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# Transit District Pleased With Bus Survey

## Sentinel

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Most Santa Cruz County residents recently surveyed have a positive attitude toward riding the bus.

Results of a telephone survey of some 631 residents and an onboard survey of 461 bus riders for the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments have been released by Transit Research and Marketing, Inc. of Orange County.

Survey statistics have been compiled and will be announced to Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District directors at their Friday morning meeting.

Eighty-five percent of those surveyed gave the district a "positive" rating, which, the report says "is considerably higher" than in companion surveys taken in the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas transit district areas.

The predominant reason for the high rating, according to the survey, was good or improving service, service available close to customers and good on-time performance. A distant second reason cited was "public transportation is needed."

Only 37 of the 613 persons called reported negative attitudes, and 75 percent were complaints that there is not enough service. Nearly one-third (30 percent) of those surveyed by telephone claimed to have ridden the bus. Use was reported highest among the low-income group (44 percent by those earning less than \$10,000), youth (78 percent of 16-17-year-olds), Hispanics (47 percent and those with no vehicles (51 percent).

Residents of Santa Cruz claimed to ride the bus more than those in other areas. Per-

centages include Santa Cruz 34, Scotts Valley 30 and Watsonville 24.

The only real negative results produced by the survey came from handicapped persons, with only 6 percent of whom claimed to have ridden the bus recently.

Persons surveyed aboard buses gave 13 reasons for using the public transportation. The chief reason cited was that riding the bus is more economical than driving a car (32 percent). Other frequent responses included no other mode available (27 percent), convenience (18) and to conserve energy during

the fuel shortage (15).

Fifty-nine percent of those queried aboard buses reported riding five or more times per week. Another 27 percent claimed to ride between one and four times per week. Results were slightly lower from

the telephone survey, which showed 26 percent saying they rode one to four times per week, but only 21 percent saying they rode five or more times per week.

The onboard survey found that most riders were going to

school (38 percent), followed by shopping (28). Most responding to the telephone survey said they rode the bus for shopping (52), followed by school (24) and work (23).

When asked which improvements they'd like to see, 16 percent of those questioned on board said more frequent service (16 percent).

More service to specified areas was the top response in the telephone survey (18 percent), followed by making bus schedules more available (10) and more frequent service (9). Fifty-two percent of those queried said they would be like-

ly to ride the bus if the improvements they suggested were made.

Scott Galloway, general manager of the district, says he is pleased by the survey results, especially the high percentage of responses of favorable impression. He also is happy to learn that 30 percent of those questioned by telephone said they had ridden the bus in the past month.

And, he said he is further pleased that the most often listed negative comment was that service is not frequent enough or serving a specific area.