



Take our onboard transit survey to help plan transit services in our region.

From September to October 2024, a survey will be conducted on fixed-route transit vehicles throughout the Buffalo Niagara region. If you ride transit, you may be approached by a surveyor in a blue vest and asked to answer a few questions.

This survey helps NFTA – Metro understand how the transit system is being used. Your responses help our planners understand who rides the bus, where they are coming from and going to, and how long their trip takes. This information helps us to update a regional travel demand model, which shows how people travel throughout the region and is used to plan multimodal transportation facilities and services in the region. The transit survey information also helps transit agencies make improvements to the system to make sure services are meeting the needs of all riders.

We need your help to plan transportation services for the future! Riders will be selected at random to take the survey. If you are asked to participate, it takes about five minutes to complete the survey.

Onboard Transit Passenger Survey

NFTA-Metro are conducting a survey onboard all fixed bus and rail routes in the region from September to October 2024 in order to inform transit planning. During this period, interviewers with tablet computers will ask randomly selected passengers questions about their transit trips. Surveyors may also approach commuter passengers and ask riders to participate in a self-administered paper survey. For further details, please refer to the frequently asked questions below.

What is the Onboard Transit Passenger Survey?

The survey is a study of how people use transit to travel in the Buffalo Niagara region. Questions focus on trip behavior and demographics. Your responses will help NFTA-Metro

better understand travel patterns and choices of transit riders. This information will be used to plan transit infrastructure improvements and service augmentation.

How often are these studies performed and why now?

Onboard transit passenger studies are typically conducted every five years. The region's last survey was conducted in 2021. Since that time, our region has changed and up to date travel data is needed to make transportation improvements.

Who is conducting the study?

NFTA-Metro hired a contractor to conduct the onboard transit passenger survey. The people you see on the bus and train administering the surveys are contracted employees. The data, however, belongs to NFTA-Metro.

How do I take the survey?

Interviewers with tablet computers will randomly select passengers to take the survey. (The tablet computer tells the interviewer who to pick based on a random number formula.) Random selection is necessary to ensure that the data are statistically valid. While volunteers are not allowed to take the survey, we appreciate your participation if you are selected. For express services, surveyors will approach passengers and ask them to complete a self-administered paper survey and return the paper form to the surveyor after it has been completely filled out.

How long will it take to complete the survey?

Your individual survey will take about five minutes to complete.

Why do you need to ask about personal information such as income? What does that have to do with how I use transit?

NFTA-Metro is required to collect specific demographic data about passengers including race, household income, and language proficiency in order to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This information is submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approximately every five years. Also, studies have shown that certain household characteristics, such as income, are key indicators of travel behavior. By understanding these relationships, planners are better able to predict how recommended service improvements will perform.

Please keep in mind that personal information is removed from all records and the results are aggregated, a measure that ensures your privacy and anonymity.

What if I am asked to participate in the survey more than once?

If you are selected more than once, we would appreciate your participation each time you are selected.

How will I know that the interviewer is legitimate?

Official survey staff members wear a uniform consisting of a blue vest and surveyor badge. They carry tablet computers and will never ask you for information such as your social security number or bank account information.

What if I have a complaint or a concern about a specific interviewer?

Please note a description of the interviewer and email the project manager at the email below. Please include all relevant information (date/time/location of encounter, reason for concern), so that the matter can be investigated. (NFTA Contact Info Here)

Is the survey available online?

No. Since the survey asks about the specific transit trip, only passengers who are on transit on the survey day are being selected for interviews.

Are people with disabilities included in the survey?

Yes. All persons riding transit during the survey period are included in the random selection methodology. Interviewers can assist customers with disabilities in completing the survey, or they can provide a paper version of the survey, the option to complete it later by phone, or a handout with details about how to request accommodation.

Is the survey available in other languages?

Yes. Bilingual staff who speak Spanish and other languages will be available on transit where they are most likely to be needed.

Will I have access to the data or the final findings?

A summary report will be available when the study is complete in early 2025.

Is the data shared with or sold to anyone other than NFTA-Metro?

No. To ensure the anonymity of survey respondents, personal information will not be included in the final data files.

Will my route be eliminated or changed based on my information?

This information will allow NFTA-Metro to implement enhancements to the system that make it more effective, reliable, and efficient. The ultimate goal is to better meet travelers' needs.

When will the project be completed?

Surveying of all transit lines is expected to be finished by the end of October 2024.

Who is paying for the survey?

NFTA-Metro receives transportation planning funds from the federal government that are being used to pay for the survey.

How do I know that my personal information is safe?

The survey consultant and NFTA-Metro are required to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information (PII). Key provisions include storing PII on secure computers, protecting it from unauthorized use, and destroying PII after an agreed-upon time period.

Also, as previously noted, published reports will summarize the survey data, but will not disclose PII.

Who can I contact to get more information on the study?

Contact Customer Care at (716) 855-7211 or info@nfta.com