



Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) Meeting

Marion Senior Services and via WebEx

1101 SW 20th Court, Ocala, FL 34471

September 16, 2021

10:00 AM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Michelle Stone

Jeffrey Askew (*arrived at 10:20am*)

Ivonne Perez *via WebEx*

Tracey Sapp

Tracey Alesiani *via WebEx*

Susan Hanley

Carlos Colon

Andrea Melvin

Anissa Pieriboni *via WebEx*

Members Not Present:

Charmaine Anderson

Iris Pozo

Carissa Hutchinson

Steven Neal

Jeff Aboumrad

James Haynes

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, TPO

Shakayla Irby, TPO
Elizabeth Mitchell, TPO
Erick Hawkins, Marion Transit
Ken McKely, Marion Transit
Karen Williams, Marion Transit
Herman Schulz, Marion Transit

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairwoman Stone called the meeting to order at 10:17am. Secretary Shakayla Irby called the roll and a quorum was present with a special quorum of five member's present in-person. Mr. Askew joined the meeting at 10:20am and a quorum of six members were present.

Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairwoman Stone led the board members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 3. Proof of Publication

Secretary Shakayla Irby stated that the meeting had been published September 9, 2021 online on the TPO website and Facebook and Twitter pages, the City of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites. The meeting was also published to the September 10, 2021 edition of the Ocala Gazette.

Item 4A. Introduction of new Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), Erick Hawkins

Mr. Hawkins introduced himself to the board as the new Transportation Director for Marion Senior Service and the new CTC. He gave praises to the Marion Transit team and said by far they were one of the best teams he had worked with.

Before being named Transportation Director for Marion Transit in June 2021, Erick was the Transit Administrator in the city of Rock Hill South Carolina. Erick was responsible for starting the first all-electric transit system in the county. The operations consisted of fixed route, as well as para-transit services. This was a complete 0-completion process.

Prior to the city of Rock Hill, Erick was the Director of safety and security for RATPDEV for an operation in Asheville NC. This was also a city operation that was managed by RATPDEV. Previous to his work for RATPDEV, Erick was the Director of Operations for TransDev America. The location was in Greensboro NC. The operation consisted of 120 fixed route buses, and 42 Para-transit vehicles. His work in Greensboro was a complete turnaround operation. Much of the turnaround focus being OTP, and customer complaints. Erick earned his B/A in Industrial Psychology from the University of Wisconsin. Erick also played outside linebacker for the university.

Chairwoman Stone said that she was very happy to have the opportunity to serve Marion County along with Mr. Hawkins and Marion Transit.

Item 4B. Board Member Changes

Chairwoman Stone noted Board member changes for the Agency for Healthcare Administration:

- Ivonne Perez – Sr. Human Services Program Specialist
- Victoria Anderson – Sr. Human Services Program Specialist (alternate)

Item 5A. Annual Operating Report (AOR)

Mr. Hawkins gave an overview of the AOR summary page to the board (*attached to this set of minutes on page 8 for reference*)

Chairwoman Stone said it looked as if 2021 was already outpacing 2020. She also inquired about any milestones that should've been recognized.

Mr. Hawkins said that track for complaints had decreased by a significant amount. Ken McKely with Marion Transit had implemented a new tracking system for compliments and complaints and all feedback had been tracked perfectly.

Chairwoman Stone inquired about the status of accidents and if any riders were traveling on the transit vehicles when they took place.

Mr. Hawkins said no, and that three of the accidents were Marion Transit and that two of them were the contractors. He could not speak to the accidents of the contractors.

Mr. Askew inquired about the Trip Requests and what type of requests were they.

Mr. Hawkins was unsure because the five request came from contractors. Marion Transit had zero requests.

Mr. Askew made a motion to approve the Annual Operating Report. Ms. Melvin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 6. Consent Agenda

Mr. Askew made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Hanley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 7A. Safety Action Plan

The TPO was planning to invest in the development of a Safety Action Plan to serve as a resource to improving transportation safety throughout Marion County. The development of an Action Plan is envisioned to be a collaborative process involving citizens and stakeholders, private and public partners, and state agencies.

