



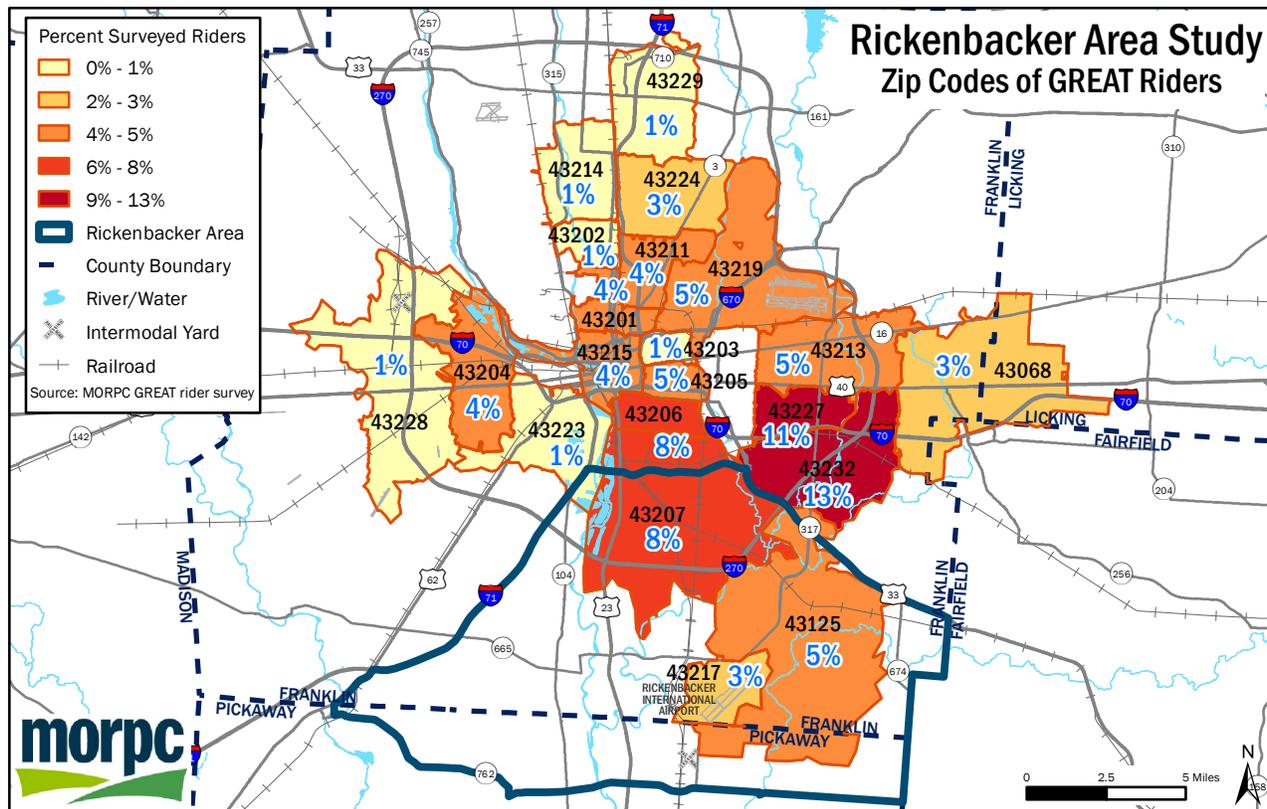
GREAT ON-BOARD SURVEY BACKGROUND

The Groveport Rickenbacker Employee Access Transit (GREAT) Shuttle service connects COTA riders to businesses located in the Rickenbacker area. The shuttle service is operated by the City of Groveport and Village of Obetz, and is free to all riders. GREAT shuttles coordinate with COTA lines 22 and 24, which both stop at the Marathon gas station located in the northeast quadrant of Alum Creek Drive and SR 317/ London Groveport Road. Three GREAT shuttles leave from the Marathon and stop at various businesses along three different routes, closing the last mile transportation gap for COTA riders. On weekdays, the shuttles run continuous loops beginning and ending at the Marathon, during two shifts per day – 5:45-9 a.m., 1:45-5:30 p.m., and on-demand from 8:15-10:15 p.m. Weekend service is on-demand only. The three different routes have between nine and 13 stops each at various locations in the Rickenbacker area.

On Tuesday November 28, 2017, MORPC conducted an on-board survey of the GREAT shuttle service. This survey was conducted in collaboration with COTA and the City of Groveport. Its purpose was to learn more about the challenges facing everyday users of COTA and GREAT shuttle services, and from where they were commuting to work. The survey was delivered by three teams of two people (two people on each route), and in two shifts. The first shift was from 5:30-8:30 a.m., and the second from 1:30-5:30 p.m. The results of the survey are summarized here, as well as information MORPC learned from GREAT shuttle drivers, its riders, and field observations.

