

## Survey Methodology

### Survey Platform

The 2022 NCDOT IMD Partner Survey was launched on PublicInput (PublicInput.com), an online survey and public participation platform that is computer and smartphone compatible. PublicInput is a web-based platform designed to facilitate public engagement. Sites can host project information, public forums, and surveys. NCDOT holds a license for PublicInput and uses it often to engage the public and collect comments on its many transportation projects.

The project team selected PublicInput for the 2022 IMD Partners Survey for its flexibility, variety of survey question types built into the platform, and the ability to incorporate logic in the survey. Lastly, the longevity of NCDOT's relationship with PublicInput will make replicating this annual survey seamless and allow for year-to-year comparisons of survey results.

### Survey Audience and Timeline

The survey was directed toward transit agencies, partners, internal NCDOT offices and units, and other community organizations and was open from March 7-25, 2022. Its purpose was to solicit input for developing future goals and objectives for IMD and to help shape the future of integrated mobility within the state.

NCDOT IMD disseminated the survey through email and periodically reminded its partners of the survey purpose and availability. At the end of the survey period, there were 189 participants and 1,091 comments.

### Survey Questions

A total of 57 possible questions were included in the survey with 20 minutes being the estimated time for completion. All questions were optional aside from the type of organization with which the participant is affiliated and how many years the participant has been working with IMD or formerly the Public Transportation Division or Division of Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation. Several questions from the 2018 PTD Support Survey were included, though some were slightly altered to better suit the platform and provide greater diversity in question type. For example, on the 2022 survey, respondents were asked to provide a letter grade or rating on a sliding bar, whereas in 2018 all questions asked for a score on a scale of 1 to 10. Additional questions were included to gain feedback and insights on the bicycle and pedestrian programs operated by NCDOT IMD following the merger of NCDOT Division of Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation with the NCDOT Public Transportation Division.

### Survey Analytics

To analyze and derive findings from the survey responses, an Excel workbook was developed featuring an interactive dashboard with aggregated data and multiple supporting tabs of comments and individual responses from participants. The data was compiled using Excel Pivot Tables, which have the built-in capability to slice the data according to selected variables, including organization type, years working with IMD, and average response time. To gain maximum insights from the survey, data was further processed in the following specific ways:

### *Duplicating responses*

All respondents were asked to indicate the organization type(s) with which they are affiliated, and participants were able to select more than one organization type. A key goal for the survey was understanding how responses varied according to organization type. Therefore, responses that identified multiple organization types were duplicated and counted as a unique response for each organization type identified. This allowed the respondent's feedback to be reflected for all appropriate organization types and prevented potential bias in selecting the organization type with which the response should be classified. This step changed the entry count from 190 to 247.

### *Converting categorical letter grades to quantitative variable*

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on how well IMD is applying its guiding principles by assigning each principle a letter grade with "A" representing 90%-100%, "B" representing 80%-89%, etc. The use of categorical letter grades limits potential analysis and visualization opportunities for the response data. Therefore, the categorical responses were converted to quantitative variables based on the percentage range associated with each letter. A response of "A" was converted to 95%, "B" was converted to 85%, and so on through "F" being converted to 55%.

### *Binary Analysis*

Multiple questions asked participants to provide feedback on IMD's performance using a sliding bar, in which sliding the marker to the right on the bar indicated varying levels of favorable performance and sliding the marker to the left on the bar indicated varying levels of poor performance. The raw scores were presented on the Excel Dashboard. For additional analysis, the responses for these questions were also converted to binary responses in which a score of 50-100 was classified as a favorable rating and a score of 0-49 was classified as a poor rating. This binary data was used to assess the percent reporting satisfaction with IMD's services and a positive score for IMD achieving its goals. This binary analysis did not replace the analysis of the raw data – it was used to supplement and provide an additional lens for understanding how well IMD is performing according to multiple metrics.

## Survey Report Insights

### *Overview of Survey Participants*

- Of the 247 agencies represented by survey respondents, there are more than 9 organizational types represented as survey participants, with the vast majority working in some aspect of transit; and within those transit systems, rural transit was most common, but only by 6 responses (63 vs. 57).
- Of the respondents that identified an organization type, the top three (3) types were: NCDOT Central Office Unit, NCDOT Division, and Municipal Government.
- The total of 207 distinct zip codes from survey respondents reflects a broad spectrum of reach across the state and includes a large swath of representation from within the different organization types. The highest overall satisfaction scores are reported by NCDOT Central Office Units, which represents an opportunity for more proactive outreach and productive engagements with external organizations and community partners.

### IMD Performance Review

*Includes IMD Core Goals and Customer Service Satisfaction (2022 and 2018-2022 Comparison)*

- The average score of 73 in response to “How closely do IMD goals align with organization goals” reinforces the presence of a well-articulated vision and plan for transit development across the state.
- The highest level of approval for IMD Performance Goals and IMD Application of Guiding Principles is with individuals working with IMD for more than 5 years, which seems to be inverse to higher customer satisfaction rankings for respondents with less time working with IMD. This presents an opportunity for IMD to develop communications that “onboard” or provide more in-depth introductory orientations about the division, the services it offers, and how the IMD team can support its internal and external customers.
- IMD customer service/professionalism is a definite strength; however, the level of knowledge about organizational issues and services suggests there is more work to be done to make sure IMD team members can effectively assist transit partners. Specifically, more industry training and better understanding of respective organizational priorities and needs will address this issue.
- As a point of reference, NCDOT Central Office Unit (7 respondents) gave the highest rating for IMD Professionalism at 94%. Council of Governments (8 respondents) gave the lowest rating for IMD Knowledgeable about Organization Issues at 41%.