The proposed title of the Action Plan is **Commitment to Zero: An Action Plan for Safer Streets in Ocala Marion.**

The purpose of **Commitment to Zero** was to bring together the Ocala Marion community to collaborate in the development of an Action Plan to improve safety on our transportation system.

The Action Plan would be focused on four key areas:

- Education and Awareness
 - The Safety Story of Ocala/Marion County
- Public and Partner Engagement
 - Instrumental to Plan success!
- Safety Analysis
 - Trends
 - Areas of Concern (hotspots)
 - System-wide Issues
- Action Planning
 - What could everyone do individually and collectively to improve safety in Marion County
 - Commitments over next 3-5 years

TPO staff were seeking leadership support through the development of a strategy for partner engagement. A key to success of the Safety Action Plan would be how our partners in the community work together toward improving safety.

Mr. Balmes notified the board of the September 27, 2021 Safety Action Plan Public Workshop and said that members were invited to the meeting. The meeting was also open to the public.

Mr. Ken McKely, with Marion Transit commented that safety is important because you don't want anyone to get hurt but also there is a financial impact when accidents happen. He said it was a good idea to share the financial burden of accidents so that people could see the impact.

Item 7B. Marion Survey Results

Ms. Mitchell presented and said that TPO staff had conducted a survey in an attempt to receive feedback from the community and general public relating to Marion Transit services. In August, the TPO conducted a 30-day Public Survey soliciting feedback from the community. The survey was presented online through the TPO website, on Survey Monkey and hard copies at the Ocala Public Library, Center for Independent Living and on Marion Transit buses. A total of 77 responses were received, 56 on Survey Monkey and 21 hard copies from the above mentioned sites.

A survey results summary was presented to the board (*attached to this set of minutes for reference on pages 9 through 15*).

A few comments were highlighted:

- Question #2 How important is Paratransit service “Marion Transit”
 - Response: “We do not have this in Belleview and need it.”
 - Ms. Karen Williams with SunTran said that the comment may have been referenced to the SunTran because Marion Transit did service the Belleview area.

- Mr. Balmes inquired with Mr. Steven Neal about SunTran in Belleview and was told that the City Council and the community had not voted on investing in a SunTran line to Belleview.

Chairwoman Stone asked if the TPO could give a response that addresses negative comments for clarity sake.

Ms. Mitchell said that the TPO could give a general response and make available to the public.

- Question #3 In your "Marion Transit" daily commute what do you see that functions well and not well?
 - Response: "The bus drivers drive way too fast for our small communities."
 - Mr. Hawkins replied that the buses had speed limit monitoring equipment and once drivers exceeded a certain speed limit the team is notified.

Mr. McKely said that if another survey was conducted in the future instead of saying "Marion Transit" be more specific and say "Marion Senior Services Marion Transit Agency". That way the survey would not be confused with all transit in Marion County.

Ms. Melvin suggested adding a photo of a Marion Transit bus on the front of the survey to limit any confusion as well.

- Question #4 What impact does Marion Transit have in the community
 - Response: "Does not include enough areas. Should be in all areas of the county."
 - Mr. Hawkins replied that Marion Transit had partnered with another department to conduct public outreach and would be going out to different areas of the county to notify of the Marion Transit service.
- Question #8 What if Marion Transit only runs in your area once a month, what would you do?
- Question #9 What if Marion Transit stopped service, what would you do?

Chairwoman Stone asked if drivers had noticed any additional worry or concern that Marion Transit would limit or stop service due to the questions that were asked.

Mr. McKely responded no, but he had heard from some of the drivers that in general customers had said to not stop the service and to continue the service.

Chairwoman Stone said she did not want the public to think that service would be limited or stopped due to the questions asked in the survey.

