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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability, in coordination with a consortium of municipalities, organizations, and stakeholders, is in the process of developing the Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan. The study area includes a three-state, four-county region that is roughly consistent with the Memphis urbanized area. The region is centered on the City of Memphis and includes Shelby County and Fayette County, Tennessee, as well as parts of northern Mississippi (DeSoto County) and eastern Arkansas (Crittenden County). The Greenprint is a wide reaching effort designed to create a regional vision and strategic plan that will strengthen economic opportunities and ensure growth is in sync with other regional goals and objectives, including environmental stewardship and equity. A key part of the project is designed to ensure that the benefits generated by regional growth are accessible to the broader community and distributed equitably across the region.

One of the sub-tasks associated with the Mid-South Regional Greenprint Plan is the Bus Transit to Workplace Study. This study examines regional employment markets and the corresponding available transportation options to identify strategies for improving the accessibility of the regional job market. The end product for the study will be recommendations for improving access to employment and the regional multimodal transportation network. Shelby County retained a team of consultants led by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to conduct the Bus Transit to Workplace Study.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The over-riding goal of both the employer and employee survey was to understand transportation challenges associated with getting to and from work and to identify programs that might help address these challenges. The key findings from the surveys related to this issue are:

- Employers were reluctant to participate in the survey and generally speaking were not especially concerned with employee commutes, which is consistent with findings from the commuter survey in which 84% of commuters said transportation has not prevented them from taking a job.

- Nevertheless, roughly a third (31%) of employers said employees do have challenges with transportation and this can affect their ability to hire and retain employees. These employers said employees can be challenged by commute costs, lack of access to a private vehicle, and the need for more public transportation.

- Consistent with this finding, 16% of commuters said they have not taken or changed jobs because of a difficult commute. The reasons cited as making work difficult include costs, long travel times, lack of public transportation and traffic.

- A portion of employers (roughly identified in this survey as about 30%) said their staffing levels change over the course of the year. Employers who hire seasonal employees, mostly hire them during the traditional holiday season (Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year).

- Most employers provide employees with “free” parking and few reported having parking challenges, such as a shortage of parking space; however, most employers also said they are located within a mile of a MATA bus stop.

- Although 88% of commuters have access to a vehicle that they are able to use every day, only 78% drive their vehicle to work. This means that 22% of commuters are taking alternative transportation methods to work and 10% have the option to drive but choose to take alternative transportation.
From an employer perspective, employees do not have a lot of flexibility with regards to their work start and end times. Commuters, however, tended to say they do have some flexibility.

Most of the employees who filled out a survey, reported having work schedules that are aligned with “traditional” work shifts, starting between 7:00 am and 9:00 am and ending between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm during weekdays. Weekend shifts only varied slightly from the “traditional” work shift periods.

METHODOLOGY

As part of the Bus Transit to Workplace Study, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates conducted separate, but related surveys with employers and employees to understand the transportation challenges associated with getting to work in the Mid-South region. These surveys include:

- Regional employers aimed at gaining the employer’s perspective
- Commuters aimed at gaining the employees’ perspective

Surveying these two groups was intended to get “both sides” of the story regarding work commutes in the Mid-South region and ultimately to help the study team identify strategies that will offer more options and flexibility for both employers and commuters. It is also worth noting that the surveys are closely related because many of the employers interviewed for the survey distributed the commuter survey to their employees.

Employer Survey

The Mid-South Regional Employer Survey was administered through phone interviews between August 2013 and October 2013 by staff from Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates and Trust Marketing, Inc. A list of employers was compiled from two sources: Doing Business in Memphis, a directory and database of Memphis and Shelby County business and industry, and the Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce. From this larger list, a smaller list was created for “major employers” (100 employees or more) which were initially targeted for participation in the survey. Once all of the major employers were contacted, staff contacted other employers on the larger list.