### Satisfaction

- Overall, service satisfaction was highest for IMD Professionalism and lowest for IMD Knowledgeable about Organization Issues.
- Generally speaking, overall satisfaction is a direct correlation with average response times. Most respondents (33%) receive a response from IMD within 1 to 2 days; followed by within 24 hours (23%); and a few hours (same day response) at 18%.
- Overall Satisfaction is 74% for respondents that receive a response within 24 hours from IMD (39 respondents) compared to 29% for respondents that never get a response from IMD (6 respondents representing municipal government, other, rural transit systems, and urban transit systems).
- Overall Satisfaction correlates with years working with IMD, whereas the shorter the duration working with IMD, the higher the overall satisfaction – which could indicate that respondents are more satisfied with recent interactions compared to past ones. Solely among transit agencies, the survey results from 2018 compared to the 2022 results demonstrate a significant decrease in overall satisfaction from 72.4 to 62.0. There is also a slight decline in all other areas, with the exception of Accuracy and Helpfulness of IMD Information, which averaged 69.7 among transit agencies in 2018 and averaged 70.2 among transit agencies in 2022. The recommendation moving forward is to use consistent survey platforms with the same question type to obtain more comparable information.
- In the Binary Analysis, Council of Governments stands out for its neutral or less than positive scores (Ex. 38% for Knowledge of Organizational Issues & Services) and low IMD goal achievement scores, presenting an opportunity for the IMD team to strengthen its knowledge of and outreach to that partner organization.

- *\*Note: 2018 satisfaction results seem to be higher than 2022 results; however, the slider design of the 2022 survey may influence the results. This is true when comparing 2018 results to all 2022 respondents and to 2022 transit agency-only respondents.*

### Future Trends

- Excluding “No Response,” the top 3 leading future trends among all organization types are mobility as a service software, electric vehicles, and microtransit service.
- The least popular mobility trend that recipients believe will be widely adopted within the next 5 years is autonomous vehicles.
- There is a clear desire and/or demand for mobility as a service and mobile ticketing in mostly rural areas. Possible rationales include the lack of infrastructure in rural areas and the need to reduce staffing burdens with automation provided by mobile ticketing and/or dispatch.
- Municipal governments were focused on EV and microtransit.
- Of the 19 respondents that chose “N/A (not applicable to my organization)” the organization types in ranking order were: Other (5); RPO/MPO (4); Rural Transit System (4); Council of Governments (3); Municipal Government (2); and County Government (1).
  - Of those interested in microtransit, the top organization types were: RPO/MPO (9); Rural Transit System (9); Urban Transit System (7); County Government (7); Municipal Government (7).
    - RPO/MPO included 9 of 46 responses = 19.6%
    - Rural Transit System included 9 of 46 responses = 19.6%
    - Urban Transit System included 7 of 46 responses = 15.2%
    - County Government included 7 of 46 responses = 15.2%
    - Municipal Government included 7 of 46 responses = 15.2%
    - Remaining combined organizations were Council of Government (3), NCDOT Division (3), and Other (1) for a combined total of 7 out of 46 responses = 15.2%

### Grant Funds

- Regarding grant funding, 60 of 189 respondents (32%) indicated they currently receive grant funds for transit; while 31 of 189 respondents (16%) do not, with 98 respondents (52%) providing “No Response.” Of respondents providing a Yes or No answer, 60 of 91 (66%) answered Yes to receiving grant funding for transit.
- Of the respondents that have not applied for a grant, 67% (8 of 12) stated they were simply unaware of the grant opportunity, followed by 25% (3 of 12) individuals not having the time or resources to apply. This provides insight and guidance for development of future communications-related content to align with the organizational needs and desired information requested by partner agencies.
- Of those that apply for grant funds, 76% are satisfied with the grant process for bicycle and pedestrian grants, whereas 65% are satisfied with the process for transit grants; perhaps reflecting complexity/requirements associated with FTA funding.
- Overall satisfaction scores for the IMD grant application process average 65%. Rural transit systems are on par – indicating that they are more satisfied with the transit grant application process (65%) compared to urban transit systems (43%).

- Based on an average satisfaction score of 65% for all organization types for the IMD grant application process, RPO/MPO has the lowest satisfaction score of 40%, reflecting a lower than positive or neutral ranking.
- Municipal Governments are most satisfied with IMD Planning Grant for bike/ped (81%) and the most satisfied of all organizations with the IMD grant application process (86%).

### Guiding Principles (Ranking)

#### Performance

- IMD's performance in applying its guiding principles was uniform across the nine principles, ranging from 79 to 83.
- Performance for Visionary and Equity ranked highest, but not notably greater than the other nine principles.

#### Importance

- Of all respondents, Solution Oriented was the top ranked guiding principle followed by Customer Focused, and Equitable.
- The highest response occurrence of 18 as the No. 1 priority of guiding principles was for Solution Oriented. In 21 instances, Visionary ranked in ninth (or last) place among the priority for guiding principles.
- For rural transit systems, Simple was the highest priority, whereas Customer Focused is highest priority for urban transit systems.