Chairwoman Stone asked Ms. Mitchell to solicit the board members to help formulate the questions if a never survey was constructed.

Ms. Melvin said a lot of the comments were related to ADA complimentary paratransit instead of a TD trip.

Mr. McKely said that there should be a distinguished separation between the two.

Ms. Mitchell said at the last meeting she requested feedback from the board members and did not receive responses.

Chairwoman Stone said that the survey shined a light on customer satisfaction of Marion Transit and that the survey could be done annually to provide good feedback for the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP).

Chairwoman Stone said that by July the questions could start to be formed so by August or September the questions could be formulated.

Ms. Pieriboni said that it would be helpful to have some information for new clients for training purposes of how to utilize the service.

Ms. Pieriboni said that they had talking points that could be utilized at the different agencies to make it easier for citizens utilizing the service.

Ms. Melvin said that Centers for Independent Living would give out the Marion Transit Rights and Responsibilities to ADA paratransit applicants.

Item 7C. Next Meeting Date

The board decided to have the next meeting date on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 10:30am. The meeting would be held at Marion Senior Services.

Item 8. Comments by TDLCB Members

Ms. Pieriboni notified the board that the Center for the Blind had been giving virtual assistance to clients but were in the soft reopening stages for late September. Through the pandemic they never stopped service.

Item 9. Comments by TPO Staff

There were no comments by TPO Staff.

Item 10. Comments by CTC

There were no comments by the CTC.

Item 11. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 12. Adjournment

Chairwoman Stone adjourned the meeting at 11:10am.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant

County: Marion
 CTC: Marion Senior Services, Inc.
 Contact: Erick Hawkins
 1101 SW 20 CT
 Ocala, FL 34471
 352-620-3519

Demographics	Number
Total County Population	0
Unduplicated Head Count	1,470



Email: ehawkins@marionseniorservices.org

Trips By Type of Service	2019	2020	2021	Vehicle Data	2019	2020	2021
Fixed Route (FR)	0	0	0	Vehicle Miles	982,693	1,003,678	1,066,983
Deviated FR	0	2,039	0	Roadcalls	14	21	8
Complementary ADA	0	16,595	0	Accidents	3	5	2
Paratransit	112,448	69,978	66,480	Vehicles	55	61	69
TNC	0	0	0	Drivers	58	70	64
Taxi	0	0	0				
School Board (School Bus)	0	0	0				
Volunteers	0	0	0				
TOTAL TRIPS	112,448	88,612	66,480				
Passenger Trips By Trip Purpose				Financial and General Data			
Medical	52,830	44,193	41,920	Expenses	\$3,522,712	\$3,634,073	\$3,269,583
Employment	1,910	2,455	1,577	Revenues	\$3,392,671	\$3,601,705	\$3,257,823
Ed/Train/DayCare	33,568	22,193	7,132	Commendations	59	35	43
Nutritional	18,964	16,312	12,879	Complaints	20	11	23
Life-Sustaining/Other	5,176	3,459	2,972	Passenger No-Shows	3,018	3,989	1,682
TOTAL TRIPS	112,448	88,612	66,480	Unmet Trip Requests	27	5	0
Passenger Trips By Revenue Source				Performance Measures			
CTD	33,703	30,240	23,716	Accidents per 100,000 Miles	0.31	0.50	0.19
AHCA	2,373	233	0	Miles between Roadcalls	70,192	47,794	133,373
APD	26,380	1,477	6,702	Avg. Trips per Passenger	34.28	40.39	45.22
DOEA	0	0	0	Cost per Trip	\$31.33	\$41.01	\$49.18
DOE	0	0	0	Cost per Paratransit Trip	\$31.33	\$41.01	\$49.18
Other	49,992	56,662	36,062	Cost per Total Mile	\$3.58	\$3.62	\$3.06
TOTAL TRIPS	112,448	88,612	66,480	Cost per Paratransit Mile	\$3.58	\$3.62	\$3.06
Trips by Provider Type							
CTC	84,640	72,007	61,804				
Transportation Operator	0	0	0				
Coordination Contractor	27,808	16,605	4,676				
TOTAL TRIPS	112,448	88,612	66,480				