While the survey was publicized, most employers contacted by surveyors were “cold called” meaning they had no advance warning of the survey. In total, approximately 375 employers were called at least once for a yield of 96 completed interviews, which includes 17 employer interviews that were completed with a similar, but more detailed list of questions.²

The response rate to the employer survey was quite low, with about 25% of the contacted employers participating in the survey. This response rate may be interpreted to mean that many employers do not identify transportation as a major concern. There were, however, several efforts to increase awareness of the survey; staff from Trust Marketing attended the Memphis Minority Businesses Expo and handed out business cards with information about the survey and scheduled calls with employers for several weeks in September. Additionally, staff from the consultant team attended the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) October meeting to tell people about the survey and give them an opportunity to schedule a time for the survey. SHRM also advertised the survey in their September 2013 newsletter.

Questions on the Employer Survey focused on the following information:

² For the full analysis of the 17 more detailed employer interviews completed as part of this project, see the Mid-South Regional Greenprint Bus Transit to Workplace Stakeholder Report, November 2013.
Employer profile: location and number of employees at each company/organization location
Employee work shifts: shift times, pay grades, and travel behaviors
Whether transportation is an issue for employees
Transportation resources available onsite

Commuter Survey

The Mid-South Regional Commuter Survey was administered between August 2013 and November 2013 via the online surveying platform Survey Monkey. A handful of surveys were also distributed as paper surveys by the Memphis Bus Riders Union. As mentioned, the survey was primarily distributed by the employers who participated in the employer survey. This approach was intentional; however, it should be noted that there is a bias in the survey towards office workers. In total, 669 commuters responded to the survey, which includes 245 employees of St. Jude Hospital. The Commuter Survey was publicized through a few different efforts:

- Online on the Mid-South Regional Greenprint website.
- Through the Employer Survey itself. Nelson\Nygaard and Trust Marketing Staff asked each employer during the survey if they would also send out the commuter survey to their employees. St. Jude Hospital made the largest effort to get the survey out to their employees by sending out an email request for all employees to complete the survey.
- Presentations and staff available at the Memphis Minority Businesses Expo and SHRM October meeting.
- SHRM also advertised the Commuter Survey in their September 2013 newsletter at the same time as the Employer Survey.

The Commuter Survey asked questions to determine the following:

- General information about the commuter: age, home and work zip code
- Employment: employment status, length of employment, and hourly pay rate
- Work shift: shift start and end times and degree of flexibility
- Commuting habits: mode of travel to work, access to a vehicle, length of commute, and regular stops along daily commute
- Commuting challenges: effect commute has on taking a job, reasons for making commute difficult, and ideas to help with commute
MID-SOUTH REGIONAL EMPLOYER SURVEY

As discussed, the employer survey focused on collecting information about the employers, understanding work schedules, commute needs and the availability of programs to support commuting (see Appendix A).

Employer Profiles

Industry Sector

As mentioned, the employer survey focused on the largest employers (in terms of number of employees) and the sample included a range of different industry sectors with 17 different sectors participating (see Figure 1). The sectors with the most participants are transportation/distribution with 17 participants (16%), manufacturing with 16 participants (15%), retail with 11 participants (11%), and healthcare with 11 participants (11%).

Number and Type of Employees

A mix of both small and large employers participated in the Employer Survey; the smallest employer has 46 employees and the largest has 9,947 employees. The healthcare, education, and manufacturing sectors have the highest number of employees and finance, automotive, and security sectors have the lowest number of employees (see Figure 2).

In addition to asking about industry sector, employers were also asked about the percentage of hourly workers as compared to managers/supervisors. The finance, education, and healthcare sectors are the only sectors that have a greater number of supervisors compared to hourly employees. The other sectors have a greater percentage of hourly workers than supervisors (see Figure 3).
### FIGURE 3  SECTORS WITH A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th># Hourly</th>
<th>% Hourly</th>
<th># Supervisors</th>
<th>% Supervisors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>2460</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech/IT</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2908</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate/Construction</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>1649</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Services</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Hiring

Another key question was the extent to which employers hire additional employees during certain times of the year. Data from the survey suggests that the majority of the employers (70%) who participated in the survey do not hire seasonally and thus do not add employees during certain times of the year.

For the 30% of total employers who do hire additional employees during certain times of the year, 20 employers hire during the holiday season—roughly between Thanksgiving and early January (see Figure 4). Only one employer hires employees for on-call work sporadically throughout the year. Two employers are closed during the summer months.

