



DATE: March 25, 2025
TO: Coleman A. Young II, Council Member-At-Large Detroit City Council
FROM: Robert Cramer, CEO, Detroit Transportation Corporation
SUBJECT: Budget Questions for the Detroit Transportation Corporation

1. The People Mover's budget includes operational funding, but ridership has historically been a challenge. What plans are in place to increase ridership and improve service reliability?

We are actively pursuing a goal to increase ridership by 50%, aiming to achieve an impressive two million riders this year. We are actively collaborating with our transit partners and the RTA. Our ongoing relationship with the convention bureau and city neighborhoods is essential, as we continuously adapt and enhance our services to meet the evolving demands of visitors and residents alike. By engaging with Visit Detroit, Downtown Detroit Partnership, local residences, hotels, and parking providers, the People Mover is strategically positioning to attract more riders.

As the city welcomes an increasing number of events and residents downtown, we are committed to delivering a reliable and safe transportation service that meets their needs effectively. We are committed to keeping the DPM stations and train cars in a state of good repair, with scheduled maintenance and responsiveness to eliminate any extended downtime. Following our successful rail replacement project last fall, DPM can have as many as four trains in service, reducing wait times to approximately 4 minutes.

Your support in these initiatives will be crucial to our success.

2. With the ongoing transition to more sustainable public transit, are there any plans to explore alternative energy sources or partnerships for funding infrastructure upgrades?

The DPM vehicle is 100% electric and produces zero emissions. DTC is committed to reducing waste and continuously seeking to incorporate energy-efficient products into our operations.

3. Can you provide an update on fare revenue projections and whether there are any anticipated changes in pricing or service levels?

The current program has been extended by the DTC Board of Directors through at least the end of CY 2025 and will consider the future of the fare program in July 2025. Due to the fact that resuming fare collection with modern payment would require a \$5,000,000 capital investment (which would be at least a five-year break-even on fare revenue), the logistics and cost of resuming fares is much more challenging than keeping fares free. We will continue to work with Priority or other partners in the future based on interest and value for those sponsors.



DETROIT TRANSPORTATION CORPORATION

2024 PEOPLE MOVER CUSTOMER SURVEY SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

To better understand who is currently riding the Detroit People Mover (DPM) and what can be done to maintain and build on recent success, the project team distributed an on-board intercept survey to customers and an online survey to riders and non-riders across Metro Detroit. In summer 2024, the team collected **840 on-board surveys** and **398 online surveys**.

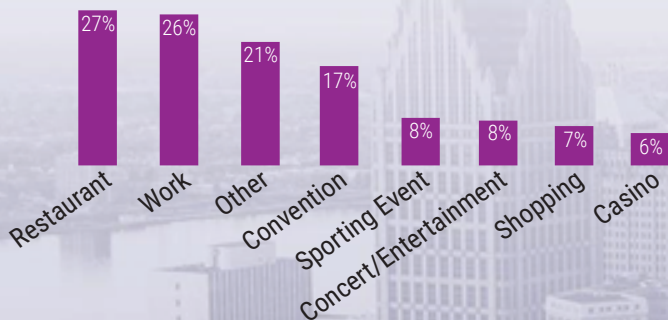
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INSIGHTS

- >> **Most respondents** rate their **overall experience** with the DPM as **excellent**.
- >> **Customer Satisfaction is up from 2018.** The 71% excellent rating seen on the 2024 on-board survey is 18 percentage points higher than the 2018 on-board survey.
- >> **Most respondents** said they were **more likely** to ride the DPM now that it is free, and 15% of on-board respondents were only riding because it is free.

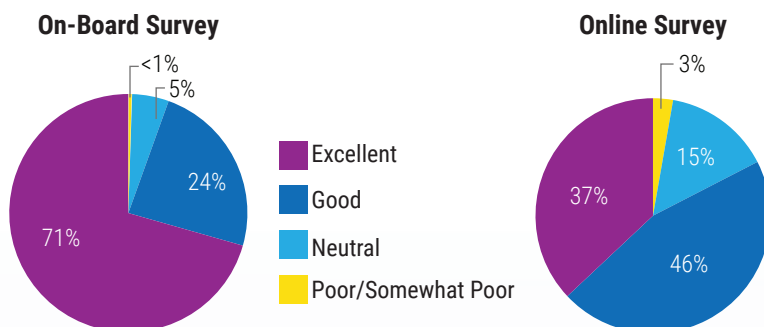
TRIP PURPOSE

- >> Compared with 2018, 2024 respondents were less likely to be riding for work and more likely to be riding for sporting events.

