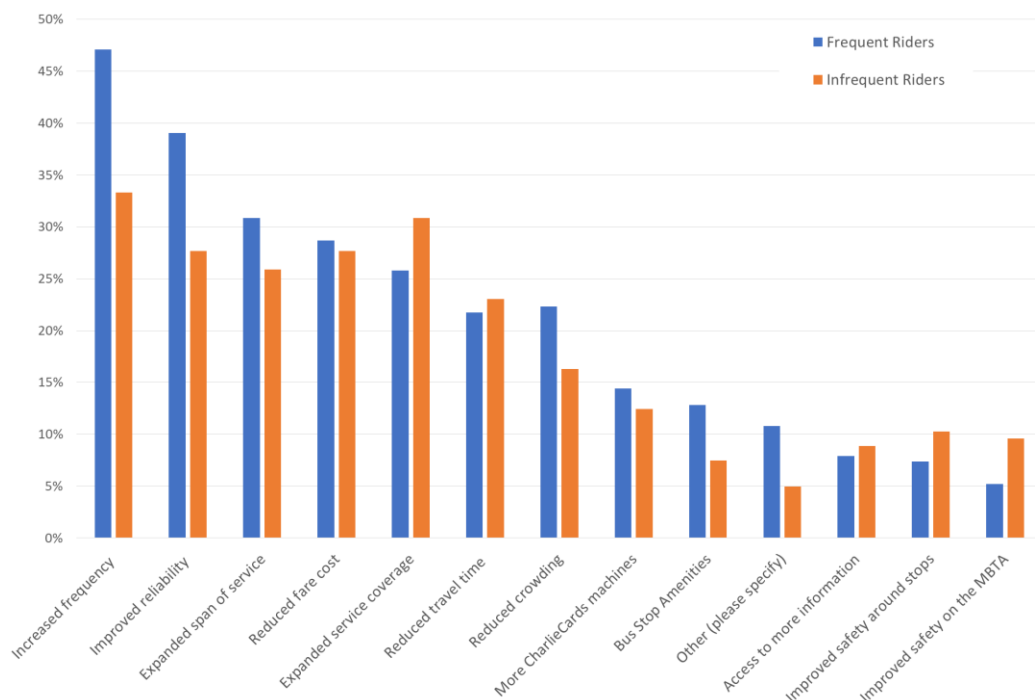
Low-income households and high-income households have considerably different reasons for not using MBTA services more often.

- The top reason that respondents from high-income households cited for not using the MBTA more often is a preference for driving, while the top reason cited by respondents from low-income households is that service is too expensive. However, a preference for driving was the second most selected reason for respondents from low-income households.
- Respondents from high-income households selected infrequent service, a lack of direct routes to their destinations, and service not running at convenient times as other reasons.

- Respondents from low-income households selected at higher rates not knowing enough about the service and services being too slow as compared to respondents from high-income households.

What is the primary reason you do not use the MBTA more often?

■ Households making less than $44,500 per year (n=55)   ■ Households making $44,500 and above per year (n=117)

CONCLUSIONS
The results of this public input survey provide additional context and support for the findings of the Existing Conditions Analysis that was conducted using ridership and travel data, as well as other qualitative information collected from project stakeholders.

Local bus service and services connecting to Boston provide critical access to destinations for many residents, especially for low-income households. As with other parts of the region, improvements to frequency and reliability are the highest priority for frequent and non-frequent transit riders. Fare costs and access to information about services are important barriers particularly for low-income households. Strategies to address these issues could both benefit current riders and encourage infrequent riders to use transit more often.

Using this data, the Lynn Transit Action Plan will analyze and recommend potential strategies for improving transit services both within Lynn and to regional destinations and employment centers. Those strategies may include changes to the built environment including installation of bus lanes, transit signal priority, bus stop amenities, and changes to services themselves including additional off-peak service, frequency adjustments, and route modifications. Strategies will continue to be analyzed and refined through the stakeholder engagement process.