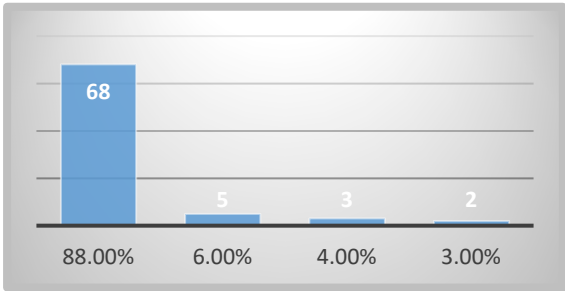
TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED SURVEY RESULTS

77 TOTAL RESPONSES

Positive Negative Informative

1. How important is public transportation?

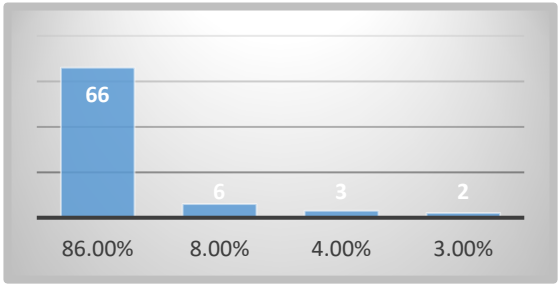
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very	88.00%	68
Somewhat	6.00%	5
Not important	4.00%	3
Other (please specify)	3.00%	2



Comments: "Without Marion Transit my husband and I would not have survived"

2. How important is Paratransit service "Marion Transit"

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very	86.00%	66
Somewhat	8.00%	6
Not important	4.00%	3
Other (please specify)	3.00%	2



Comments: I have a friend that always rely on a taxi she lives on 24th St. and you go just on Lake Weir it would be nice to have come to Forrest Hills Apt.

We do not have this in Belleview and need it.

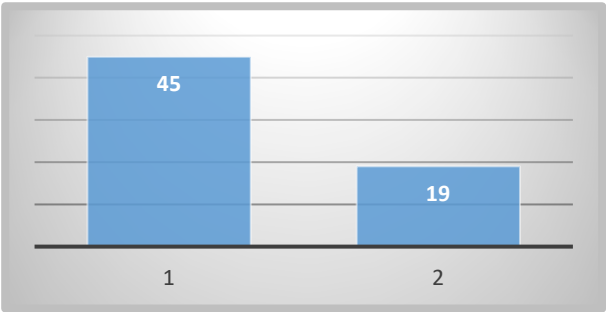
3. In your "Marion Transit" daily commute what do you see that functions well and not well?

Answered	45
Skipped	19

Comments:

Well:

- On time pick up
- How do I sign up to use
- Everything good
- Great great service
- I do not use it at this time but it's a necessity for people in need



I see them everywhere. I do not use them because I am able to drive. I am in my late 70's and one day it will become something I will need. The people using it now , I am sure, completely rely on this transportation. Do Not Cancel it.

Communication with dispatch is great! Drivers are very nice and helpful.

I personally do not use as yet but foresee a time when I will want/need to.

Caring drivers, with few exceptions on time for scheduled arrivals, safety.

Morning driver on time personable drivers

Drivers get you to your appointments quickly and safely

I use seldom but have had many times in the past but the biggest need is to serve all seniors regardless of insurance Great for transporting to dr's appointments, some people take advantage of the service daily instead of making other arrangements

Many of my elderly and disabled neighbors are able to get to their medical and shopping appts.

Promptness, clean vehicle, friendly driver

Marion Transit could use additional staff. Most of the drivers I have encountered were compassionate and helpful.

Travel times can be lengthy but drivers are great

Marion Transit scheduling system is very efficient. It would be nice if they sent you a confirmation email for your scheduled ride.