SURVEY RESULTS

- A total of 77 surveys were completed and usable, out of a total of 134 riders during the shifts surveyed (57% of riders completed a usable survey). This surpassed the minimum number needed to make the survey statistically significant. Expansion factors were calculated and applied to responses to better represent total ridership on the day the survey was administered.
- During the survey, 69% were traveling from home to work, and 31% traveled from work to home.
- The largest percentage of riders commuted from the southeast Columbus area.
- The home zip codes of the riders are as indicated on the graphic below:





SURVEY RESULTS CONTINUED

- The top employers of riders are:
 1. Eddie Bauer (13.4%)
 2. CTDI (10.4%)
 3. FedEx (8.6%)
 4. Gap, Inc. (7.5%)
 5. Toys R Us (4.9%)
- 94% of riders use a COTA bus as part of their commute.
- 56% of riders indicated there were zero working vehicles available to their household. 25% indicated there was one working vehicle available to their household.
- 27% of riders reported having to walk for longer than 5 minutes to reach their destination.
- Of those riders who indicated they walk 5 minutes or more:
 - 52% said there are no sidewalks on their walking route
 - Of those who said there are no sidewalks, 72% reported they do not feel safe from vehicular traffic on their walk.
 - 33% said there were sidewalks on only parts of their walking route.
 - Of those who said there are sidewalks on only part of their walking route, 9% reported they do not feel safe from vehicular traffic on their walk.
 - 15% said, yes, there are sidewalks on their walking route
 - Of those who said there are sidewalks, 39% reported they do not feel safe from vehicular traffic on their walk.



COTA SERVICE OBSERVATIONS

- More frequent COTA buses (Route 22) are needed in the mornings, especially during peak season. The buses are often filled to capacity, forcing riders to wait for the next one. COTA's ridership data for Line 22 on the day of the survey confirms this observation. To mitigate, COTA has added buses to Line 22 in the early morning hours.
- COTA timeliness needs: When the COTA bus is late, it forces the GREAT bus to be late (it waits for COTA bus at Marathon each round). COTA's on time performance data for Lines 22 and 24 indicates that these lines were more than 5 minutes late approximately 15% of the time on the day of the survey which is on par with the rest of COTA's service.
- Workers are given no exceptions on lateness, so COTA timeliness directly affects job retention in the area. (GREAT standard operating procedure is to hold no longer than 10 minutes beyond scheduled departure times in these instances.)





GREAT SERVICE OBSERVATIONS

- Regular buses (or at least on-call service) are needed between 8:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. Non-peak season shifts start/end between those times.
- There is a communication gap about the availability of service. Riders do not seem to know about it, nor about the Gohio emergency ride home service.
- Frequently, the presence of parked vehicles (someone in them waiting) in the GREAT shuttle's turnaround at Toys r Us causes GREAT shuttle difficulty in maneuvering.
- In every shuttle, the bus drivers knew many of the riders and their schedules. They were cognizant of their needs and even knew which COTA bus they needed to catch to get home. They also stopped to pick up passengers along that route that were not at stops, and they went out of their way to ensure people were at least given the option of taking a ride.
- Some riders hold two jobs in the area, and use GREAT to travel from one to the other.



SAFETY OBSERVATIONS

- The Marathon station has become a hub of near constant pedestrian and vehicular activity. COTA and GREAT riders walk across the lot to go into the store to pick up beverages, snacks, etc. Automobiles enter/exit, circulate, and park to utilize the fuel station and convenience store. The GREAT buses pull in, park, and circulate the lot to exit. As activity increases the volume of pedestrians, automobiles, and transit vehicles, with no formal patterns or predictability, creates potentially hazardous conditions for pedestrians and vehicles.
- The survey team observed poor pedestrian visibility during the early morning and evening along the shuttle routes due to lack of street lighting. Combined with no sidewalks, and as employment increases and more workers are walking along these routes, the need to address street lighting is becoming a significant safety factor. High pedestrian activity in the following road segments with no street lighting nor sidewalks include:
 - Shook Road from SR 317 to Alum Creek Drive
 - Rohr Road from Creekside Parkway , to SR 317 east of Alum Creek Drive
 - Spiegel Drive from Shook Road to Port Road.
 - Port Road from Rohr Road to SR 317.





SAFETY OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

Intersection safety issues were identified at the following locations:

- Creekside Parkway and Rohr Road visibility issues when turning left or driving through intersection due to landscaping enhancements on the northwest corner of the intersection (trees, CREEKSIDE sign, etc.).



- Rohr Road and Shook Road intersection – many drivers ignore the stop sign, GREAT drivers reported many near-miss incidents.



GREAT RIDERS' CONVERSATIONS

- Many riders mentioned how long their total commute takes. One rider mentioned that it takes him two hours (each way) to travel from the North Columbus / Worthington area. These same people mentioned that they have been late to work due to the time it takes to commute and COTA timeliness issues.
- There appeared to be a littering problem along the routes, but no available trash receptacles along the routes.
- Many of the riders commented on how the route could be expanded to reach additional employment centers.
- Riders indicated a need for a shuttle on the “Columbus side,” specifically pointing out that Funai needs employees but people have trouble getting there.
- Many riders pointed out the need for better weekend service.
- Some riders were commuting to work with luggage, and upon conversing with them, we learned they are living in homeless shelters and trying to transition into stable housing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT morpc.org/rickenbackerstudy.

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