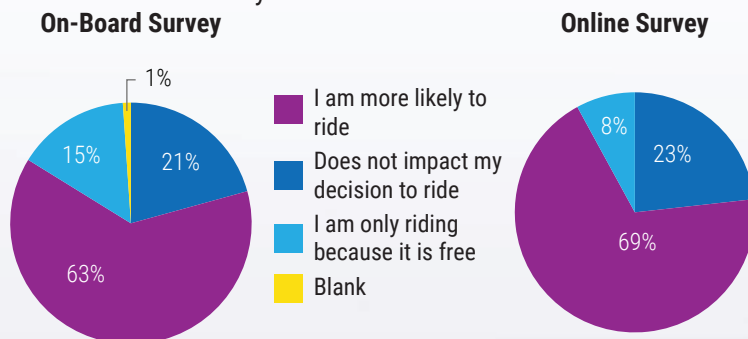
The most common reasons for being downtown were going to a restaurant or to work.



How would you describe your overall experience with the DPM?



As of January 2024, the DPM is free. How does this impact your decision to ride?



- >> **Almost half** of on-board survey respondents were riding just for fun or riding to see the city.

What is the primary purpose of this trip on the DPM?



ON-BOARD SURVEY RESULTS

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

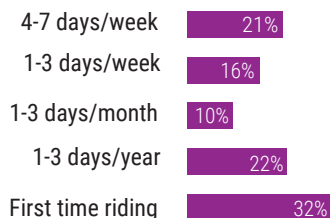


Riding Frequency

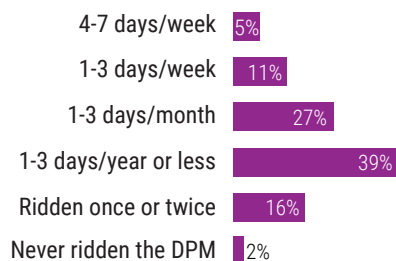
How often do you ride the DPM?

2018 Results

There was a greater proportion of first time riders in 2024 (32%) than in 2018 (15%) and a greater proportion of frequent riders in 2024 (21%) than in 2018 (8%).



How often do you ride the DPM?



Frequent Riders were asked about their last experience riding the DPM.

Non-Frequent Riders were asked about their travels in downtown Detroit.



Popular Stations

2018 Results

The most frequently visited stations were **Huntington Place (Cobo Center), Greektown, and the Renaissance Center**.

The most frequently visited stations were the **Renaissance Center, Greektown, and Grand Circus Park**.

The most frequently visited stations by frequent riders were **Grand Circus Park, Greektown, Renaissance Center and the Financial District**.

Non-Frequent Riders

Rather than taking the DPM, infrequent riders typically **walk or drive and park** to get around Downtown



Alternative Modes

Most respondents would have **walked** (52%) if the DPM weren't available. Other alternative modes include **driving** (17%), **not making the trip at all** (10%) and **taxi/rideshare** (10%).

Common reasons for not riding the DPM include **having the ability to walk instead**, not being able to reach destinations, and not being Downtown often.



Group Type

Most respondents were travelling in groups of **two or more** (62%). For those travelling in groups, the greatest share of respondents were travelling with **family** (60%).

Respondents typically ride the DPM **alone**, followed by with **friends**, and with **family**.



On-Board Rider Frequency

	First-time riding	1-3 days/month, 1-3 days/year	1-3 days/week, 4-7 days/week
	First-time Rider	Non-frequent Rider	Frequent Rider
How did you get info about the DPM?	Word of Mouth	Grew up in Detroit and always knew about the DPM	Grew up in Detroit and always knew about the DPM
How did you reach Downtown Detroit?	(1) Stayed in Hotel/Airbnb (2) Drove/Carpooled/ Was driven (3) Walked/Biked	(1) Drove/Carpooled/ Was driven (2) Stayed in Hotel/Airbnb (3) Walked/Biked	(1) Downtown Resident (2) Used transit (3) Walked/Biked

>> First-time Riders were more likely than non-frequent and frequent riders to hear about the DPM from the events they were attending, station signage, hotel/concierge, and word of mouth.

>> Those who live downtown, have a higher frequency of riding, as well as those who reached downtown via other modes of public transit.



Traveling in Downtown Detroit

>> How often are you in Downtown Detroit? The greatest share of respondents are in Downtown Detroit 1-3 days per month (36%).

>> How do you typically get to Downtown Detroit? Most respondents drove or carpooled and parked to get to Downtown Detroit (71%), followed by those who rode the QLine (18%), walked (14%), and biked (12%).

>> What is the main reason you visit Downtown Detroit? Most respondents primarily went Downtown to eat at restaurants (63%), attend concert/entertainment events (51%), and attend sporting events (37%).



DETROIT PEOPLE MOVER