Not Well: Routes supported by county tax money do not serve all county residents equally.

Not we'll since you don't pick up at Ocala palm garden because if covid even though she is vaccinated

Ride times are limited

Making available the knowledge to the ADA community that MT rides are available whenever the SunTran buses are running. That means 5:00 am to 10:00 pm. Monday through Saturday. Some of my friends have told me they were told drivers weren't available for Saturday runs. (Pre and post pandemic shutdowns).

My husband is disabled but they won't come to our area.

Passengers are not always ready to go.

No Sunday service

Limited distance (doesn't go far)

Long wait out

Wait times can be long

Not enough public transport for entire Ocala area.

Lack of consistency, traffic being key factor

Needing to schedule three days in advance is bad. What if I need a prescription filled today?

Too many old people that smell bad, ugly colors on buses

On occasion I've seen patients in doctors' waiting rooms having to wait for a long time for their ride(s). Not often though.

I don't use it but know people that do they just have very long wait times

The bus drivers drive way too fast for our small communities.

Afternoon pick-up not getting home for a long time

Sometimes waiting can be a bit long

Number of days to book appointment

4. What impact does Marion Transit have in the community

Answer Choices	Responses	
Provides a better quality of life	70.00%	54
Provides equity in the community	21.00%	16
Don't see a real difference	3.00%	2
Other (please specify)	9.00%	7

Comments: Provides a transportation option

At this time it is no help to us

Not enough till full ADA coverage of sun tran's schedule is made known and encouraged - by brochure, and public announcement

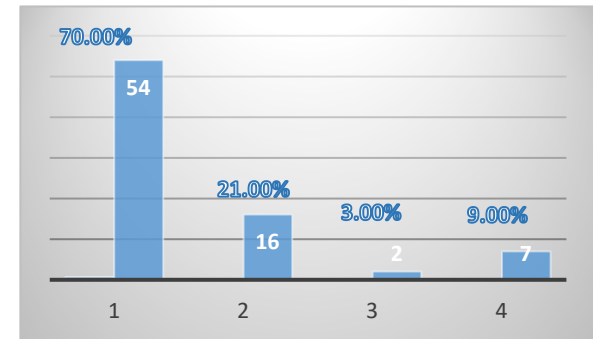
Helps people who can't afford cars to get to jobs

Provides a way to get to necessary places when there is no other way

Pollutes the air with gas / exhaust

Does NOT include enough areas. Should be in all areas of the county.

Mkes getting home less worisome



5. What are the most important features of the Paratransit system "Marion Transit"

Answer Choices	Responses	
Enough capacity	21.00%	16
Fare pricing	35.00%	27
How accessible they are	51.00%	39
Other (please specify)	9.00%	7

Comments: Not fair especially when they are picking up at Walmart

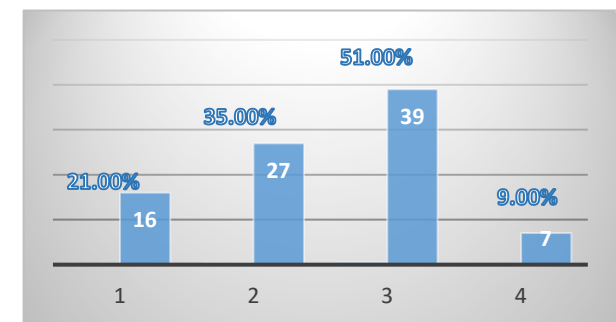
Willingness to go to all areas.

Available to all, not only low income

Keeping riders safe, thank you!

Safe transport

Not sure since I don't use it.