Available Transportation Options and Incentives

Parking

Although employers were not specifically asked their employee’s primary mode of travel to work, they were asked about the availability of parking. For most employers participating in the survey, having ample employee parking is a priority. Indeed, only two employers do not have parking available onsite for their employees. As shown in Figure 5, participating employers have a wide range of parking spaces available for their employees:

- Twenty employers have between 1 and 50 surface parking spaces
- Fourteen employers have between 251 and 1,000 surface parking spaces
- Three employers have 1-50 spaces available in a covered garage
- Two employers have 250-1,000 spaces available in a covered garage

Overall, participating employers with a concrete number of spaces have 15,728 surface spaces and 3,292 spaces in garages. Several employers responded that they “have enough” parking or were unsure of the exact number of spaces, but these employers noted that there is “plenty of parking” for their employees.
Proximity to MATA Bus Stop

The majority of the employers (76%) participating in the study said that their company is located near a MATA bus stop (see Figure 6). Most employers (65%) said that the MATA bus stop is located less than a quarter of a mile away from their location. Overall, 88% of employers have a MATA bus stop located within a mile of their location, as shown in Figure 7.
Alternative Transportation Incentives

The federal government provides up to $245 per month in tax incentives for employees who commute to work via transit and vanpool, and a $20 monthly bonus for employees who commute by bicycling. This program has been available since the year 2000, but the majority (85%) of participating employers surveyed had not even heard of these programs (see Figure 8)

Additionally, as shown in Figure 9, only 18 employers currently offer any sort of alternative transportation incentives to their employees. The incentive most commonly offered by employers is carpools or ride-matching programs; eighteen employers said that they offer these programs to their employees. Three employers said that they offer alternative commute information programs, such as bike to work day, transit information, etc. to their employees. Additionally, three employers offer a shuttle system for employees and one employer offers pre-tax commuter incentives such as transit passes. An additional three employers had “other” types of transportation programs they offered to employees.
Employee Work Shifts and Pay Ranges

Work Shifts

Employers were asked to describe their employees work shifts in order to understand the commuting demand profile. Most employers (78%) have more than one work shift for their employees. Of those with more than one shift, 35% have two shifts, 46% have three shifts, and 19% have four shifts (see Figure 10). Work shifts vary by the hour, but generally morning and early morning shifts account for 67% of shifts, as shown in Figure 11. Afternoon shifts (15%) and late night shifts (11%) were more prevalent than evening shifts (7%). Most work shifts last between 8.5 to 10 hours (71%) (see Figure 12).

In summary, the data identifies the predominant work shift that begins in the morning and lasts between 8.5 and 10 hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Shift</th>
<th>Shift Start Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Morning</td>
<td>Between 3am and 7am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Between 8am and 11am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Between 12pm and 4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Between 5pm and 8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Night</td>
<td>Between 9pm and 2am</td>
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</table>

Work Shifts by Location

By examining the areas with the highest number of employers who participated in the survey, certain work shift by location trends become evident. The predominante work shift of employers located near the airport is the shift beginning in the early morning (3am to 7am), while the predominant work shift of the employers in downtown Memphis is the shift that begins at the regular morning start time (8am-11am). The predominante work shift for employers who work near Germantown is also during the regular morning period, as shown in Figure 13.
FIGURE 13  WORK SHIFTS BY LOCATION
Work Shift Flexibility

Employers were asked whether their employees needed to start and end work at an exact time or if they had some flexibility as to when their shift began and ended. The majority of employers (63%) said that their employees start and end times are not flexible. In these cases, employees have to get to work before their shift starts and this often means they must arrive at work a few minutes before they begin working. Only 17% of employers have flexible work shifts that allow employees to have some leeway in their work start and end times, as shown in Figure 14. This is important to know when planning transportation options because it means that any new options have to allow time before the start and after the end of each shift to allow employees to prepare.

Hourly Pay Rates

Employers were asked to provide the average pay rates for their hourly employees, which will help identify how changes in the cost of transportation impact an employee’s income. As shown in Figure 15, the majority of employers (70%) pay their hourly employees more than $12 per hour – 42% of employers pay $12-$15 per hour and 28% pay more than $15 per hour – and only 4% pay less than $8 per hour (the minimum wage in Tennessee is $7.25 per hour).