Coverage of county

Great people

6. What is the one thing that should be a long term "Paratransit" transportation focus?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Provide more buses more often	49.00%	38
Customer Service	23.00%	18
More advertising for public awareness	25.00%	19
Other (please specify)	8.00%	6

Comments: All of the above

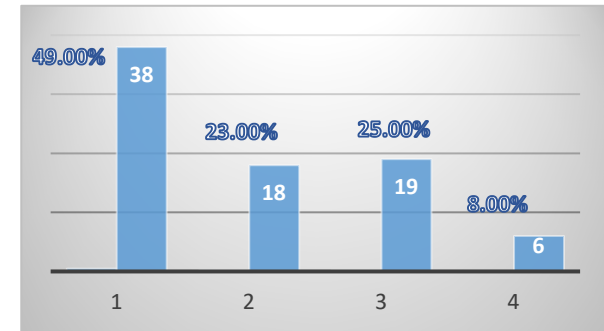
Unknown

Keep doing the same job!

Wider service area.

Need to extend further into Marion County

Driver safety - their drivers speed far and above the speed limit, slam on the breaks at the last minute when they do stop at red lights and stop signs - this is not good for the riders.



7. What in Marion Transit's service do you think would make an immediate improvement?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Faster pick up and return time	48.00%	37
Friendly service	10.00%	8
No improvement needed	26.00%	20
Other (please specify)	17.00%	13

Comments: New CEO

Larger coverage area

Again, more pickup areas.

Driver training, customer service.

More buses

Call today, pick up today.

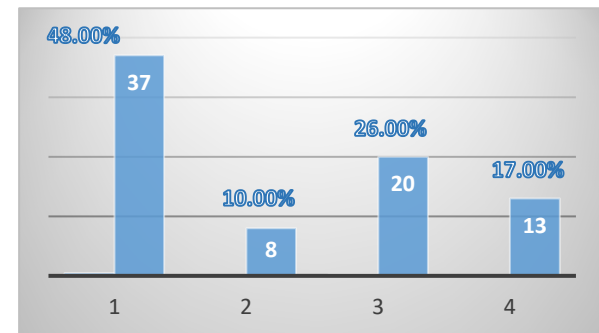
More advertising so people know what it costs, availability and how to use it

Need info on how to ride

Consistency in promptness

If the call center actually answered the phones. Lines are very busy quite often and you cannot reach anyone.

I'd say from what I have seen would be the stops would need some kind of shelter from the weather and lighting for the early



morning commuters

Faster return time and public awareness of 5:00 am to 10:00pm M-S service

Extending the routes to include more rural areas

8. What if Marion Transit only runs in your area once a month, what would you do?

Answer Choices	Responses	
This would be acceptable	3.00%	2
Adjust my doctors, shopping, etc. to that timeframe	49.00%	38
Other (please specify)	38.00%	29

Comments: This would not be acceptable.

Be without transport

Unacceptable

We need a better system

Weep

Die

Try to find alternative rides

Move out of Ocala

Be in trouble on dialysis 3x's a week

I'm in bus route ADA. I'd campaign for compliance to ADA

No way can't have it

I am wanting to move from Ocala for better accessibility to transportation.

Once a month probably isn't enough for an area. People will find another way if it doesn't work with their schedule. You can't always adjust doctors to fit Marion Transit's schedule.

It would mean my daughter could not work.

Probably would have to refrain from going anywhere that wasn't absolutely essential to life

Find other transportation

Contact city public transit system to see what can be done

Not be able to see Drs or food shop

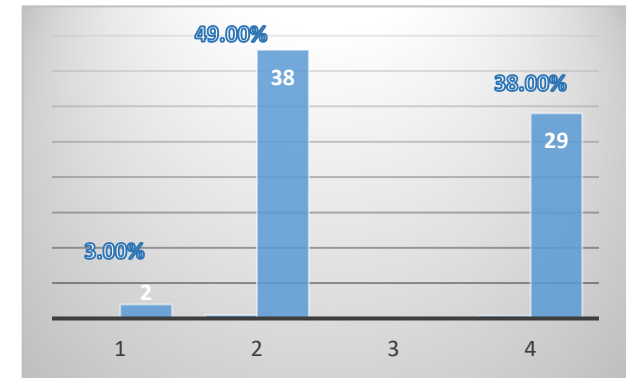
Not acceptable as Appts to Drs in this Covid world is harder to get