To put this hourly rate in perspective, employees who have to travel about 15-20 miles each way to work (such as those commuting from Downtown Memphis to Ingram Micro in Millington) could spend as much as $22 per day on transportation, which is about 1.5 hours of paid work.

FIGURE 14 EMPLOYEE WORK SHIFT FLEXIBILITY

FIGURE 15 SALARY BY EMPLOYER FOR HOURLY WORKERS
Perception of Need

Generally, employers do not perceive transportation to be a challenge for them in hiring and retaining employees. The majority of employers (69%) said that transportation is not a challenge, noting how the vast majority of employees drive their own vehicle and park in free parking at the employer’s location (Figure 16). Employers who said that transportation is an issue for their employees (31%) stated that these challenges stem from a variety of reasons:

- Some employees depend on limited bus service to get to work
- Employees who live in downtown Memphis do not have cars so it is difficult for them to get to a job that is not accessible by public transit
- When gas prices increase, driving becomes prohibitively expensive for some employees
- Some employees have to get rides from other employees because they do not own a car
- Employees take the bus to work, but then their work shift will change and they will need to go home but the bus only runs during certain times of the day
- For those employees who get paid the lowest salaries, the cost of driving a personal vehicle is too costly
- Parking fees on college and hospital campuses are a problem
- Most people drive to work, but if more reliable public transportation was available, many employees would take it

Employers who Perceive Transportation as a Challenge

For the 31% of participating employers who do perceive transportation to be a challenge for them in hiring and retaining employees, the following analysis was completed to obtain further information.

There were a higher number of employers who perceive transportation to be a problem for employees in five different areas: near the airport, Germantown, Bartlett, downtown Memphis, and Millington (as shown in Figure 17 – Location of Employers – Figure 17.
FIGURE 17  LOCATION OF EMPLOYERS – TRANSPORTATION IS A CHALLENGE
As shown in Figure 18, employers who perceive transportation as a challenge are largely in healthcare, transportation/distribution, staffing - and to a lesser extent, manufacturing - sectors.

![Figure 18](image)

Surprisingly, the hourly amount that employers pay their employees does not have an impact on whether employers perceive that their employees find transportation a challenge, as shown in Figure 19. It is not surprising; however, that the majority of these employers have work shifts that begin in the early morning (between 3am-7am), as shown in Figure 20.

![Figure 19](image)

![Figure 20](image)

Proximity of an employer’s location to a MATA bus stop does not seem to affect whether that employer perceives transportation to be a challenge for their employees, as shown in Figure 21. Nine of these employers located are within 1/10th of a mile walking distance from a MATA bus stop. Only four of these employers are not within walking distance of any MATA bus stops.

![Figure 21](image)
MID-SOUTH REGIONAL COMMUTER SURVEY

The commuter survey was designed to collect the experiences and perceptions of people commuting to and from work in the Mid-South Region. The survey was primarily distributed on-line and via the employers who also participated in the employer survey; however, the survey was also advertised in a number of venues and in some cases was available as a paper survey. A copy of the commuter survey is available in Appendix A.

Commuter Profile

Commuter Age

The majority of commuters who responded to the Mid-South Regional Commuter Survey are between the ages of 25 and 54 (67%) (see Figure 22).

Employee Home and Work Zip Codes

The survey asked commuters to provide their home and work zip code, which was used to develop a map (see Figure 23) showing the most common travel to work patterns.