Find other means if possible, if not just not go

My husband wouldn't be able to get to medically necessary appointments

Couldn't go to dialysis

Die without dialysis



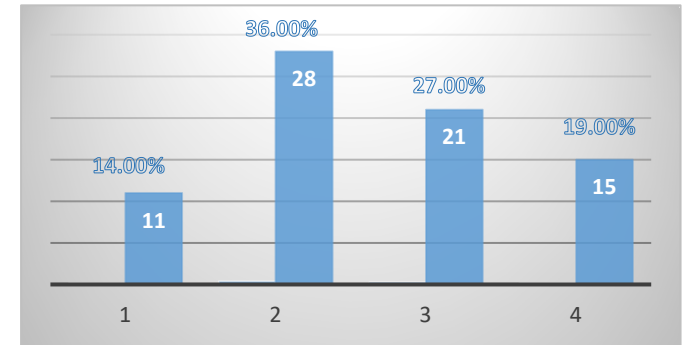
That would not be helpful to those that depend on the service
 Would not affect me
 Not often enough
 Not sure. Would have to ask family and friends to help neighbors, I already provide no cost transportation to a few of my close neighbors on an occasional basis. They don't like to ask anyone for help.
 Need transportation
 Not Acceptable

9. What if Marion Transit stopped service, what would you do?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Try to ride the SunTran bus system	14.00%	11
Trouble my family and friends for rides	36.00%	28
Stay home	27.00%	21
Other (please specify)	19.00%	15

Comments:

Die
 My wife will continue to miss work to take me places.
 I wouldn't have access to accessible transportation
 Walk
 Please don't stop
 No other alternative. I'd campaign for ADA compliance. Is this a fear tactic?
 People would have to find some other way. Probably friends and family.
 Miss work and critical doctor appointments
 Use uber but would cut into my food money.
 Die a horrible death
 Many people would have no choice but to stay home or ask neighbors for a ride.



10. If you were doing this survey for Paratransit Services what questions would you ask? What did we fail to ask you?

Comments:

This survey was very effective.
 Are YOUR needs being met?
 Love to keep Marion Transit because very good on the bus get them on time from Dr.
 Why not come to Forrest Hills only go on lake weir and 31st
 Help us
 "Are you aware that Marion Transit is contracted by SunTran to fulfill it's ADA mandatory coverage. What safety hindrances at SunTran bus stops have you come across while attempting to ride SunTran (non existent or broken or blocked

sidewalks(including dirt paths or sidewalks btw stops and destination, and dangerous intersections. People on handicapped scooters have been killed trying to cross or on our roadways due to poor off road conditions. Ditto for Walkers and canes being equally dangerous.

How can we better serve you as a customer

Are drivers qualified in life threatening situations

I can't think of anything at this time

How is the ride itself? Comfort, respect by driver and other riders

If I need or would like to have service evenings, say to 10 PM, and weekends, like to Saturday downtown market.

Do you use the service? Do you know what it offers?

How safe is this service? (I would say it is very safe & gives me peace of mind).

If you do not currently use our service, Do you personally know anyone who uses our service

Show me how to apply

I am fine with the service

Does your routes cover everything

Was the bus clean, social distancy practiced, my over experience on bus

Should a mc resident be penalized for living in a rural area?

I would ask why you can not get it straight that sw 38 th avenue is not close to suntran routes when you make appointments

What kind of music would we like played on the bus?

I currently do not use the service so I am unable to help with this question

If I or anyone I know rides Marion Transit to disqualify me from the survey.

Considering the SIZE of Marion County and how fast its population has increased, what would be the BEST way to fund the improvements you suggested (above) are needed?

How often do you see Paratransit in your immediate neighborhood?

Need dr. appt., dentist, shopping every week. It is essential.

We need Paratransit in Marion Oaks badly!

Drivers very polite

Need transportation for work 3 times a week

I like very much is very good