The most common travel to work patterns are as follows:

- Midtown Memphis (38104) to Downtown Memphis (38103)
- Midtown Memphis (38104) to Midtown Memphis (38104)
- Memphis near I-240/Airport (38111) to Downtown Memphis (38103)
- Midtown Memphis (38112) to Midtown Memphis (38112)
- Downtown Memphis (38103) to Downtown Memphis (38103)
- Midtown Memphis (38112) to Downtown Memphis (38103)
- North Memphis (38107) to Downtown Memphis (38103)
- West Memphis (72301) to West Memphis (72301)
- Midtown Memphis (38112) to Midtown Memphis (38104)
- Midtown Memphis (38104) to Memphis (near I-240 38111)
- Midtown Memphis (38104) to Midtown Memphis (38112)
- Midtown Memphis (38104) to Memphis below Poplar Avenue near U of M (38152)
- Collierville (38017) to Memphis near Germantown (38197)
- Memphis New Pathways (38126) to Memphis New Pathways (38126) commuters
FIGURE 23 COMMON TRAVEL TO WORK PATTERNS
Employment Profile

Employment Status

As shown in Figure 24, most of the survey respondents are employed full-time (79%). Only 8% are employed part-time, plus another 3% said they are unemployed but looking for employment and 2% identified themselves as not working. Additionally, about 5% identified themselves as students.

Length of Employment and Hourly Pay Rate

In general, respondents to the survey reported working for their current employer for multiple years (see Figure 25). More than 50% of commuters have been working for their current employer for more than five years and 32% have been working for their current employer for more than ten years. Only 18% of employers have been working for their current employer for one year or less.

Commuters also reported their hourly pay rates by identifying a range. Overall, hourly pay per hour is relatively high; the minimum wage in Tennessee is $7.25 per hour. 75% of respondents are paid $15 or more per hour, 11% are paid $12-15 per hour, 11% are paid $8-$12 per hour, and only 3% reported being paid less than $8 per hour.
Work Shifts

Generally speaking, commuters reported that they arrive and depart from work during the standard business hours, roughly 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. This schedule is constant regardless of the work day, including Saturday and Sunday.

Work Days

As shown in Figure 27, commuters who participated in the survey generally work Monday to Friday (about 500 commuters per day). Friday has almost 50 less commuters than on Monday, most likely because some commuters are allowed to work from home on Friday. Saturday and Sunday each have about 1/5 the number of weekday commuters. Only 120 people commute to work on Saturday and only 100 on Sunday.

Weekday Work Shifts

Slightly less than 50% of commuters begin work on weekdays at 8:00 am and about 40% of them arrive either at 7:00 am or 9:00 am, which means that more than 85% of commuters arrive at work between 7:00 am and 9:00 am (see Figure 28). There is a small group of commuters (about 5%) who arrive at work at either 6:00 am or 10:00 am, plus another cluster of commuters who arrive at work between 3:00 pm and 9:00 pm.

More than 40% of commuters depart work at 5:00 pm, and almost 40% depart at either 4:00 pm or 6:00 pm, which means that almost 80% depart work between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. This finding is also consistent with the employer data which suggests most employers have shift lengths of between 8.5 and 10 hours.
**Weekend Work Shifts**

Similar to weekdays, commuters generally stick to the 8:00 am start time and 5:00 pm end time on Saturday and Sunday. As shown in Figure 29, about 50% of commuters arrive at work on the weekend at 8:00 am and a little more than 30% of them arrive either at 7:00 am or 9:00 am, which means that more than 80% of commuters arrive at work between 7:00 am and 9:00 am, even on the weekend.

Unlike the weekday schedule, however, there is a larger group of commuters who arrive at work later in the morning between 9:30 and 10:00 am (almost 10%) than 6:00 am (only 2%). The outliers to the traditional “8 to 5” commuters tend to arrive at work between 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm to start an afternoon work shift.

About 40% of commuters depart work at 5:00 pm on the weekend (Sunday has a higher percentage than Saturday), and more than 20% depart at either 4:00 pm or 6:00 pm, which means that about 60% depart work between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. There are also a handful of commuters (about 10%) who depart work at either 3:00 pm or 7:00 pm and about 10% of commuters leave work at 7:00 or 8:00 am (and likely started at 7:00 or 8:00 pm the day before). Another 5% of commuters leave at 11:00 pm (and likely started between 12:00 and 3:00 pm that same day).

**FIGURE 29 WEEKEND SHIFT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES (SATURDAY AND SUNDAY)**

**Flexibility of Work Shift**

Employers and commuters were both asked about flexibility in work start and end times. The majority of employers (73%) said that there is no flexibility; however, the majority of commuters (83%) said that they have at least some flexibility in their work start and end times. The difference between the two questions is that the employers were given an open ended response and commuters had to choose from levels of flexibility. But they are essentially the same question.

46% of commuters have flexible schedules meaning that their employer allows them to begin and end work at slightly different times than their official start time (allowing them additional time to prepare). The next largest group of commuters (25%) has somewhat flexible work schedules meaning that they are allowed to arrive and leave a few minutes early or late for work. A small percentage of commuters (17%) have no flexibility and need to arrive and leave work at the exact same time. An even smaller percentage (12%) of commuters said that their work schedule is very flexible allowing them to set their own work hours, as shown in Figure 30.
Travel to Work

Mode of Travel

As discussed in the Employer Survey, the Commuter Survey asked participants to pick the mode of transportation they most frequently take to work. The majority of commuters who participated in the survey (78%) drive their own vehicle alone to and from work (see Figure 31). The next most common modes of travel are public transportation (7%), and carpooling/sharing a ride with family or friends (7%). Only 4% of commuters ride their bicycle to work and another 2% walk to work.

Interestingly, even though 88% of commuters have access to a vehicle that they are able to use every day (see Figure 32), only 78% drive their vehicle to work. This means that 10% have the option to drive but choose to take alternative transportation.
Commute Time and Regular Stops

The majority of commuters (88%) reported spending 45 minutes or less getting to or from work (see Figure 33). The most common commute time is 16-30 minutes (37%), followed by 0-15 minutes (29%) and 31-45 minutes (22%). Only 5% of commuters spent more than an hour and 7% spend between 46 minutes and an hour commuting to work.

Commuters were also asked how often they make the regular stops along their commute to work. As shown in Figure 34, the majority of commuters (65%) do not make regular stops on their way into work. The 45% of commuters who do make regular stops are primarily dropping off/picking up children (17%) or run personal errands (12%).

Travel to Work Obstacles

A regional concern is that people have to turn down or change jobs due to the lack of affordable transportation options in the region. The survey asked commuters if they ever had to turn down or change jobs because transportation to and from work is too difficult. The majority of commuters (84%) said they have not had to turn down or change jobs because of a difficult commute, but 16% of commuters have experienced a commute that was enough of an obstacle to warrant leaving a job or turning one down (see Figure 35).

When asked about the factors that make their commute to work challenging, the most common response (30%) is that the cost of gas, car ownership and car maintenance is very high (see Figure 36). Other common responses are as follows:

- The commute time or distance is too long (18%)
- The MATA bus does not come often enough or at the right time (16%)
- Traffic along the way is a problem (14%)
Very few commuters think that issues with their carpool, the walk to or from the bus station, or the cost of the bus are factors in making their commute difficult.

**Ideas for Improvement**

Commuters were asked to choose among six listed ideas that interested them the most and, potentially, could encourage them to use a different way to get to and/or from work (see Figure 37). Commuters were interested in the following:

- Improvements to sidewalks and/or walking paths (50%, 223 responses)
- More bus service (46%, 219 responses)
- More bicycle lanes, paths or routes to/from work (43%, 197 responses)
- Buses at different times (39%, 173 responses)
- A program that helps pay for bus passes (24%, 107 responses)
- Help arranging a carpool or vanpool (15.6%, 70 responses)
Commuters were also given the option to add a written comment at the end of the survey of other ideas or suggestions that would make getting to work easier for them. 143 commuters provided suggestions that were useful for this study. These were then grouped into categories, as detailed below (see Figure 38):

- Improve and/or add non-bus mode options, e.g. biking/walking/carpool lane/light rail (35%, 50 responses)
- More bus routes/more frequent bus schedules (34%, 48 responses)
- More commuter service, e.g. bus/rail/park and ride options (13%, 19 responses)
- Bus amenities and/or comfort issues, e.g. bus shelters, real time info, more seats on buses, unsafe, etc. (8%, 12 responses)
- Later and/or earlier service (5%, 7 responses)
- On time performance issues (3%, 5 responses)
- Cost of service and/or funding issues (1%, 2 responses)

**FIGURE 38  SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of suggestions in different categories](image)